1. **aimlessly** (AYM-lis-lee) *adverb*; Aimlessly means “without purpose or direction.” A person might stroll aimlessly through a park, wandering around with no particular destination in mind.

2. **compilation** (kom-puh-LAY-shuhn) *noun*; The verb *compile* (kuhm-PYLE) means “to gather and put together in an orderly form.” You might compile all the research for a social studies project into a binder. A friend might compile photos of the two of you into a slideshow. A compilation is a group of similar things that have been gathered together into a collection. You might listen to a compilation of hit songs from the 1990s on a Spotify playlist. A book might contain a compilation of poems about nature.

3. **deict** (dih-PIKT) *verb*; To depict something is to show what it is like—to represent it in some way. A science fiction novel might depict life in the year 2518. Many people feel that Harry Potter movies depict Hogwarts exactly as they imagined it while reading the books. Someone who paints a portrait of a queen might depict her as strong and confident.

4. **extraterrestrial** (ek-strah-tuh-RES-tree-uhl) *adjective or noun*; The adjective *terrestrial* means “relating to Earth.” The prefix *extra-* means “outside” or “beyond.” Something that is extraterrestrial is from outside Earth or its atmosphere. When scientists search for life in the universe, they are looking for extraterrestrial life.

   When used as a noun, **extraterrestrial** refers to a being from a world other than Earth—in other words, an alien. Pao from *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* is an extraterrestrial.

5. **invaluable** (in-VAL-yuh-buhl) *adjective*; Valuable means “having a lot of value, worth, or importance.” Something that costs a lot of money, like a gold ring, is valuable. But things can be valuable for other reasons too. A letter from your grandfather might be very valuable to you.

   The prefix *in-* means “no.” But **invaluable** does **not** mean “having no value.” In fact, something that is invaluable is so valuable—so useful, helpful, or important—that its worth cannot be measured. For example, if a library contains a collection of very old books that can’t be found anywhere else in the world, you might say the collection is invaluable.
6. pore (pohr) verb or noun; As it used in the article, the verb pore means “to read or study something very carefully.” When used this way, pore is usually used with over, as in, “To prepare for the final exam, I pored over my notes.”

As a noun, pore means “a tiny hole that lets liquid or gas through.” Sweat comes out of your body through the pores on the surface of your skin.

Directions: Below or on the back of this page, list any other words from the article whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.
Vocabulary Practice
“The Day We Sent a Message to Aliens”

Directions: Below are titles and summaries for imaginary books. Choose the best title for each book. Briefly explain your choices. (There’s one title you will not use.)

BOOK TITLES

A. How to Tickle a Pig and Other Invaluable Lessons
B. How Would Your Dog Depict You?
C. Living Aimlessly, With Dog
D. The Extraterrestrials in My Backpack
E. Poring Over the Past

1. You’ll love this delightful collection of “interviews,” in which dogs describe their people. Includes a questionnaire to do with your dog!

Title (A-E): _____ Why I chose this title: ______
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

2. Allie is not excited about spending a year in Ohio on her grandparents’ farm. But what she will learn in that year will be more precious to her than all the riches in the world.

Title (A-E): _____ Why I chose this title: ______
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

3. Jason’s parents get the shock of their lives when he brings home a family of tiny creatures who claim to be from the planet “Eos.”

Title (A-E): _____ Why I chose this title: ______
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

4. People are always telling Paul that he needs to find “direction” and in life. He needs a “purpose,” they say. Honestly though? Paul is quite happy living without a plan, ready to discover whatever the universe has in store for him and his dog.

Title (A-E): _____ Why I chose this title: ______
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

Directions: Underline the boldfaced word that best completes each sentence.

5. Jo’s help was invaluable/extraterrestrial—we couldn’t have finished the project without her.

6. At Sam’s graduation party, his parents played a compilation/pore of funny home videos.

7. The pirate pored/depicted over the treasure map, studying it carefully for hours.

8. Scientists learned that the strange rocks were extraterrestrial/invaluable—bits of a small meteorite that landed on Earth last year.