

Royal Fireworks Language Arts by Michael Clay Thompson

THE WORD WITHIN THE WORD I

Fourth Edition

Michael Clay Thompson

With historical perspective by Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

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Introduction

The Word Within the Word is designed to establish a deeply interdisciplinary foundation for advanced modern English. It seeks to make students stronger in every subject. When I wrote *The Word Within the Word*—a colossal task—I had one goal: I wanted to create a foundation for modern academic English that would put students at the top of all of their classes. I wanted to enable students to read *anything*.

As I wrote each lesson of the book, I searched methodically for Greek or Latin stems in every department, with the dream of making serious, talented students better in everything. I wanted the book to be brainy, to prepare scholarly students for the highest end of intellectual life. I believed—and I was right—that advanced students want and deserve an ultra-rigorous, challenging word study.

In preparation for the book, I piled a table high with advanced textbooks from mathematics, science, history, literature, and every other subject. I borrowed texts from all of my colleagues. I poured through the vocabulary of the different courses and amassed a foundation of diverse vocabulary that flowed into every chapter.

The interdisciplinary core of this book is what I want for you. Its breadth is its strength. This program will, without doubt, empower you in every subject. You will know things that other students do not even suspect. The science stems alone are a treasure that will propel you into a higher level of intellectual awareness.

The vocabulary is supplemented with Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz's perspective on the historical origins of academic English. Though this information is background to the vocabulary, it is fun, and brainy, and wonderful to contemplate. Few schools require students to study Greek or Roman history, so this is a unique opportunity to absorb the distant genesis of modern English from someone with profound historical knowledge. Dr. Kemnitz not only knows what happened; he knows what it means. There are no quizzes or exercises on the historical portion of the book, but you will have great fun absorbing the knowledge.

Many school systems have used *The Word Within the Word* to help honors or gifted students prepare for national or state tests, such as the SAT, and I am happy about that, but test preparation is not my goal; it is to prepare top students for extreme success in every academic discipline. For you, I want an intellectual life. I want to give you an open gate to the life of the mind. To master a program this strong, you will have to study like mad. Good.

Michael Clay Thompson

A NOTE ABOUT THE GREEK HISTORICAL MATERIAL

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

The Word Within the Word is the premier text for understanding English language vocabulary; the vocabulary sections have proven valuable to several million students. However, included in the text is the discussion of Greece in the Classical Age. In this and the subsequent two volumes, we want to give you more insight into Greece and Rome, the two ancient cultures from which much academic English is derived. This is not material that will be on the test, or at least it should not be. Its function in this volume is to give you some idea of the Greek world, of the chronological, geographical, and other relationships of the actors to one another. History should not be a story to be memorized but rather an exploration of relationships, of how people in specific contexts acted and reacted, solved problems, and endeavored to live in ways that they found satisfactory. I chose the subjects of the short essays in this volume to give you a sense of what occurred during the fewer than 200 years that proved so important for the history of the world and to us today.

As you read these essays, it is important to realize and remember that the fundamental structure of ancient Greece was competition. The Greeks were competitive about everything; it was how they approached one another and the world around them. It was individual against individual, family vying with family, city against city, league against league, and finally all of Greece against the Persian empire. The Greeks were the originators of the Olympic games, but the Olympic games were only one of several Panhellenic games that involved athletes, musicians, charioteers, sailors, and other contestants from all of Greece. The Greeks did not simply have concerts, they had competitions between singers and between musicians; they did not simply go to plays, they had competitions between playwrights. If this does not seem strange to you, it is because much of our world is organized on the same premise. We have competitions and give prizes on a level that rises to the ancient Greek standard and perhaps even surpasses it. And after a lapse of 1,600 years, we revived the Olympic games and play them every four years, just as the ancient Greeks did.

With competition, the Greeks developed a concept of individualism and freedom and a portrayal of individuals striving and fighting for their own liberty and for the freedom of their homeland from enslavement. They had fewer protections of their individual rights than we do, but individuals had far more protections in Athens than they did in Egypt or Persia or elsewhere in the ancient world. Their freedoms might have been circumscribed, but they were no less precious to them.

The Greeks gave us many of the underpinnings of our life. Besides organized competitive games, they developed democracy, the importance of the individual and the will of the people, philosophy, the theater, comedy and tragedy, mathematics, medicine, rhetoric, history, the epic poem, and the fable. The most glorious manifestation of Greek culture and achievement might be Athens in the fifth century, although others would argue it was the fourteen years of Alexander's leadership of the Macedonians, and still others have pointed to Sparta. It was an exciting and vibrant period in the history of the world, and in these short essays I have tried to open up some aspects of it to you.

As interesting and important as the history of classical Greece may be, it is well to remember that the purpose of this book is to help you learn English vocabulary, specifically the academic English of learned discourse. The essays and photographs about the Greek world are not an end in themselves but an aid to your comprehension of academic English.



The Word Within the Word • List #1

ante	<i>(before)</i>	antedate, antecedent, antebellum, anterior, ante meridiem, antepenult	<i>Latin</i>
anti	<i>(against)</i>	antiaircraft, antibody, anticlimax, anticline, antitoxin, antithesis	<i>Greek</i>
bi	<i>(two)</i>	bilateral, bicycle, binary, bimonthly, biped, bipolar, binocular, bicuspid	<i>Latin</i>
circum	<i>(around)</i>	circumnavigate, circumspect, circumvent, circumlocution, circus	<i>Latin</i>
com	<i>(together)</i>	combination, comfort, commensurate, common, complete, combo	<i>Latin</i>
con	<i>(together)</i>	contract, confidence, confine, confederate, conjunction, contact	<i>Latin</i>
de	<i>(down)</i>	deposit, descent, despicable, denounce, deduct, demolish, decrepit, deplete	<i>Latin</i>
dis	<i>(away)</i>	distract, distort, dispute, dissonant, disperse, dismiss, dissuade, disprove	<i>Latin</i>
equi	<i>(equal)</i>	equitable, equilateral, equivocate, equinox, equation, equilibrium	<i>Latin</i>
extra	<i>(beyond)</i>	extraterrestrial, extraordinary, extravagant, extrovert, extramural	<i>Latin</i>
inter	<i>(between)</i>	international, interdepartmental, interstellar, interject, interlude	<i>Latin</i>
intra	<i>(within)</i>	intracellular, intravenous, intracranial, intrastate, intrauterine	<i>Latin</i>
intro	<i>(into)</i>	introduce, introspective, introvert, introject, introrse, introgression	<i>Latin</i>
mal	<i>(bad)</i>	malevolent, malcontent, malicious, malign, malady, malapropism, malonym	<i>Latin</i>
mis	<i>(bad)</i>	misfit, mistake, misfortune, misfire, misdeed, misguided	<i>Germanic</i>
non	<i>(not)</i>	nonstop, nonprofit, nonconformity, nonplussed, nonchalant	<i>Latin</i>
post	<i>(after)</i>	postgraduate, posthumous, postscript, posterity, posterior, postlude	<i>Latin</i>
pre	<i>(before)</i>	prelude, preposition, premonition, premature, predict, predecessor	<i>Latin</i>
semi	<i>(half)</i>	semitone, semiaquatic, semicircle, semiweekly, semiannual, semiformal	<i>Latin</i>
sub	<i>(under)</i>	subterranean, subtract, subordinate, submarine, subterfuge, substantial	<i>Latin</i>
super	<i>(over)</i>	supervise, superb, superior, superfluous, supercilious, supernatural	<i>Latin</i>
sym	<i>(together)</i>	sympathy, symbiosis, symbol, symmetry, symphony, symposium	<i>Greek</i>
syn	<i>(together)</i>	synthetic, synchronize, syndrome, synonym, synopsis, syntax	<i>Greek</i>
tri	<i>(three)</i>	tricycle, triangle, triceps, triad, trichotomy, triceratops, trivia, triologue	<i>Greek</i>
un	<i>(not)</i>	unfit, unequal, undone, unequivocal, unearned, unconventional, untenable	<i>Old English</i>

de

down • away • from

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:	able to 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.
derogate:	to detract. Why derogate another's reputation?
deseccrate:	to profane what is sacred. Vandals had deseccrated 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.

The Word Within the Word • Sentences #1

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. The **symbiotic** species could not survive without each other.
23. Please **synchronize** your watches at this time.
24. Rome was sometimes ruled by a **triumvirate**.
25. **Unearned** income must be reported to the Internal Revenue Service.

The Word Within the Word • Ideas #1

synthesis

1. Invent three words that each combine two or more of the stems in 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. Is it 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?

The Word Within the Word • Analogies #1

1. **ANTEBELLUM : BELLIGERENCY ::**
 - a. antiaircraft : aircraft
 - b. nonstop : continuous
 - c. cause : effect
 - d. morning : afternoon
2. **INTERSTELLAR : STELLAR ::**
 - a. submarine : marine
 - b. interstate : intrastate
 - c. mortar : bricks
 - d. intracellular : cell
3. **SUPERFLUOUS : INADEQUATE ::**
 - a. excess : insufficiency
 - b. malevolence : benevolence
 - c. superior : mediocre
 - d. euphony : cacophony
4. **SUPERCILIOUS : IDOLIZING ::**
 - a. depression : euphoria
 - b. condescension : admiration
 - c. synthesis : antithesis
 - d. zenith : nadir
5. **CIRCUMVENT : COMPLY ::**
 - a. noncooperation : complaisance
 - b. superior : subordinate
 - c. preposition : position
 - d. circumnavigate : navigate
6. **ANCESTRY : POSTERITY ::**
 - a. eohippus : horse
 - b. intracranial : cranial
 - c. anteroom : gazebo
 - d. syncline : anticline
7. **ANTECEDENT : PRECEDENT ::**
 - a. grammar : law
 - b. circumlocution : equivocation
 - c. malaprop : malevolence
 - d. inspection : introspection
8. **PRENATAL : POSTHUMOUS ::**
 - a. bilateral : unilateral
 - b. pathogen : syndrome
 - c. intravenous : vein
 - d. subterfuge : evasion
9. **BIPED : BICYCLE ::**
 - a. rectangle : tetragon
 - b. binary : unitary
 - c. biceps : triceps
 - d. quadruped : automobile
10. **CIRCUMSPECT : RECKLESS ::**
 - a. circumlocution : equivocation
 - b. conjunction : disjunction
 - c. supercilious : despicable
 - d. homophone : homonym

The Word Within the Word • Notes #1

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 (*spec*) around (*circum*) for signs of danger.
2. Many other *spec* 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 words 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

The Word Within the Word • Classic Words #1

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

5. **From Eudora Welty's *One Writer's Beginnings***

I found my own _____ way into becoming part of it.

- a. introspective
- b. synthetic
- c. untenable
- d. posthumous

THE LATE BRONZE AGE: POLITIES AND HOMER

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

Greece is mountainous and its land rocky. Its climate is too dry in the summer and its soil not rich enough for the lush crops of the Nile or the Tigris and Euphrates valleys. The inhabitants of Greece were about 2,000 years behind the occupants of those more fertile lands in the development of a literate culture. But with the husbanding of animals, the bounty of the sea, the produce of olive trees and grape arbors, and other assets, the Greeks managed to feed themselves and find the resources for trade throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

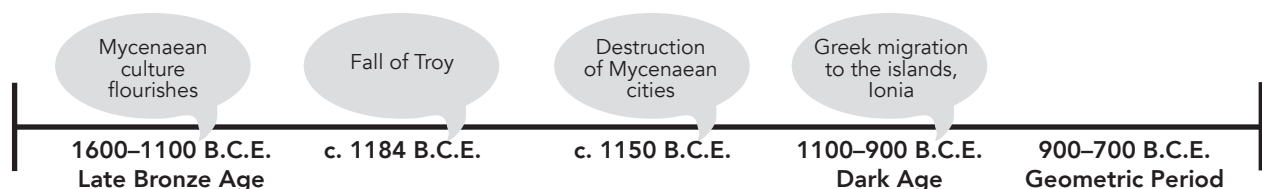
In the second millennium B.C.E., the inhabitants of Greece organized themselves into polities—city states—of some sophistication. This is known as the Mycenaean culture, after the location in Greece of the most complete ruin. They developed an alphabet and a system of writing, known as Linear B. Besides some buildings, most of what survived has been found in graves of royal personages, including many elaborately worked items of gold jewelry and death masks.

Though their cities were widely scattered through the Greek peninsula, the surrounding islands, and the shores of what is now Turkey, the Greeks developed a shared identity and a common culture. Toward the beginning of the twelfth century B.C.E., they made common cause in a war against the city of Troy and its allies. If we can believe the oral tradition that Homer and other sources recorded, the conflict involved the entire northeastern Mediterranean and lasted for a decade before it ended with the destruction of Troy.

Homer's story of the Trojan War, the *Iliad*, and of the return home from the war of Odysseus and his men, the *Odyssey*, are two of the greatest pieces of literature ever composed. The ancients themselves recognized the enormity of the achievement, and busts of Homer were common in the ancient world. All we know about Homer the man is that he was blind. The busts of him are probably idealized visages sculpted generations after his demise. For the ancient Greeks and Romans, Homer's works were great classics, a status they retain today. Scenes from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were often used to decorate walls and vases in ancient Greece and Rome. The martial prowess of Achilles, the cunning of Odysseus, the wisdom of Nestor, the prescience of Cassandra, and many of the other traits of the principal characters and the salient incidents of the war and voyage home resonated with the ancients and were part of the shared culture of Greece and Rome. Alexander the Great liked to portray himself as the successor to Achilles, and throughout his campaigns, he kept with him a copy of the *Iliad* that Aristotle had annotated for him; after the battle of Issus, he used a golden chest taken from the Persians to protect his *Iliad*.

To understand the colossal status of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, imagine a book published today that is translated into every language, taught in every university, and read by every educated person in the year 4915!

For centuries after the Mycenaean culture was destroyed, Greece seemed to go through a dark age, until the ninth century when once again polities and culture began to flourish.





The typical Greek terrain with its mountains and narrow valleys is evident in this view of the amphitheater at Delphi. Delphi was thought by the Greeks to be the center of the Earth. It was here to the oracle in the sacred temple of Apollo that Greek people came—often journeying hundreds of miles—for advice and answers to pressing questions. It was the oracle who pronounced Socrates the wisest man in the world, who foretold that the Spartans would have a king killed in combat or their city would be destroyed, and who said that Athens would be destroyed and the Athenians should seek protection behind a wooden wall (which Themistocles interpreted as the navy). Alexander the Great visited the oracle before setting off to conquer Persia.



This marble *omphalos* (navel) is an ancient copy of the original used to mark the center of the Earth at Delphi: literally the navel of the world. It was erected at the purported meeting point of two eagles released by Zeus from opposite ends of the world. The original omphalos was wrapped in a woolen net; on this copy the net is represented in stone.



Homer



Achilles and Ajax are depicted playing a board game on a vase made in Athens about 520 B.C.E. The Trojan War was a common theme of Greek art and was used to emphasize a common Hellenic identity far more important than the rivalries and battles and wars that separated one polity from another. The Hellenic identity became even more important in the face of the threat of Persian invasion because it emphasized Greek unity against an enemy from the other side of the Hellespont. Note the pointed beards on the faces of the players on the Athenian vase; Achilles and Ajax are depicted in the fashion of fifth- and sixth-century Athenians. This vase was made at a time when Athenian potters and ceramic painters were eclipsing most of their rivals in the quality and sophistication of their output. Athenian potters used both the black-figure style shown here and in about 530 B.C.E. developed the red-figure style seen below.



This Athenian vase of about 520 B.C.E. shows the same scene of Achilles and Ajax playing a board game and was found in Italy. It reflects the spread of Greek culture through the Mediterranean in the middle of the first millennium B.C.E. The red-figure style was easier to work and was associated with a more natural representation, characterized here by the warriors having shed their helmets and armor, which are shown behind them.

LATE BRONZE AGE	1600–1100 B.C.E.....Mycenaean culture flourishes
	c. 1184.....Fall of Troy
DARK AGE	c. 1150.....Destruction of Mycenaean cities
GEOMETRIC PERIOD	1100–900 B.C.E.....Greek migration to the islands, Ionia
	900–700 B.C.E.
	776.....Earliest known Olympic games
ORIENTALIZING PERIOD	700–600 B.C.E.
ARCHAIC PERIOD	600–490 B.C.E.
	508/507Establishment of democracy in Athens
CLASSICAL PERIOD	490–323 B.C.E.
	490.....Battle of Marathon
	485.....Sparta receives a prophecy at Delphi
	483.....Silver find at Athenian mines; decision to build the navy
	481.....Greek polities meet to form defensive strategy
	480.....Persian invasions; Battles of Thermopylae, Salamis
	479.....Greek victories at Plataea, Mycale
	478/477.....Delian League formed
	472/471.....Themistocles ostracized
	469 or 466.....Battle of Eurymedon
	464.....Earthquake at Sparta; Helot revolt begins
	461.....Cimon ostracized
	454.....Delian treasury moved to Athens
	449.....Peace with Persia negotiated
	447–438.....Parthenon built
	438–432.....Pediment statues erected
	437–432.....Propylaea erected
PELOPONNESIAN WARS	431–404 B.C.E.
	430.....Plague in Athens
	429.....Death of Pericles
	427–424.....Temple of Athena Nike erected
	421.....Peace of Nicias
	421–405.....Erechtheion erected
	415–413.....Expedition to Sicily
	415.....Alcibiades defects
	407.....Alcibiades returns to Athens
	406.....Victory at Arginusae; six admirals executed
	405.....Destruction of Athenian fleet on shore
	404.....Athens surrenders
	399.....Socrates condemned
	371.....Thebes defeats Spartan army
	359.....Philip becomes king of Macedonia
	337.....Philip founds Greek League
	336.....Philip assassinated; Alexander assumes throne
	334.....Alexander crosses Hellespont
	323.....Alexander dies
HELLENISTIC ERA	323–146 B.C.E.
	146.....Rome conquers Greece

The Word Within the Word • List #12

an-	<i>(without)</i>	anemia, anechoic, anaerobic, anorexia, anarchy	<i>Greek</i>
ab	<i>(away)</i>	abnormal, abjure, absent, abrogate, abrupt, abduct, abdicate	<i>Latin</i>
mel	<i>(song)</i>	melody, melodrama, melodeon, melodious, melodia	<i>Latin</i>
aden	<i>(gland)</i>	adenoid, adenine, adenoma, adenovirus	<i>Greek</i>
aer	<i>(air)</i>	aerobic, aerie, aerosol, aerial, aerobes, aerodynamics, malaria	<i>Greek</i>
alb	<i>(white)</i>	albumen, alba, album, albino, albinism, albedo	<i>Latin</i>
ase	<i>(enzyme)</i>	permease, galactosidase, proteinase, luciferase	<i>Greek</i>
epi	<i>(on)</i>	epicenter, epidemic, epigram, epidermis, epigraph, epitaph	<i>Greek</i>
hum	<i>(earth)</i>	humus, exhume, posthumous, humble, humiliate, human	<i>Latin</i>
-be	<i>(life)</i>	microbe, aerobe, anaerobe	<i>Greek</i>
bon	<i>(good)</i>	bonny, bonanza, bon mot, bonus, bon vivant, bonhomie, bona fide	<i>Latin</i>
struct	<i>(build)</i>	construct, destruct, substructure, instruction, structure, infrastructure	<i>Latin</i>
chlor	<i>(green)</i>	chlorophyll, chlorine, chloroplasts, chlorella	<i>Greek</i>
cyan	<i>(blue)</i>	pyrocyanin, cyanide, cyan, cyanophyta, cyanosis, cyanotype	<i>Greek</i>
cyt	<i>(cell)</i>	erythrocyte, leucocyte, cytology, cytoplasm, melanocyte	<i>Greek</i>
diplo	<i>(double)</i>	diplococcus, diploid, diplomacy, diplopoda, diplopia	<i>Greek</i>
dys	<i>(bad)</i>	dysentery, dyslexia, dystrophy, dysfunction, dysphonia	<i>Greek</i>
eco	<i>(house)</i>	ecology, economy, ecosystem, ecotone, economist, ecologist	<i>Greek</i>
emia	<i>(blood)</i>	bacteremia, anemia, hypoglycemia, toxemia	<i>Greek</i>
enter	<i>(intestine)</i>	enteritis, dysentery, gastroenteritis, enterozoan	<i>Latin</i>
erythro	<i>(red)</i>	erythrocyte, erythroblastosis, erythrism, erythromycin	<i>Greek</i>
idio	<i>(peculiar)</i>	idiot, idiosyncrasy, idiomorphous, idiom, idiot savant	<i>Greek</i>
exo	<i>(out)</i>	exotoxin, exogenous, exodus, exorbitant, exorcism, exotic, exobiology	<i>Greek</i>
im	<i>(not)</i>	impossible, impassable, improbable, imperfect, immobile, impecunious	<i>Latin</i>
fil	<i>(thread)</i>	filiform, filicineae, filament, filaria, filigree, defile	<i>Latin</i>

super

over • above • higher

The Latin stem **super**, which we define as meaning *over*, actually can have a wide variety of meanings, including *above*, *higher*, *on top of*, *greater*, or *surpassing*. The stem **supra** is a close relative. Here are some of the interesting words that contain **super** in its various shades of meaning:

- superjacent**: lying on top of. They were unable to explore the superjacent structure.
- superlunary**: beyond the moon. The craft sailed out to its superlunary orbit.
- supernumerary**: extra. Her play was superfluous with supernumerary characters.
- supernatant**: floating. They stared at the supernatant debris on the surface.
- superfine**: too subtle. His argument was guilty of meaningless, superfine distinctions.
- superordinate**: superior. There were superordinate issues that remained to be examined.
- superpose**: to place above. Watson carefully superposed one model on top of the other.
- supernal**: celestial. Einstein believed in a supernal consciousness, The Old One.
- superscribe**: write on. The package arrived with his name superscribed at the top.
- supervene**: to happen unexpectedly. Plans were suspended when tragedy supervened.
- supersubtle**: too subtle. The point was supersubtle and was missed by the audience.
- superable**: able to be overcome. Every difficulty, she felt, was superable.
- superincumbent**: pressured from above. He succumbed to the boss's superincumbent demands.
- superlative**: excelling all. Fischer's chess game possessed a superlative clarity and force.
- superficial**: on the surface. The burn was superficial, but the wound to his pride was not.
- superb**: majestic. This steep range of the Alps had a superb and rugged wildness.
- supreme**: highest. The gold medal was the supreme accomplishment of her athletic life.
- supraorbital**: above the eye. The Neanderthal skull had a massive supraorbital crest.
- supersensible**: outside of sense perception. Tiresias possessed a supersensible vision.
- supraliminal**: conscious. The subliminal fears overcame his supraliminal ideas.
- supereminent**: extremely distinguished. The Nobel laureates form a supereminent class.

1. The **anarchist** had a severe case of **anemia**.
2. The **absentee** landlord was **abruptly abducted**.
3. The **melodeon** played a sappy **melody** during the **melodrama**.
4. The **adenovirus** was discovered in his **adenoids**.
5. The pilot studied **aeronautics** and **aerodynamics**.
6. The **albino** stared at the white pages of the blank **album**.
7. **Luciferase** is the enzyme in the luminous organs of the firefly.
8. Does Benjamin Franklin's tombstone **epitaph** contain a witty **epigram**?
9. At the **exhumation**, the rich **humus** was removed from the **humble** grave.
10. **Microbes** are a favorite subject of biological studies.
11. The **bonny** lass discovered the **bonanza** by accident.
12. The **superstructure** was **constructed** in three days.
13. **Chlorine** from the pool damaged the **chlorophyll** in the plants.
14. He held the **cyanotype** to the light and admired the sharp, blue lines.
15. The **cytologist** watched the **leucocytes** and **erythrocytes** through the microscope.
16. She folded the **diploma** double and handed it to the waiting **diplomat**.
17. His **dyslexia** made it difficult for him to read words.
18. The **ecologist** was fascinated with the living things in the **ecosystem**.
19. The senator had **hypoglycemia**, not **anemia**.
20. A specialist in **dysentery** and **enteritis** explained the rare intestinal ailment.
21. The blood's **erythrocytes** are generated by **erythroblasts** in the bones.
22. The **idiot savant** was a handicapped artist with **idiosyncrasies**.
23. The crowd made a sudden **exodus** when the **exorcism** began.
24. The journey is **impossible** because the roads are **impassable**.
25. The gold **filigree** in her jewelry resembled the bright **filaments** in a light bulb.

aesthetics

1. Sometimes it is possible to relish a word purely for its artistic merit, for the poetic image it conveys. The enzyme that allows a firefly's tail to glow in the dark, giving rise to spooky and wondrous summer evenings, is called **luciferase**: the devil's enzyme.
2. Imagine living in an **aerie**. How would your sense of the world, of its sounds, temperatures, colors, smells, and textures change from season to season? Why do people become fire tower operators, perched alone in tiny rooms atop high observation towers on mountain peaks?

synthesis

1. Use ten words from List #12 in a paragraph on the human body.
2. Suggest three life experiences that might combine to make someone become an **anarchist**.

divergence

1. How many things can you think of that will always be **impossible**? How many things can you think of that are **immobile**? **Impassable**?
2. Think of as many important steps as you can for specialists from the Centers for Disease Control to take at the outbreak of a virulent **epidemic**.

analysis

1. We **adjure** our friends to do something, meaning that we earnestly urge them to do it. We **abjure** our former beliefs, meaning that we renounce them or give them up. Analyze the difference between these two words. Remember that to analyze something is to break it into its components and to examine the components one at a time.
2. Analyze the words **gastroenteritis** and **hypoglycemia**.

evaluation

1. It is a common principle of international **diplomacy** that nations do not search the **diplomatic** pouches of other nations. It is also common to grant the **diplomats** of other nations diplomatic immunity from prosecution for crimes. Finally, it is common to allow the foreign diplomats safe passage out of one's country—even in time of war. Should we continue to observe these policies?

The Word Within the Word • Analogies #12

1. **ANAEROBIC : AEROBIC ::**
 - a. enteritis : dysentery
 - b. nontoxic : toxic
 - c. filament : filigree
 - d. bonus : bonanza
2. **MICROBE : MICROSCOPE ::**
 - a. astronomer : telescope
 - b. cyanophyta : chloroplasts
 - c. astronomy : astrophysics
 - d. spectrum : spectrometer
3. **ALBINO : ALBINISM ::**
 - a. melodrama : cubism
 - b. red hair : erythrisim
 - c. exodus : influx
 - d. melodia : melody
4. **ENTEROZOAN : DYSENTERY ::**
 - a. protozoan : protozoa
 - b. erythrocyte : leucocyte
 - c. pneumococcus : pneumonia
 - d. diplococcus : anorexia
5. **EPIGRAM : EPIGRAPH ::**
 - a. *bon mot* : inscription
 - b. epitaph : phonograph
 - c. diplomacy : bonhomie
 - d. atrophy : dystrophy
6. **IMPECUNIOUS : PENNILESS ::**
 - a. humus : earth
 - b. defile : pollute
 - c. construct : destruct
 - d. bonny : pretty
7. **CYTOPLASM : LEUCOCYTE ::**
 - a. enterozoan : protozoan
 - b. building : parking lot
 - c. language : idiom
 - d. substance : object
8. **BON VIVANT : ASCETIC ::**
 - a. instruction : construction
 - b. cytology : cytoplasm
 - c. idiot savant : talent
 - d. sybarite : spartan
9. **ABJURE : ADJURE ::**
 - a. renounce : entreat
 - b. denounce : pronounce
 - c. abrogate : annul
 - d. abdicate : relinquish
10. **ANARCHY : NIHILISM ::**
 - a. gerontocracy : pointillism
 - b. exobiology : hedonism
 - c. ecology : romanticism
 - d. monarchy : absolutism

1. Some have said that knowledge is power, but to the **aeronautical** engineer who is attempting to design a new aircraft by using the principles of **aerodynamics**, air (*aer*) is power (*dyna*). The pressure of air against the wings is powerful enough to lift the aircraft into the sky.
2. A **Micropoem**: Concerned citizens sometimes feel that our nation's **economy** would improve if we applied the same common sense to our financial and monetary laws that thrifty individuals have always applied to the economical laws (*nomy*) of the house (*eco*).
3. What does the word **diplomacy** have to do with the idea of double (*diplo*)? Diplomacy is largely the art of producing and conveying important state documents that, in ancient times, were known for being folded double.
4. Some words have forbidding exteriors but inside are simple and pretty. **Chlorophyll** is the green material within plants that is responsible for photosynthesis. The word *chlorophyll*, however, means only green (*chlor*) leaf (*phyll*).
5. What do an **idiom** and an **idiosyncrasy** have in common? Peculiarity. The stem *idio* means peculiar. An idiosyncrasy is a peculiar way of behaving, and an idiom is a way of speaking that is peculiar to one group or to an individual.
6. We think of **instruction** as teaching, and we imagine classrooms with rows of desks. But the true relatives of the word *instruction* are words such as **destruction**, **structure**, and **construction**. *Struct* means build, and in that sense, instruction is a wonderfully poetic word; it means to build (*struct*) within (*in*) the mind. The insight contained in this word sheds light on the idea that it isn't really a teacher who makes learning occur; it is the student. The teacher can help to make learning possible, but only a student can do the learning that actually builds knowledge within the mind.
7. **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 words 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:

abrupt : abrupto
abdicate : abdicar
posthumous : póstumo
microbe : microbio
infrastructure : infraestructura
cytoplasm : citoplasma
ecology : ecología
hypoglycemia : hipoglicemia
exodus : éxodo

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 John Knowles's *A Separate Peace***

We had been a(n) _____, leaderless band.

- a. melodious
- b. anaerobic
- c. impecunious
- d. idiosyncratic

2. **From George Orwell's *Animal Farm***

This _____ set the table in a roar.

- a. melodeon
- b. *bon mot*
- c. epitaph
- d. idiom

3. **From James Hilton's *Lost Horizon***

Barnard's wise-cracking _____ was of the kind he would have cultivated with a butler.

- a. epigram
- b. bonhomie
- c. abjuring
- d. anarchy

4. **From Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe***

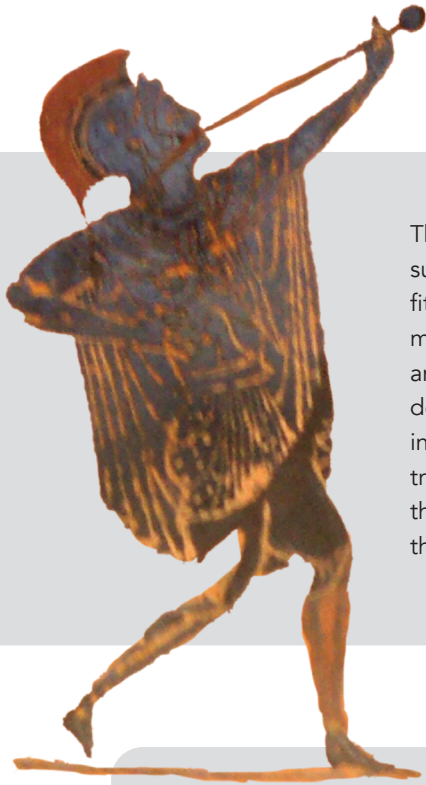
Go to the Grand Master, _____ the order to his very teeth.

- a. exhume
- b. abjure
- c. abrogate
- d. abdicate

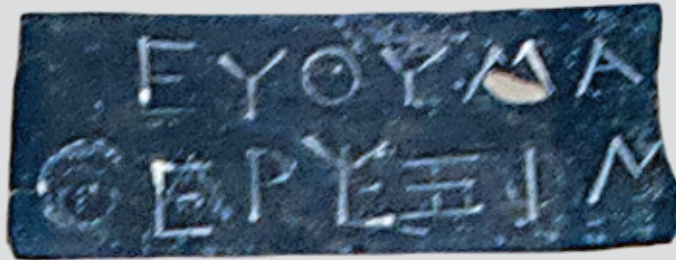
5. **From Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray***

You cut life to pieces with your _____.

- a. abrogations
- b. epigraphs
- c. epigrams
- d. melodramas



The paraphernalia of Athenian democracy, justice, and civil life have survived, including jury identification strips, the blocks into which they fit, the wheels for casting verdicts, and such items as official weights and measures and water clocks for timing speeches. More than 100,000 vases and pieces of pottery from ancient Greece exist, but the daily life of the democracy is absent from them. They offer no depictions of the Assembly in session, orators in full flight of persuasion, or visual representation of trials. But let a hoplite blow a trumpet, and the pottery decorator was there before the last note. The heroism of warfare was regarded as noble, the daily life of a democracy too mundane to use for decoration.



Jury identification strip



This is part of a large device to select jurors by accepting or rejecting randomly an entire horizontal row of jury identification strips, which were inserted into the slots.



Battles and men at war were important, but the domestic, commercial, civic, and religious aspects of Greek life are as interesting.



Domestic scenes showing women or girls in many aspects of daily life were common on pottery in the Greek world. This red-figure *hydria* (water jug) shows the poetess Sappho reading to a small group. It was produced in Athens about 430 B.C.E. One of the women on the right holds a lyre, which was often strummed when poems were read, a practice that explains the origins of the term *lyric poetry*.



Detail from a red-figure kylix of a woman with a flower