
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, abroad, abrogate, abrupt, abduct, abdicate	<i>Latin</i>
mel	<i>(song)</i>	melody, melodrama, melodeon, melodious, melodia	<i>Greek</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:	that can 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.

The Word Within the Word • Sentences #12

1. The **anarchist** had a severe case of **anemia**.
2. The **absentee** landlord was **abruptly** abducted.
3. We advised the **adventurer** to admire his **adversary**.
4. The **melodeon** played a sappy **melody** during the **melodrama**.
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 pronounce 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.

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 which, in ancient times, were known for being folded double.
4. We think of an **advocate** as a supporter, a person who is in favor of something. But in its most precise sense, the word **advocate** refers to someone who speaks in favor of something—who lends his or her voice (voc) to (ad) the cause.
5. 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).
6. 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.
7. We think of **instruction** as teaching, and we imagine classrooms and blackboards. 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 the student can build a structure within herself. No one else can build something within you.
8. **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:

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