Advanced Vocabulary
for Gifted Secondary Students

A sample chapter, Chapter One
of thirty chapters in
The Word Within the Word, Volume One

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ante</td>
<td>(before)</td>
<td>antedate, antecedent, ante-bellum, anterior, ante meridiem, antepenult</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti</td>
<td>(against)</td>
<td>anti-aircraft, antibody, antici-max, antici-line, antitoxin, antithesis</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi</td>
<td>(two)</td>
<td>bilateral, bicycle, binary, bimonthly, biped, bipolar, binocular, bicuspid</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circum</td>
<td>(around)</td>
<td>circumnavigate, circumspect, circumvent, circumlocation, circus</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com</td>
<td>(together)</td>
<td>combination, comfort, commensurate, common, complete, combo</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>con</td>
<td>(together)</td>
<td>contract, confidence, confine, confederate, conjunction, contact</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>(down)</td>
<td>deposit, descent, despicable, denounce, deduct, demolish, decrepit</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dis</td>
<td>(away)</td>
<td>distract, distort, dispute, dissonant, disperse, dismiss, dissuade, disprove</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equi</td>
<td>(equal)</td>
<td>equitable, equilateral, equivocate, equinox, equation, equilibrium</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extra</td>
<td>(beyond)</td>
<td>extraterrestrial, extraordinary, extravagant, extrovert, extramural</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter</td>
<td>(between)</td>
<td>international, interdepartmental, interstellar, interject, interlude</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intra</td>
<td>(within)</td>
<td>intracellular, intravenous, intracranial, intrastate, intrauterine</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intro</td>
<td>(into)</td>
<td>introduce, introspective, introvert, introject, intorse, intromission</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mal</td>
<td>(bad)</td>
<td>malevolent, malcontent, malicious, malign, malady, malapropism</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mis</td>
<td>(bad)</td>
<td>misfit, mistake, misfortune, misfire, misdeed, misguided</td>
<td>Germanic</td>
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<td>non</td>
<td>(not)</td>
<td>nonstop, nonprofit, nonconformity, nonplussed, nonchalant</td>
<td>Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>post</td>
<td>(after)</td>
<td>postgraduate, posthumous, postscript, posterity, posterior, postlude</td>
<td>Latin</td>
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<td>pre</td>
<td>(before)</td>
<td>prelude, preposition, premonition, premature, predict, predecessor</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semi</td>
<td>(half)</td>
<td>semitone, semiaquatic, semicircle, semiweekly, semiannual, semiformal</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub</td>
<td>(under)</td>
<td>subterranean, subtract, subordinate, submarine, subterfuge, substantial</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>super</td>
<td>(over)</td>
<td>supervise, superb, superior, superfluous, supercilious, supernatural</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syn</td>
<td>(together)</td>
<td>synthetic, synchronize, syndrome, synonym, synopsis, syntax</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sym</td>
<td>(together)</td>
<td>sympathy, symbiosis, symbol, symmetry, symphony, symposium</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tri</td>
<td>(three)</td>
<td>tricycle, triangle, triceps, triad, trichotomy, triceratops, trivia, triadule</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un</td>
<td>(not)</td>
<td>unfit, unequal, undone, unequivocal, unearned, unconventional</td>
<td>Old English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Latin stem *de*, which we define as meaning *down*, actually can have a wide variety of meanings, and is a relative of the stem *dis*. Though *de* often means down, it can mean *away, off, from, entirely, or even undo*. Here are some of the interesting words that contain *de* in its various shades of meaning:

- **debacle**: an overwhelming defeat. Alexander’s attack was a debacle for Darius.
- **debark**: to get off of a ship or airplane. They debarked immediately.
- **debauch**: to lead astray morally. Dorian’s life was increasingly debauched.
- **debris**: rubble or fragments. The barbarians lived in the debris of Rome.
- **decamp**: to depart suddenly or secretly. In the night, the enemy had decamped.
- **declivity**: a downward slope. The horses stumbled down the declivity.
- **defalcate**: to embezzle funds. He had defalcated the funds and vanished.
- **defeasible**: that can be undone or voided. The provision proved to be defeasible.
- **defoliate**: to strip of leaves. The chemical defoliated most of the jungle.
- **deliquesce**: to melt down. In the movie, the villain’s face deliquesced in the blast.
- **demure**: modest or affectedly modest. Her demure pretensions fooled no one.
- **denizen**: an inhabitant. The denizens of the forest could be heard in the night.
- **depravity**: wickedness. The depravity of the criminal was beyond belief.
- **depredation**: plundering. Ghengis Kahn’s depredations terrified the villages.
- **deracinate**: to pull up by the roots. He weeded with deracinating frenzy.
- **deride**: to ridicule. He mercilessly derided the new student.
- **derogue**: to detract. Why derogate another’s reputation?
- **desecrate**: to profane what is sacred. VANDALS had desecrated the shrine.
- **desiccate**: to dry completely. The desiccated apples fell out of the package.
- **desideratum**: something considered essential. Our primary desideratum was cost.
- **desperado**: an outlaw. The cove was a haven for desperadoes and escapees.
1. The Civil War **antedates** the Korean War by decades.
2. The **antiaircraft** fire shot down the enemy planes.
3. The two nations have a **bilateral** agreement.
4. The **circumspect** spy is difficult to catch.
5. The two together are an interesting **combination**.
6. He was **confined** to the asteroid’s detention center.
7. The lunar lander **descended** through the atmosphere.
8. His attention was easily **distracted**.
9. She made an **equilateral** triangle with three straws.
10. It was an **extraordinary** achievement.
11. They were lost in **interstellar** space.
12. He received an **intravenous** solution through a tube in his arm.
13. The boy was a lonely **introvert** who kept to himself.
14. He looked fearfully at the glowing, **malevolent** demon.
15. He had the **misfortune** to forget his wallet.
16. The foundation is a **nonprofit** organization.
17. She added a **postscript** at the bottom of the letter.
18. Before Romeo left, Juliet had a frightening **premonition**.
19. The circle was divided into two equal **semicircles**.
20. The lieutenant gave a sharp order to her **subordinate**.
21. The talkative fool made several **superfluous** comments.
22. Please **synchronize** your watches at this time.
23. The **symbiotic** species could not survive without each other.
24. Rome was sometimes ruled by a **triumvirate**.
25. **Unearned** income must be reported to the Internal Revenue Service.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Correct Spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>introvert</td>
<td>intro vert</td>
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<tr>
<td>supervise</td>
<td>super vise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circumvent</td>
<td>circum vent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synchronize</td>
<td>syn chron ize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>symphony</td>
<td>sym phon y</td>
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<tr>
<td>postscript</td>
<td>post script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circumspect</td>
<td>circum spect</td>
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<tr>
<td>unequivocal</td>
<td>un equi voc al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sympathy</td>
<td>sym path y</td>
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<tr>
<td>intracellular</td>
<td>intra cell ul ar</td>
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<tr>
<td>submarine</td>
<td>sub mar ine</td>
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<tr>
<td>nonconformity</td>
<td>non con form ity</td>
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<tr>
<td>introspective</td>
<td>intro spect ive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equilateral</td>
<td>equi lat eral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semiaquatic</td>
<td>semi aqua tic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>symbiosis</td>
<td>sym bio sis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dissonant</td>
<td>dis son ant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interstellar</td>
<td>inter stell ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posthumous</td>
<td>post hum ous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superfluous</td>
<td>super flu ous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intravenous</td>
<td>intra ven ous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introject</td>
<td>intro ject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equinox</td>
<td>equi nox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtract</td>
<td>sub tract</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Word Within the Word • Mystery Questions #1

1. Does a father’s birthday antedate his son’s?
2. Does an anticlimax enhance a play’s conclusion?
3. Can the president make a bilateral decision by himself?
4. Does a drill sergeant encourage troops to circumvent rules?
5. Is a distortion a faithful account of what happened?
6. Is your subordinate your boss?
7. Is a superfluous comment unnecessary?
8. Can a book record your thoughts for posterity?
9. Do you mistrust a person who equivocates?
10. Are symbiotic creatures mortal enemies?

ANSWERS

1. Yes, it dates before (ante) the son’s.
2. No, it works against (anti) the conclusion’s drama.
3. No, a bilateral decision must be two (bi) sided (lat).
4. No, he doesn’t want them going around (circum) the rules.
5. No, in a distortion the story is twisted (tort) away (dis).
6. No, the subordinate belongs to a lower (sub) order (ord).
7. Yes, it is an over (super) flow (flu).
8. Yes, posterity is the population that comes after (post) you.
9. Yes, we mistrust one who gives equal (equi) voice (voc) to both sides of an issue.
10. No, symbiotic creatures spend their lives (bio) together (sym).
SYNTHESIS:
1. Invent three words that each combine two or more of the stems on List #1. Write definitions for these words.
2. Write a paragraph about an intracranial operation, and use at least ten example words from List #1 in your paragraph.

DIVERGENCE:
1. List as many words as you can think of that contain the stem pre. Keep listing until you find unexpected, creative examples.
2. How many things can you think of that need to be synchronized?

ANALYSIS:
1. What is the difference between interstate highways and intrastate highways? Explain by examining parts of the words.
2. If nav means ship, explain the origin of the word circumnavigate.

EVALUATION:
1. Are politicians morally obligated to speak unequivocally, or do they have a practical right to be equivocal in order to be elected?
2. It is wrong to be an introvert, or is it just a matter of style? Is it better to be sociable? Should you force yourself to socialize if you feel like being alone?

INTUITION:
1. What images flash in your mind when you hear the following words: preschool, misfortune, symbol, deposit, interstellar, and descent?
2. If you could do something truly extraordinary, what would it be?
1. **antebellum** : **belligerency** ::
   - anti-aircraft : aircraft
   - non-stop : continuous
   - cause : effect
   - morning : afternoon

2. **interstellar** : **stellar** ::
   - submarine : marine
   - interstate : intrastate
   - mortar : bricks
   - intracellular : cell

3. **superfluous** : **inadequate** ::
   - excess : insufficiency
   - malevolence : benevolence
   - superior : mediocre
   - euphony : cacophony

4. **supercilious** : **idolizing** ::
   - depression : euphoria
   - condescension : admiration
   - synthesis : antithesis
   - zenith : nadir

5. **circumvent** : **comply** ::
   - noncooperation : complaisance
   - superior : subordinate
   - preposition : position
   - circumnavigate : navigate

6. **ancestry** : **posterity** ::
   - eohippus : horse
   - intracranial : cranial
   - anteroom : gazebo
   - syncline : anticline

7. **antecedent** : **precedent** ::
   - grammar : law
   - circumlocution : equivocation
   - malaprop : malevolence
   - inspection : introspection

8. **prenatal** : **posthumous** ::
   - bilateral : unilateral
   - pathogen : syndrome
   - intravenous : vein
   - subterfuge : evasion

9. **biped** : **bicycle** ::
   - quadruped : automobile
   - rectangle : tetragon
   - binary : unitary
   - biceps : triceps

10. **circumspect** : **reckless** ::
    - circumlocution : equivocation
    - conjunction : disjunction
    - supercilious : despicable
    - homophone : homonym
1. antebellum : belligerency :: morning : afternoon
   Temporal relationship, A precedes B. The antebellum period precedes the period of belligerency as the morning precedes the afternoon.

2. interstellar : stellar :: mortar : bricks
   Spatial relationship, A between B. The interstellar region is located between the stars as mortar is located between the bricks.

3. superfluous : inadequate :: excess : insufficiency
   Quantity. Too much vs. too little. A and B are opposites, and left and right are synonyms. Superfluous means excess, as inadequate means insufficient.

4. supercilious : idolizing :: condescension : admiration
   A and B are opposites of attitude. Looking down vs. looking up to. Also, the right terms are synonyms of the left terms.

5. circumvent : comply :: noncooperation : complaisance
   To circumvent is to avoid cooperation, to be complaisant is to wish to comply. A and B are opposites, and left and right are near-synonyms.

6. ancestry : posterity :: eohippus : horse
   Temporal relationship, A before B. The eohippus is an ancestor of the horse.

7. antecedent : precedent :: grammar : law
   Both mean go before, but antecedent refers to grammar and precedent to law. The left terms are specific examples of words used in the larger categories at right.

8. prenatal : posthumous :: pathogen : syndrome
   Temporal relationship, A before B. The prenatal period precedes the posthumous period as the pathogen precedes the syndrome.

9. biped : bicycle :: quadruped : automobile
   Two feet/two wheels, four feet/four wheels. The relationship is two-fold: numerical identity and foot vs. wheel.

10. circumspect : reckless :: conjunction : disjunction
    Opposites. Circumspect is the opposite of reckless as conjunction is the opposite of disjunction.
1. The interior of a word often contains a striking image that only a person who knows the meaning of the stems will enjoy. In the case of *circumspect*, which means cautious, we see the cautious person looking (spect) around (circum) for signs of danger.

2. Many other *spect* words contain memorable images. The *introspective* person is not merely thoughtful, but is looking inside himself. And we *respect* a person when something that person does causes us to look at him again in a new way.

3. Some words offer moments of humor. The person who *equivocates* is deliberately ambiguous, but we see in the word an image of someone having problems with his mouth as he attempts to give equal (equi) voice (voc) to both sides of an issue!

4. Depending upon how it is used, *introvert* contains an unsettling, sad image. The intro (into) vert (turn) is turned into himself—his back to the beautiful, unnoticed world.

5. Even familiar words take on new light at times. Why is a *preposition* called a preposition? Because of its position—it always (almost) comes at the beginning of a prepositional phrase. It occupies the PRE position.

6. The word *posthumous*, as in posthumous award, contains a portrait of tragedy. A posthumous award is only granted after (post) its recipient has been buried in the ground (humus).

7. The foolishness of a too-talkative person’s excessive questions and comments is wittily described by the word *superfluous*. The talker has provided all of the comments that can be contained, and now the comments begin to over (super) flow (flu).

8. Can a word help to sharpen one’s senses? The beauty of a symphony arises largely from just what the word *symphony* emphasizes; the musicians play their instruments in unison so that the sounds (phon) rise together (sym).

9. **Spanish Cognates**: One of the most important observations to gain from the study of the etymology of English vocabulary is that English and Spanish share thousands of words that are cognates, related words, that have common origins. Often, the English and the Spanish word share not only a stem, but even more than one stem, and often in the same order. As examples, here are some English words from this lesson, and their Spanish cognates:

   - **semiannual : semianual**
   - **introduce : introducir**
   - **posterity : posteridad**
   - **superior : superior**
   - **superfluous : superfluo**
   - **malicious : malicioso**
In each case below, one of the choices was really the word used by the author in the sentence provided. All of the choices can be found in the example words on the first page of this lesson. Your challenge is to decide which word the author used. This is not a test; it is more like a game, because more than one word choice may work perfectly well. See if you can use your sensitivity and intuition to guess correctly which word the author used. You may need a dictionary.

1. **From F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby**
   
The ________ assumption was that on Sunday afternoon I had nothing better to do.
   
   a. commensurate  
   b. supercilious  
   c. introverted  
   d. symbiotic

2. **From Herman Melville’s Moby Dick**
   
   He was ________, evincing a confusion.
   
   a. equivocal  
   b. circumspect  
   c. equitable  
   d. nonplussed

3. **From James Joyce’s A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man**
   
   His life had grown to be a tissue of ________ and falsehood.
   
   a. subterfuge  
   b. antithesis  
   c. nonchalance  
   d. introversion

4. **From Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird**
   
   Inside the house lived a _________ phantom.
   
   a. subordinate  
   b. superfluous  
   c. malevolent  
   d. dissonant
### Questions just for fun:

- Is an **intradepartmental** memo shared with members of other departments?
- Was the **antebellum** period just after the Civil War?
- Is the sun a **binary** star?
- Would someone enjoy receiving a **posthumous** award?
- Is a **superfluous** comment welcome?
- Is **interstellar** space the space within a star?
- Does an **equilateral** triangle have sides of equal length?
- Is an **introvert** a sociable person?
- Are **dissonant** sounds beautiful?
- Do **symbiotic** species live solitary lives?
- Does a **malevolent** being have good will towards all?
The Word Within the Word • Answer Key #1

MALady  bad  EXTRAtrestrial  beyond
INTRAcellular  within  INTROduction  into
Biinary  two  EQUilateral  equal
SEMIcircle  half  TRIceps  three
DISmiss  away  CONtact  together
ANTEcedent  before  ANTItthesis  against
NONstop  not  SYNtax  together
SUBmarine  under  INTERnational  between
UNdone  not  MIStake  bad
SUPERior  over  COMmon  together
POSTerity  after  SYMpathy  together
DEscend  down  PREschool  before
CIRCUMnavigate  around

Questions just for fun:

Is an intradepartmental memo shared with members of other departments? No
Was the antebellum period just after the Civil War? No
Is the sun a binary star? No
Would someone enjoy receiving a posthumous award? No
Is a superfluous comment welcome? No
Is an interstellar space the space within a star? No
Does an equilateral triangle have sides of equal length? Yes
Is an introvert a sociable person? No
Are dissonant sounds beautiful? No
Do symbiotic species live solitary lives? No
Does a malevolent being have good will towards all? No