

4. The _____ of the woodpecker drumming on a tree trunk signifies a search for insects or proclaims the bird's territory and readiness to mate.
5. "La Bamba," a song with numerous verses, has become a(n) _____ favorite, continuing to reflect life in Mexican fishing villages.
6. The crew of the spaceship *Discovery* in the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* is _____ on finding proof that creatures from outer space influenced earth forms millions of years ago.

LESSON 2

Sub rosa.
Under the rose, or secretly.*

Key Words		
adversity	introvert	retort
avert	perverse	subservient
contort	prose	subvert
distort		tortuous

Familiar Words
subdue
subject
sublime
submit
substance
substitute
subtraction
suburb
succeed

SUB <L. "under"

1. **subvert** (səb vûrt') [*vertere* <L. "to turn"]
tr. v. To upset; to overthrow; to ruin.

In 1917 revolutionists **subverted** the regime of the Russian czars.

subversion, n.; subversive, adj.; subverted, adj.

2. **subservient** (səb sər'vī ənt)
[*servare* <L. "to serve"]
adj. Excessively willing to yield; submissive.

History shows that although men have often expected women to be **subservient**, many women have resisted domination.

subservience, n.; subserviently, adv.



Challenge Words
subconscious
subjective
sublimate
subside
subterfuge
succumb

*The rose is a classical symbol of secrecy.

Familiar Words

torch
torment
nasturtium

Challenge Words

extort
torque
tort
truss

TORQUEO, TORQUERE, TORSI, TORTUM <L. "to twist," "to bend," "to turn around"

3. **contort** (kən tōrt') [*con* = *cum* <L. "with"]
tr. v. To twist or bend out of shape.

The acrobats **contorted** their bodies until they resembled pretzels.

contorted, *adj.*; **contortion**, *n.*



4. **distort** (dīs tōrt') [*dis* <L. "apart"]
tr. v. 1. To change something to make it false.

By combining photographs of two people who have never met, a devious propagandist could **distort** their relationship and mislead the public.

2. To twist (something) out of its natural shape.

Both heat and dampness can **distort** videocassettes and computer disks.

5. **retort** (rī tōrt') [*re* <L. "back," "again"]
tr. and intr. v. To reply quickly and sharply, often as if in reply to an accusation.



When the ventriloquist told her dummy, "You're not very bright today," the figure **retorted**, "Look who's talking."

n. A quick, witty, sometimes biting reply.

In the television series *M*A*S*H*, "Hawkeye" Pierce is known for **retorts** that show his frustrations with life in a temporary army hospital during the war in Korea.

6. **tortuous** (tōr'chōō əs)
adj. 1. Having many twists and turns.

Three animals make a **tortuous** return to their owners in the story *The Incredible Journey*.

2. Deceitfully roundabout; tricky.

Tom Sawyer's **tortuous** plan to free Jim, the already freed former slave, becomes a hardship, or at least a nuisance, to everyone except Tom.

tortuously, *adv.*; **tortuousness**, *n.*

NOTA BENE: The word *torturous* comes from the same Latin word as *tortuous* but, as the adjective form of *torture*, is much stronger in meaning: "causing torture" or "causing mental suffering."

Familiar Words

advertisement
anniversary
controversy
convert
divert
invert
revert
universe
versatile
verse
version
vice versa

Challenge Words

extroversion
vertebra
vertigo
vortex

VERSO, VERSARE, VERSAVI, VERSATUM <L. “to turn,” “to turn around”

7. **adversity** (ăd vûr’sə tē) [*ad* <L. “to,” “toward”]
n. Hardship; misfortune.

Despite the **adversity** of a shipwreck, the Swiss Family Robinson adapts to living simply, turning their island into a small paradise.

adverse, *adj.*; **adversely**, *adv.*

8. **avert** (ə vûrt’) [*a* = *ab* <L. “away from”]
tr. v. To turn away (one’s eyes).

During an eclipse of the sun, viewers must **avert** their eyes to avoid severe burning of the retina.

2. To prevent.

Although the hydraulic system of the plane was gone, the pilot **averted** total disaster in landing.

averted, *adj.*

9. **introvert** (ĩn’tрэ vûrt) [*intro* <L. “within,” “inward”]
n. A person whose thoughts and interests are directed inward.

Introverts often keep extensive journals, in which they record their thoughts about life.

introversion, *n.*; **introverted**, *adj.*

10. **perverse** (pər vûrs’) [*per* <L. “through”]
adj. Stubbornly doing something other than what is reasonable or required.

The children took **perverse** pleasure in hiding from their sitter.

perversely, *adv.*; **perverseness**, *n.*; **perversity**, *n.*

11. **prose** (prōz)
[*prosa* <L. “straightforward” from *proversum* <L. “turned forward”]
n. Ordinary speech or writing without rhyme or meter (that is, without verse).

Prose is what we all speak and write unless we are composing poetry.

adj. Referring to speech or writing other than verse.

Laura Ingall Wilder’s **prose** style makes life on the American frontier quickly accessible to her readers.

prosaic, *adj.*



EXERCISE 2A

Circle the letter of the best **SYNONYM** (the word or phrase most nearly the same as the word in bold-faced type).

1. hopeful even in **adversity** a. good fortune b. fame c. change
d. hard times e. discomfort
2. **subversion** of an enterprise a. concealment b. support
c. celebration d. annihilation e. aberration
3. **distortion** of the facts a. alteration b. description
c. recantation d. clarification e. salience
4. **introverted** attitudes a. outgoing b. self-confident
c. capricious d. selfish e. inward-looking

Circle the letter of the best **ANTONYM** (the word or phrase most nearly opposite the word in bold-faced type).

5. to **avert** disaster a. consider b. anticipate c. encounter
d. prevent e. enjoy
6. **perverse** responses a. lively b. wicked c. reasonable
d. tortuous e. prose
7. **contorted** metal sculpture a. rounded b. twisted c. piled
d. straightened e. ugly
8. to adopt a **subservient** manner a. helpful b. submissive
c. reverent d. suspicious e. bullying

EXERCISE 2B

Circle the letter of the sentence in which the word in bold-faced type is used incorrectly.

1. a. Adventure games on computers sometimes require players to follow **tortuous** routes to solve the puzzle and find the treasure.
b. Forcing **tortuous** misunderstanding, Little Buttercup at last reveals the identity of her marriageable son in *H.M.S. Pinafore*.
c. Agatha Christie's mystery stories promise **tortuous** plots before the detective nabs the wrongdoer.
d. The prisoners suffered severe **tortuousness** from their cruel captors.
2. a. We discussed the **prose** and cons of turbo engines.
b. Edgar Allen Poe wrote both poetry and **prose**.
c. Trying to smarten himself up to become a gentleman, a character in a French play is amazed when his tutor tells him he has been speaking **prose** all his life.
d. In *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, a scolding voice speaking in rhyme sometimes interrupts the **prose**.

3.
 - a. The poem contained many stanzas because the poet expected to be paid on a **perverse** basis.
 - b. The **perverseness** of the princess who complains about the pea under her twenty-four mattresses shows a delicate sensitivity that wins her a princely bridegroom.
 - c. Nature sometimes appears **perverse**, sending flash floods to drown thousands in Bangladesh while the land dries up in the famine-stricken Sahara.
 - d. Although Templeton the rat is often **perverse** when Charlotte the spider asks a favor, he manages to save the day on several occasions in the story *Charlotte's Web*.
4.
 - a. Historian Elizabeth Longford writes that "as playthings or household slaves, women were **distorted** the world over."
 - b. Makeup and padding **distorted** the figure of Charles Laughton for his role in the film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.
 - c. Clowns tumbling from the diving board entertained the audience with their **distortions**.
 - d. Under the leadership of Joseph Stalin and his successors, Russian history presented as truth many **distortions** and omissions of world events.
5.
 - a. The team crossing Antarctica by sled placed trust in the lead dog to **avert** dangerous crevasses.
 - b. Writers often **avert** to their own experience in both prose and poetry.
 - c. In some cultures politeness requires **averting** the eyes rather than looking directly at someone.
 - d. By breaking German codes during World War II, British forces could **avert** some damage by preparing for air attack.
6.
 - a. We often think of a good **retort** too late to use it.
 - b. In *Pride and Prejudice* Elizabeth Bennet **retorts** to the haughty Lady Catherine, who delivers a **retort** in return: "I send no compliments to your mother."
 - c. "Really?" and "You know?" are **retorts** we often hear in conversation.
 - d. When Mrs. Hardcastle in the play *She Stoops to Conquer* scolds her son for playing a trick on her, he **retorts**, "Ecod, mother, all the parish says you spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on it."
7.
 - a. Despite the gardener's perseverance in planting parsley, a hungry vole **subverted** all of her efforts.
 - b. Socrates was put to death for supposedly **subverting** the minds of Athenian youth by teaching them to reason.
 - c. In 1917 the French government tried and executed Mata Hari for **subversion**: conveying military secrets to the Germans.
 - d. The speaker declared that racism still exists; it has only been **subverted** from our attention.

8. a. In the Middle Ages serfs were bound in **subservience** to their lord.
- b. At the Constitutional Convention in 1787 the idea of being **subservient** to a national rather than a state government frightened some of the framers of the Constitution.
- c. On a plantation the **subservients** who worked in the fields had a more difficult life than those skilled in a craft.
- d. Although seeming **subservient** to the new regime, the people quietly resisted.

EXERCISE 2C

Fill in each blank with the most appropriate word from Lesson 2. Use a word or any of its forms only once.

1. Balancing a budget is a(n) _____ task for individuals as well as for governments.
2. When several people pass along information one by one, they inevitably _____ it.
3. Although admirers were eager to lionize the Brontë sisters, they were _____s, preferring their own company to that of the outside world.
4. Thomas Carlyle says that “_____ is hard upon a man” but that prosperity is even harder to endure.
5. A clever _____ may win admiration for wit but discourage gentler feelings.
6. Readers of Beverly Cleary’s _____ have met Henry Huggins, an amusing character who appears in a succession of her novels.
7. As they leap, turn somersaults, and otherwise _____ their bodies, Olympic gymnasts prove their suppleness.
8. Although the nursery rhyme begins, “Mary, Mary, quite contrary,” the references to her garden and “maids all in a row” do not explain why she is _____.

REVIEW EXERCISES FOR LESSONS 1 AND 2

1 Fill in the blanks or circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Which of the following English words does *not* derive from a Latin verb meaning “to twist” or “to turn”?
a. tortuous b. subvert c. contort d. dilatory e. perverse
2. The words *confer*, *relate*, *prefer*, and *translate* come from the Latin verb _____, meaning _____.
3. *per* : through : : *sub* : _____
4. The words *contend*, *intent*, *attention*, and *tense* come from the Latin verb _____, meaning _____.
5. perennial : long-lasting : :
a. perverse : agreeable
b. introverted : outgoing
c. dilatory : ready
d. elated : happy
e. percussive : silent

2 Matching: On the line at the left, write the letter of the word or phrase that most accurately defines the word in the left-hand column.

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------|----------------------|
| _____ | 1. introversion | A. hardship |
| _____ | 2. percussion | B. determination |
| _____ | 3. deference | C. disagreement |
| _____ | 4. contortion | D. sound of striking |
| _____ | 5. dilatoriness | E. inwardness |
| _____ | 6. elation | F. tardiness |
| _____ | 7. adversity | G. respect |
| _____ | 8. contention | H. stubbornness |
| _____ | 9. perseverance | I. joy |
| _____ | 10. perversity | J. twisting |

3 Writing or Discussion Activities

1. In a brief paragraph describe a situation in which you felt *elation*. What are the reasons you experienced this feeling? In your paragraph give specific details allowing your reader to visualize the moment (who? what? when? where?). Use *elation* or *elated* in at least one of your sentences.
2. One of the most irregular verbs in Latin is *fero, ferre, tuli, latum*. Think of a way to remember this odd verb with its unmatching parts, and explain in a few sentences how you will go about keeping it in mind, along with some of its useful derivatives.
3. Imagine yourself at a circus, watching acrobats, clowns, musicians, and animals perform. From the list of words below choose at least four to use in a brief paragraph in which you describe the sights, sounds, and smells under the big top. Use the form of the word that best expresses your idea.

percussion	contortion	avert	perverse
permeate	retort	infer	persevere
contend			tortuous