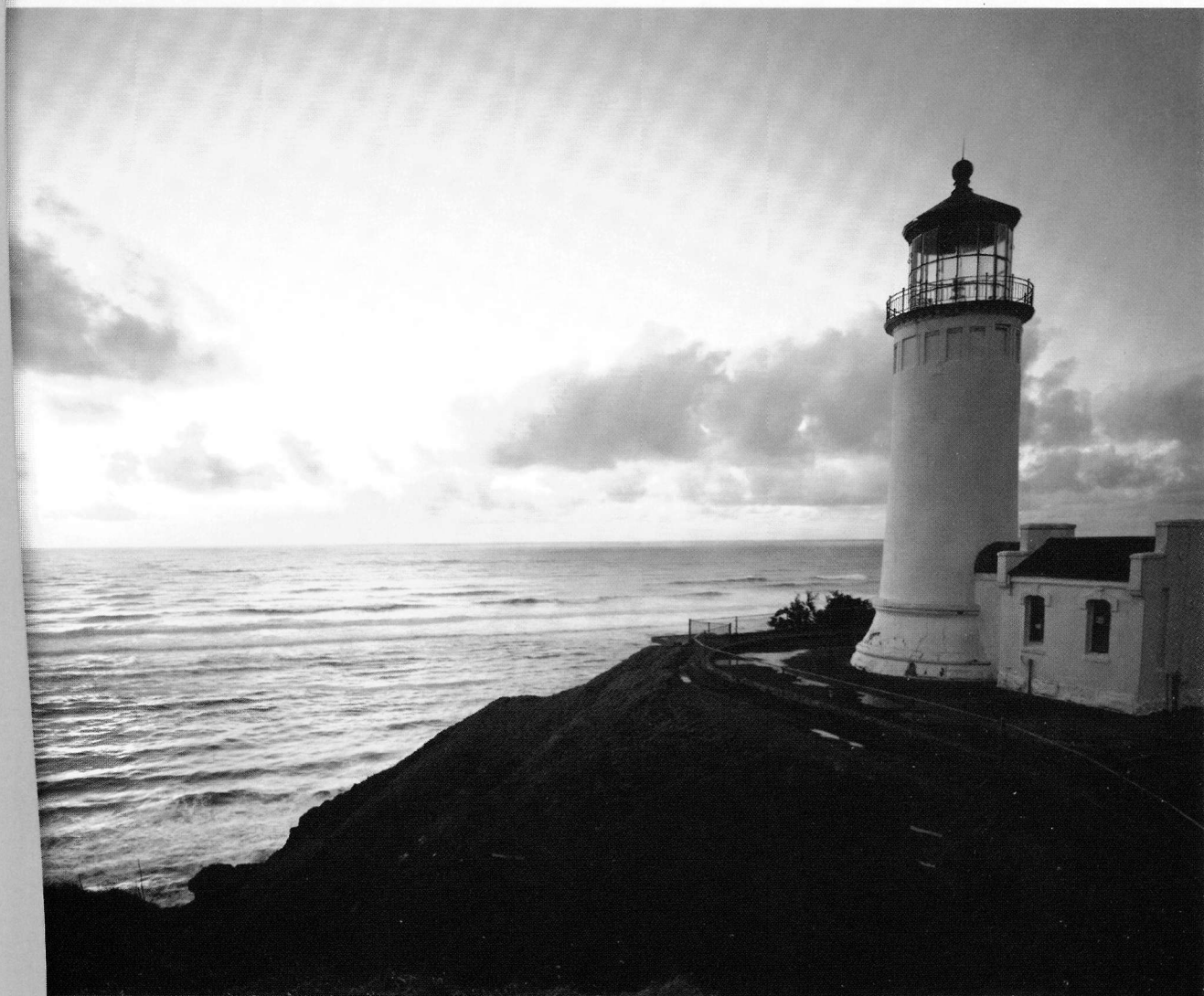


# A Guiding Light

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Blue 1c  
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1 It is hard to imagine a world without light. Plants need light to grow. People need light to be healthy. We need light to work or play after dark. Light guides the way when it is stormy or dark. No one knows this better than a sailor who has used the light from a lighthouse.

2 Hidden rocks, reefs, or sandbars can make sea travel unsafe. Storms can toss a ship around and cause the sailors to lose their way. Sailors can use a lighthouse to tell where they are. Then they will know what dangers they face.

3 The first lighthouse was built more than 2,000 years ago in Egypt. It was a tall stone tower. It had a large open fire burning at the top. The first lighthouse in America was built in 1716. It was on Little Brewster Island in Boston harbor. Today there are many lighthouses. Some are on lakes. Some are on rivers. Many are on ocean shores. Some lighthouses are built in the water, while others are built along the shore.

4 Early lighthouses used fire to guide ships. Wood, coal, oil, and gas were used to fuel the fires. However, fire could not be seen from very far away. People were always searching for a better way to make the light to help guide ships. Lamps with flat wicks were replaced by lamps with round wicks.

Reflectors were put behind the lamp to make the light brighter. In the early 1800s a man named Augustin Jean Fresnel made a new lens. It used prisms to make a light that could be seen for a greater distance. Then around 1850, electricity was used to shine light across the sea.

5 When lighthouses still used fire to guide ships, someone had to keep the light shining—all night long. That was the job of a keeper. It was a difficult job. A keeper had to keep the lamp wick trimmed. This way the fire burned as bright as possible. Every day the keeper cleaned the glass of the lantern, the windows, and the reflector. The keeper had to carry wood, coal, or oil up many steps to use in the fire.

6 The keeper also painted the lighthouse and other buildings near it. If there was enough space and soil, the keeper was expected to plant a garden. If a ship wrecked, the keeper had to try to help save the people. The pay for all of this was about \$600 a year in the 1800s. Since lighthouses were often built on islands or rocky strips of land, the job of keeper could be a lonely one.

7 Today many lighthouses operate without a keeper. However, the need for lighthouses and the safety they provide are still important.

## COMPREHENSION

**A** Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- 1 This story is mainly about
  - a** duties of lighthouse keepers.
  - b** early lighthouses.
  - c** dangers at sea.
- 2 Lighthouse keepers had to carry fuel up many steps because
  - a** most lighthouses are very tall.
  - b** lighthouses are built on hills.
  - c** lighthouses are built underneath cliffs.
- 3 By putting a reflector behind the fire of a lighthouse lamp, the light
  - a** didn't need to be watched all the time.
  - b** looked more white than yellow.
  - c** could be seen from a greater distance.

4 Keepers are no longer needed at lighthouses because

- a** no one uses lighthouses anymore.
- b** lighthouses are run by machines that don't need people.
- c** no one wants that kind of job anymore.

5 Lighthouses are important because

- a** they are needed for their light.
- b** people like them.
- c** people live in them.

## LEARN ABOUT WORDS

**B** Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1 shows; leads (1)
- 2 underwater ridges made of rocks, sand, or coral (2)
- 3 supply with something to be burned (4)
- 4 fiber or cloth strips or cords used to draw fuel to a flame (4)
- 5 surfaces used to direct light (4)

6 geometric shapes used for breaking up light (4)

7 a person whose job it is to take care of something (5)

8 work (7)

**C** A word may have more than one meaning. Its meaning will depend on how it is used.

The *fly* buzzed around the room.  
The bird will *fly* to its nest.

Look at each word in **bold type**. Note the paragraph number. Look back at the paragraph. Which meaning does the word have there? Write *a* or *b*.



## LEARN ABOUT WORDS (continued)

### 9 face (2)

- a front part of the head
- b confront

### 10 strips (6)

- a pulls off
- b a long narrow piece of something

## THINK ABOUT IT

**D** Read each sentence below. If the sentence is only about lighthouses, write *lighthouses*. If it is only about the keepers who lived there, write *keepers*. If it is about both, write *both*.

- 1 They are tall enough to be seen for miles.
- 2 They were needed to keep sailors safe.
- 3 They kept the fires going.
- 4 They were built near water.
- 5 They were often lonely.

**E** untied = **un** + tied  
retied = **re** + tied

The letters *un-* and *re-* are called prefixes. A prefix is added to the beginning of a word. It changes the word's meaning. *Un-* sometimes means "not." The word *untied* means "not tied." *Re-* means "again." The word *retied* means "tied again."

Read each set of sentences.

Choose the word in parentheses ( ) that makes sense. Write the word.

- 6 If the fire went out, the keeper had to light it again. If he did not (relight, unlight) it, sailors could wreck their ships.
- 7 Today some old lighthouses are not used for safety. (Reused, Unused) lighthouses are often visited by tourists.
- 8 Many tourists visit the same lighthouse over and over again. They like to (revisit, unvisit) the lighthouse to learn more about it.
- 9 Sometimes sea travel is not safe. Hidden dangers can make it (unsafe, resafe).
- 10 Stories of unusual events at lighthouses are told again and again. They have been (untold, retold) for many years.