

Character and Skills for Home and Careers



Lesson 1

Automotive

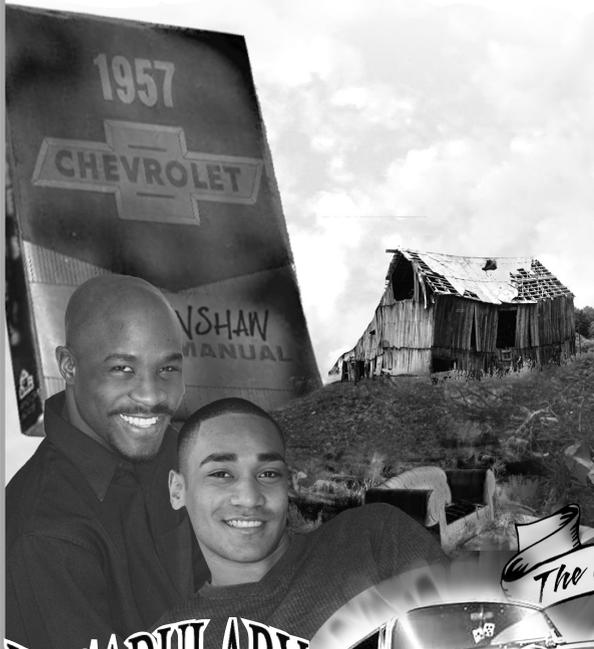
Chapter 1

Section 1

Lessons 1-5



THE DISCOVERY



VOCABULARY

Dilapidated: in a state of disrepair

Grille: Decorative metal between bumper and headlights

Radiator: cooling device for water-cooled engines

Battery: storage device for electrical power, usually 6 or 12 volts

Fan belt: drives water pump and other car accessories

Headlight ring: chrome ring around headlight to cover headlight adjustments

Hubcap: device which attaches to wheel rim and covers lug nuts



The day was a bright, sunny Saturday in June, just a week after school had been let out for the summer. James had awakened early and gone outside where he mindlessly tossed a basketball at the goal in his backyard. In a few minutes, his dad came out of the house and inquired, “What are your plans this morning, James?”

“Oh, not much, Dad. To tell you the truth, I am kind of bored: I just came out here looking for something to do.”

“Out of school only a week, and you already don’t know what to do with yourself?” Dad grinned and added, “Well, maybe I have a solution to your problem. Put away the ball, grab your cap and let’s go for a ride.”

James could not imagine what his dad had in mind. Whatever it was, he knew that it was better than sitting around the house watching television or playing video games. After snatching his cap, James bolted through the door to join his dad in the front seat of the family pickup truck.

Dad was grinning as he turned left out of the driveway, made a right turn and drove southward out of town. He glanced at James as he spoke, “On my way home from work the other day, I saw something that reminded me of when I was a teenager just like you. I thought that you might like to see it, too.”

As they passed the old, abandoned Booker T. Washington High School near the edge of town, Dad commented, “That is where your grandpa and I attended school. There’s a great difference between that old school and the new school you attend!”

After traveling a bit farther, Dad turned into the driveway of an old house that was surrounded by junk of every type imaginable. In the back of the property sagged a *dilapidated* shed.

“Here we are!” Dad exclaimed in an excited voice.

“What do you mean? All I see is an old house and a yard full of junk!” quipped James.

“Just wait!” replied Dad. “See that old shed out back?”

“Well, yes, I see it, but what’s so great about that?” asked James.

Dad exclaimed, “It’s not what is so great about that shed. It’s what is *inside* that is great! I can hardly wait for you to see it. I couldn’t believe my eyes when I first saw it! Last week I came out here to Mr. Crenshaw’s place to install a new sink in his kitchen. We went out to the shed because that’s where the new sink was stored and that’s when I saw it—wow! It took me right back to when I was your age!”

“Okay! Let’s see what you’re talking about!” James said, a sense of excitement and mystique coming over him.

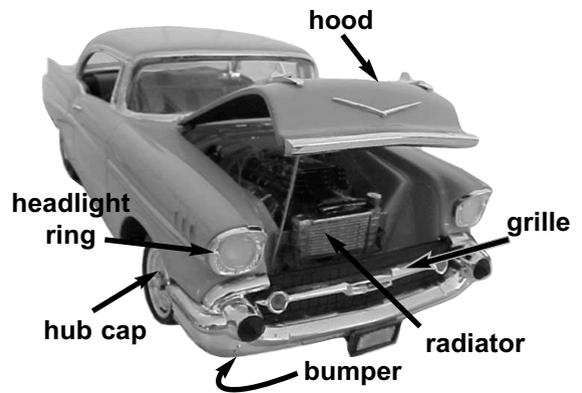
They jumped out of the truck, closed the doors and walked briskly toward the shed. James opened the door and waited for his eyes to adjust to the darkness. As his eyes began to focus, James spied a canvas spread over a large object in the far corner. He hurried over to it and peered under the canvas.

“Wow!” was all he could say. “May I?” he glanced up at Dad for permission to remove the canvas.

“Go ahead, son,” said Dad, a twinkle in his eye and a big grin across his face.

James jerked back the canvas and let it fall to the floor. There in that old, dusty shed was THE CAR—the one he had dreamed of owning—a 1957 Chevy Belair two-door hardtop! James found the hood release located under the center of the *grille* and raised the hood to reveal the original engine. It was still intact although the *radiator* was missing along with the *battery* and *fan belt*. Several exterior parts were also missing—a *headlight ring* and *hubcaps*.

“I know it’s not much to look at right now, but it has potential!” said Dad, “All this car needs is a little tender loving care. Well, maybe a little tender loving care and a lot of hard work!”

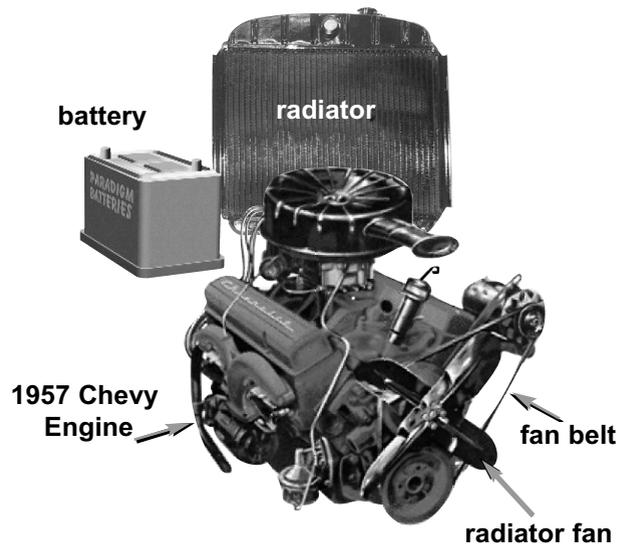


“Yes sir,” exclaimed James, “but just think of all the time I have on my hands this summer. I told you this morning how bored I already am. I would love to have a chance to get this car back on the road again and make that faded yellow paint and chrome sparkle! There is only one problem . . .”

“What is that, Son?” asked Dad.

“I know a little bit about cars, but I would definitely need some help, provided Mr. Crenshaw would agree to sell us the car. Do you think this project would be too difficult for me, Dad?”

“Not with my help; after all, that is what dads are for. You couldn’t pay me to keep my hands off that ‘57 Chevy!”



LIFE PRINCIPLE

“Be always ashamed to catch thyself idle.”

—Benjamin Franklin