
The Word Within the Word • List #29

colloquy	<i>(conversation)</i>	They had a private colloquy in the corner.
viable	<i>(able to live)</i>	Is the fetus mature enough to be viable?
synopsis	<i>(summary)</i>	Here is a brief synopsis of the course.
terra firma	<i>(solid ground)</i>	The argonauts longed to stand on terra firma at last.
sanction	<i>(authorize)</i>	We cannot sanction the use of our name.
Russophobe	<i>(one who fears Russia)</i>	The editor was an unapologetic Russophobe.
prognosis	<i>(medical forecast)</i>	The doctor presented a prognosis of the disease.
polychrome	<i>(many-colored)</i>	We purchased a large polychrome sculpture.
philanthropy	<i>(love of mankind)</i>	Her deeds of philanthropy were legendary.
perspicacity	<i>(insight)</i>	Everyone admired the perspicacity of her mind.
mobocracy	<i>(mob rule)</i>	The text showed the mobocracy of the revolution.
gerontocracy	<i>(government of the old)</i>	The Soviet gerontocracy is losing control.
magniloquence	<i>(great eloquence)</i>	His magniloquent oratory was impressive.
kleptomaniac	<i>(pathological thief)</i>	The police tried to arrest a kleptomaniac.
joie de vivre	<i>(joy of living)</i>	Her <i>joie de vivre</i> was inspiring.
in loco parentis	<i>(in place of parents)</i>	The school must act <i>in loco parentis</i> .
mundane	<i>(worldly)</i>	The thinker was reluctant to deal with mundane matters.
synthesis	<i>(combination)</i>	This product represents a synthesis of many ideas.
unequivocal	<i>(direct)</i>	He gave a refreshing, unequivocal answer.
nihilism	<i>(belief in nothing)</i>	The icy nihilism of his mind could be unnerving.
audiophile	<i>(stereo buff)</i>	He reads a magazine for audiophiles.
entomology	<i>(insect zoology)</i>	The oft-bitten entomologist finally caught the beetle.
omnifarious	<i>(of all kinds)</i>	His omnifarious exploits earned him fame.
invidious	<i>(causing envy)</i>	He paid one of them an invidious compliment.
deduction	<i>(reasoning down from principles)</i>	Deductive reasoning is idealistic.

The Word Within the Word • Notes #29

1. A **synopsis** of a course is a summary, a paper which presents a look (opia) at the whole course together (syn).
2. We can land on **terra firma** with our boats, but we can also land on intellectual terra firma. It is tragic when erroneous opinions are quickly based on loose facts which prove not to provide intellectual solid ground.
3. When we **sanction** something, we authorize it, or approve it, or make it holy (sanct).
4. A **prognosis** is a medical forecast of a disease; it is the attempt to know (gno) in advance (pro) what course the disease will follow.
5. **Philanthropy** is made of stems which mean *love of mankind*, but actually we use **philanthropy** not to refer to someone's feelings about people, but to the actual act of doing generous things to help mankind. Wealthy philanthropists donate libraries and art galleries to communities.
6. **Perspicacity** is similar to **perspicuous**, except that **perspicuous** refers to the product of someone's mind: a **perspicuous** essay, whereas **perspicacity** refers to the mind itself: a **perspicacious** mind.
7. **Unequivocal** reminds us of **equivocate**. To equivocate is to hedge by positioning oneself in the middle, like a hedge between two fields. To be unequivocal is therefore to take sides, to go clearly into the left field or the right field. The unequivocal politician can often gain passionate support (and opposition), whereas the equivocating politician can often gain victory.
8. A Micropoem: **Invidious** praise causes envy by leaving someone else unpraised—the unpraised outsider winds up on the outside looking (vid) in (in) enviously.
9. **Ten Pronunciation Tips**
perspicacity - purr spih KASS ih tee
magniloquence - mag NIL oh kwence
joie de vivre - JWAH du vee vruh
nihilism - NI ill ism
invidious - in VID ee uss
philanthropy - fill AN thro py
synopsis - sin OPP sis
viable - VI able
colloquy - KOLL o kwee
10. **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:

viable : viable
synopsis : sinopsis
polychrome : policromo
philanthropy : filantropía
perspicacious : perspicaz
kleptomaniac : cleptómano

mundane : mundano
synthesis : síntesis
unequivocal : inequívoco
nihilism : nihilismo
invidious : invidioso
deduction : deducción

The Word Within the Word • Classic Words #29

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 Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

It was a marvelous effort of _____ to discover that I did not love her.

- a. mobocracy
- b. perspicacity**
- c. joie de vivre
- d. synthesis

2. From Kate Wiggin's *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*

The day would have been an _____ success had nothing else happened.

- a. unequivocal**
- b. omnifarious
- c. invidious
- d. audiophile

3. From William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*

The _____ say it is the end; the fundamentalists, the beginning.

- a. Russophobes
- b. audiophiles
- c. kleptomaniacs
- d. nihilists**

4. From Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*

In maritime life, far more than in that of _____, wild rumors abound.

- a. philanthropy
- b. terra firma**
- c. entomology
- d. gerontocracy

5. From Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*

There was an _____ acrimony in the zeal with which he had sought the condemnation of Matthew.

- a. invidious**
- b. omnifarious
- c. viable
- d. magniloquent

The Word Within the Word • Mystery Spelling #29

colloquy	co l loqu y
viable	vi able (vita, not via)
synopsis	syn op sis
terra firma	terr a firm a
sanction	sanct ion
Russophobe	Russo phob e
prognosis	pro gno sis
polychrome	poly chrome
philanthropy	phil anthrop y
perspicacity	per spic acity
mobocracy	mob o cracy
gerontocracy	geron to cracy
magniloquence	magni loqu ence
kleptomaniac	klepto mania c
joie de vivre	joie de viv re
in loco parentis	in loco parent is
mundane	mund ane
synthesis	syn the sis
unequivocal	un equi voc al
nihilism	nihil ism
audiophile	audio phile
entomology	entomo logy
omnifarious	omni fari ous
invidious	in vid i ous
deduction	de duct ion

SYNTHESIS:

Which of the words in List #29 would be useful in a discussion of ethics?

DIVERGENCE:

What wonderful things would you buy for or contribute to your community if you became a wealthy **philanthropist**?

ANALYSIS:

Analyze the words **philanthropy, prognosis, magniloquence, invidious, and unequivocal**.

EVALUATION:

To what extent do you think that a school has the right to discipline children **in loco parentis** during the school day?

INTUITION:

There is a large **polychrome** sculpture on the building across the street from your house. What does it look like?

EMOTION:

Explain the emotional interaction that occurs when an **invidious** compliment is paid to one of two people.

AESTHETICS:

If you were asked to paint **polychrome** patterns on a fifteen-mile stretch of highway as a county publicity stunt, what colors and patterns would you choose?