
The Word Within the Word • List #28

schism	<i>(division)</i>	The debate created a schism in the Democratic party.
bootless	<i>(useless)</i>	His bootless effort to win acceptance was pathetic.
rubicund	<i>(red)</i>	Her rubicund cheeks matched her rosy outlook.
apotheosis	<i>(raising to god status)</i>	The media created the champ's apotheosis.
precursor	<i>(forerunner)</i>	The rumblings were the precursor of what was to come.
transpose	<i>(switch)</i>	Dyslexics sometimes transpose letters in a word.
invective	<i>(bitter denunciation)</i>	She endured her opponent's scathing invective.
prestidigitation	<i>(sleight of hand)</i>	Presto! The magician's prestidigitation was fun.
cosmology	<i>(study of the universe)</i>	The origin of atoms is a cosmological question.
effusion	<i>(outpouring)</i>	His effusion of joyful greetings made us wince.
anthology	<i>(literary collection)</i>	The anthology contains the flowers of modern poetry.
posthumous	<i>(after death)</i>	It was bittersweet to present a posthumous award.
euphony	<i>(beautiful sound)</i>	He loved the euphony of the wind in the trees.
refractory	<i>(stubborn)</i>	The refractory child broke and rebroke the rules.
platitude	<i>(flat trite remark)</i>	We need fresh ideas, not hollow platitudes.
acrophobia	<i>(fear of heights)</i>	He began to feel acrophobia in elevators.
agoraphobia	<i>(fear of openness)</i>	Some visitors feel agoraphobia in Red Square.
veracity	<i>(truthfulness)</i>	Slowly, we began to question her veracity.
verisimilitude	<i>(similarity to truth)</i>	Notice the fable's eerie verisimilitude.
idiosyncrasy	<i>(peculiarity)</i>	We even loved his many idiosyncrasies.
alumni	<i>(graduates)</i>	The college alumni wrote to the missing alumnus.
casus belli	<i>(cause for war)</i>	The government chose to regard the act as casus belli.
interregnum	<i>(time between rulers)</i>	The nation enjoyed a peaceful interregnum.
infraction	<i>(breaking)</i>	It was an unintentional infraction of the rules.
condign	<i>(worthy)</i>	He will receive a condign punishment for his offense.

psych

soul • mind • mental

The Greek stem *psych* is one of the most interesting stems in English, because it forms words that refer to our mental life. Depending upon what stem it attaches to, *psych* may appear as *psycho* or as *psyche*. Here is a small selection of the interesting words that contain *psych*:

psychometry:	mental testing. Only a specialist should give psychometric exams.
psyche:	the soul or mind. Derangement in his psyche explained his criminal acts.
psychomotor:	motor effects of the mind. An accident left him with psychomotor damage.
psychosocial:	social/mental development. The class trip was a good psychosocial time.
psychosomatic:	mind-caused physical disorder. Stress caused the psychosomatic condition.
psychedelic:	mind-altering. Use of psychedelic drugs had damaged affected his memory.
psychokinesis:	affecting objects with the mind. The Russians investigated psychokinesis.
psychogenic:	of psychic origin. The “ghosts” were found to have a psychogenic basis.
psychopath:	an amoral personality. A dangerous psychopath was stalking the street.
psychobiography:	a mental biography. The psychobiography examined Jefferson’s real motives.
psychodrama:	acting-out therapy. He relived his abandonment in a poignant psychodrama.
psychology:	the science of the mind. In behavioral psychology, rats are at center stage.
psychosis:	major mental disorder. In psychosis there is a break with reality.
psychoactive:	affecting the mind. The cancer drug had negative psychoactive effects.
psychograph:	personality chart. The psychopath’s psychograph revealed no conscience.
psychoneurosis:	neurosis. The multiple personality was a psychoneurosis, not a psychosis.
psychotomimetic:	psychosis-creating. Psychotomimetic drugs produce psychosis-like states.
psychotoxic:	brain-damaging. The psychotoxic damage of alcohol was obvious.
parapsychology:	study of psychic phenomena. The parapsychologist proved to be a fraud.
psychoacoustic:	subjective hearing. The ringing noise was a psychoacoustic disorder.
psycholinguistic:	the psychology of language. Reading has a psycholinguistic foundation.
psychodynamics:	mental processes behind behavior. His confidence is a psychodynamic boon.

The Word Within the Word • Notes #28

1. Apotheosis is raising someone up (apo) to the status of a god (theo) or near-god. We use the word to describe what happens to, for example, American Olympic gold medal winners. We could use **apotheosis** ironically to refer to a poet whose reputation has risen to the point that it is not wise to criticize his work.
2. We use **effusion** to refer to excessive and often unpleasant demonstrations of feeling. We might refer to effusive greetings which were not reciprocal.
3. A Micropoem: An anthology is a literary collection. The word **anthology** is a metaphor which suggests that an anthology is a study (logy) of the flowers (antho) of literature or poetry. As flowers are picked selectively, so works are included in an anthology according to selective criteria which vary from anthology to anthology.
4. **Refractory** and **infraction** make an interesting pair. If an infraction is a breaking of the rule, then a refractory child is one guilty of repeated (re) breaking (fract) of the rule. **Refractory** implies a stubborn incorrigibility.
5. We find **rubicund** most often as an adjective describing the face: cheeks are rubicund.
6. The adjective **condign** is generally applied to punishments and just deserts. We do not usually apply it to worthy rewards. Villains meet their condign ends.
10. **Ten Pronunciation Tips**
schism - SIZZ um
apotheosis - ah pah thee OH sis
verisimilitude - ver ih sih MILL itude
interregnum - in ter REG num
condign - con DINE
casus belli - kay suss BELL eye
posthumous - POSS chu muss
agoraphobia - agora FOE bee ah
euphony - YOO fo nee
11. **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:

apotheosis : apoteosis
precursor : precursor
cosmology : cosmología
anthology : antología
posthumous : póstumo
acrophobia : acrofobia

agoraphobia : agorafobia
veracity : veracidad
verisimilitude : verisimilitud
idiosyncrasy : idiosincrasia
euphony : eufonía

The Word Within the Word • Classic Words #28

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 Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*

Don't ever waste my time with such sentimental _____ again.

- a. effusions
- b. schisms
- c. platitudes
- d. prestidigitation

2. From James Fennimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*

It was known, by all present, to be the grave _____ of a weighty and important judgment.

- a. invective
- b. euphony
- c. interregnum
- d. precursor

3. From Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*

Two of them...we knew to be incorrigible and _____ to the last degree.

- a. refractory
- b. condign
- c. posthumous
- d. agoraphobic

4. From John Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*

He assailed his opponents and their policies with bitter _____.

- a. cosmology
- b. apotheosis
- c. invective
- d. verisimilitude

5. From Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*

He thanked me _____ and bolted out.

- a. bootlessly
- b. condignly
- c. euphonicly
- d. effusively

The Word Within the Word • Mystery Spelling #28

schism	schism
bootless	boot less
rubicund	rub icund
apotheosis	apo theo sis
precursor	pre curs or
transpose	trans pos e
invective	in vect ive
presfidigation	pre sti digit ation
cosmology	cosmo logy
effusion	ef fus ion
anthology	antho logy
posthumous	post hum ous
euphony	eu phon y
refractory	re fract ory
platitude	plati tude
acrophobia	acro phobia
veracity	ver acity
verisimilitude	ver i simil i tude
idiosyncrasy	idio syn crasy
alumni	alumn i
casus belli	casus bell i
interregnum	inter reg num
infraction	in fract ion
condign	con dign

The Word Within the Word • Ideas #28

SYNTHESIS:

Which words in List #28 would be often used in discussions of government and politics?

DIVERGENCE:

What authors should an **anthology** of the best American literature include? Try not to overlook anyone important.

ANALYSIS:

Break down the words **interregnum**, **cosmology**, **posthumous**, **acrophobia**, and **anthology**.

EVALUATION:

Does an **alumnus** of a college have a moral obligation to help that college later in life? Should the **alumni** have rights to certain privileges because they have graduated from the college (use of athletic facilities, etc.)?

INTUITION:

It is just as you feared; you are up here and now your **acrophobia** is beginning to grip you. Where are you?

EMOTION:

On a summer day, you go on a picnic and relax amid the **euphony** of moving leaves and running water. What are your emotions?

AESTHETICS:

Do you think that artists who have intense visual sensitivity will have more **idiosyncrasies** than most people? Why or why not?