
The Word Within the Word • List #24

advocate	<i>(speak for)</i>	It is time to advocate a new policy.
ponderous	<i>(weighty)</i>	He was crushed by the ponderous burden of the decision.
retribution	<i>(revenge)</i>	Expect a brutal retribution for what you have done.
android	<i>(robot)</i>	The android's metallic eye glistened redly.
infidel	<i>(unbeliever)</i>	The crusade against the infidels was unsuccessful.
resurgence	<i>(rising again)</i>	The resurgence of patriotism began slowly.
punctilious	<i>(precise in conduct)</i>	She liked his punctilious formal conduct.
condescend	<i>(lower oneself)</i>	His condescending attitude was infuriating.
collateral	<i>(side by side)</i>	The two collateral issues could not be discussed separately.
irrevocable	<i>(beyond recall)</i>	The past is irrevocable and answers no call.
elucidate	<i>(explain)</i>	Please elucidate the matter for our less enlightened guest.
epigram	<i>(witty comment)</i>	Benjamin Franklin's epigrams amuse us still.
eccentricity	<i>(oddness)</i>	The genius's eccentric personality began to moderate.
cognizant	<i>(aware)</i>	It is wise to be cognizant of the laws regulating investments.
stringent	<i>(binding)</i>	The stringent regulations seemed excessively severe.
anthropoid	<i>(manlike)</i>	The anthropoid apes have recognizable facial expressions.
diffident	<i>(shy)</i>	Her diffident glance caught his eye.
pandemonium	<i>(demonic clamor)</i>	Sheer pandemonium erupted on the playground.
urbane	<i>(sophisticated)</i>	The diplomat's urbane manners set the tone.
tractable	<i>(docile)</i>	The tractable little boy was a pleasure to learn from.
supersede	<i>(replace)</i>	This directive supersedes all previous directives.
temporize	<i>(delay)</i>	Begin without temporizing, if you please.
somnambulist	<i>(sleepwalker)</i>	Lady Macbeth's famous somnambulism is unforgettable.
sanguinary	<i>(bloody)</i>	We still mourn the sanguinary battles of the Civil War.
inanimate	<i>(lifeless)</i>	The inanimate stones tell no tales.

mono

one • alone • single

The Greek stem *mono* is one of the most commonly found prefixes in the English language. We have defined it as meaning *one*, but it refers to various forms of singularity, and lends a certain formality to most of the words containing it. Here is a small selection of the interesting words that contain *mono*:

- monoglot:** speaking one language. She was no monoglot but a six-language polyglot.
- monoculture:** raising one crop. It was a monocultural society, subsisting only on cassava.
- monopode:** a one-footed being. She discovered a curious myth of monopode men.
- monostrophe:** poem of identical stanzas. All stanzas in the monostrophe were ballad stanzas.
- monolith:** large stone block. The mysterious monolith towered over the crater.
- monocle:** a single eyeglass. The baron wore a monocle instead of spectacles.
- monolatry:** worshipping one god of many. The monolatrous sect worshipped only Ares.
- monograph:** paper on a single subject. We read the monograph on Sapphic meter.
- monologue:** a monopolizing speech. The professor's lecture was an egotistic monologue.
- monophagous:** feeding on one food. The monophagous koala, eats only eucalyptus leaves.
- monopolize:** gain sole possession. The eldest child always monopolized the telephone.
- monody:** a solo. The lyric ode in the tragedy was a monody by a single voice.
- monomania:** an obsession. Ahab's monomania for the white whale finally destroyed him.
- monochrome:** in one color. In Picasso's blue period he painted monochromes in blue.
- monochromatism:** color blindness. In his monochromatism he saw everything in shades of gray.
- monophony:** having a single melody. Bach's polyphony made monophony seem simple.
- monostich:** poem of one line. He specialized in writing the haiku-like monostich.
- monotonous:** lacking variety. It was a monotonous existence of factory drudgery.
- monotheism:** belief in one god. Are those who believe in the devil monotheists?
- monoplane:** airplane with one pair of wings. Monoplanes shot down the clumsy biplanes.
- monodrama:** a drama for one actor. In the monodrama, he played Albert Einstein.

The Word Within the Word • Notes #24

1. A person who seeks **retribution** seeks to pay (trib) back (re) someone who has wronged him. The revenge is the payback.
2. The **punctilious** person is so correct in proper conduct that he is full of (ous) attention to every single point (punct).
3. A Micropoem: **Elucidate** means to explain, to cast light (luc) out (ex) on the matter. Elucidation is a fine task for a luminary.
4. A person's **eccentricities** are behaviors which are way out, which are out (ex) from the normal center (centri) of things.
5. An **epigram** is a witty comment (gram) on (epi) a certain matter.
6. **Ten Pronunciation Tips**
elucidate - ee LOOSE ih date
diffident - DIFF ident
somniaulist - som NAM byoo list
irrevocable - ir re VOK able
punctilious - punk TILL ee us
stringent - STRIN jent
supersede - super SEED
sanguinary - SANG win ary
cognizant - COG nizant
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 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:

retribution : retribución
irrevocable : irrevocable
eccentricity : ecentricidad
pandemonium : pandemonio
urbane : urbano
sanguinary : sanguinario

inanimate : inanimado
android : androide
advocate : advocar
condescend : condescender
collateral : colateral
anthropoid : antropoide

The Word Within the Word • Classic Words #24

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 Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Professional honour and faith to his dead friend were _____ obligations.

- a. punctilious
- b. ponderous
- c. **stringent**
- d. diffident

2. From Esther Forbes's *Johnny Tremain*

A little _____ Isannah herself emerged from behind the lady's great dark skirts.

- a. **diffidently**
- b. irrevocably
- c. punctiliously
- d. ponderously

3. From Virginia Wolfe's *Mrs. Dalloway*

And Lady Bruton went _____, majestically, up to her room.

- a. urbanely
- b. inanimately
- c. irrevocably
- d. **ponderously**

4. From Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

I have always found horses...very _____ when treated with humanity and steadiness.

- a. **tractable**
- b. irrevocable
- c. eccentric
- d. sanguinary

5. From William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*

They cut at each other with _____ that were as sharp as razors.

- a. condescensions
- b. **epigrams**
- c. eccentricities
- d. resurgences

The Word Within the Word • Mystery Spelling #24

advocate	ad voc ate
ponderous	pond er ous
retribution	re trib u tion
android	andr oid
infidel	in fid el
resurgence	re surg ence
punctilious	punct ili ous
condescend	con de scend
collateral	co l lat er al
irrevocable	ir re voc able
elucidate	e luc id ate
epigram	epi gram
eccentricity	ec centri city
cognizant	cogn izant
stringent	string ent
anthropoid	anthrop oid
diffident	di f fid ent
pandemonium	pan demon ium
urbane	urb ane
tractable	tract able
supersede	super sed e
temporize	tempor ize
somnambulist	somn ambul ist
sanguinary	sangi nary
inanimate	in anim ate

The Word Within the Word • Ideas #24

SYNTHESIS:

What category could the words **infidel**, **android**, and **somnambulist** be grouped under? Be very flexible in the kinds of categories you consider.

DIVERGENCE:

How many instances of **pandemonium** can you think of?

ANALYSIS:

Analyze the meaning of **irrevocable**, stem by stem.

EVALUATION:

Is it a good idea or a bad idea to begin marketing personal **androids** which would perform services for their owners?

INTUITION:

If you could talk to an **inanimate** object or material, what would you choose to converse with?

EMOTION:

What emotions are associated with **urbane** behavior?

AESTHETICS:

If someone gave you whatever money you would need to make some truly **eccentric** art, what eccentric object would you make?