

LESSONS 7 AND 8

Separation

LESSON 7

Ab ovo usque ad mala.
From eggs to apples.*—HORACE

Key Words		
abhor	abstemious	discreet
abound	ascertain	infraction
abrasive	discern	infringe
abscond		suffrage

Familiar Words

aberration
abject
abnormal
abolish
abomination
abrupt
absent
absolute
absorb

AB <L. "away from"

1. **abrasive** (ə brā'sīv) [*radere* <L. "to scrape"]
adj. Harsh; rough.

The **abrasive** texture of a sandpaper smooths the surface of wood.

abrade, *v.*; **abrasion**, *n.*; **abrasively**, *adv.*

*Eggs and apples represent the first and last courses of a Roman meal; in modern terms, from soup to nuts.

Challenge Words

abdicate
abduct
ablution
abstract

2. **abound** (ə bound') [*unda* <L. "wave"]
intr. v. 1. To exist in great quantities or numbers.

Although in the nineteenth century buffalo herds **abounded** on the Great Plains, very few are roaming the range today.

2. To be fully supplied or filled.

Despite the heroine's adversities, the musical *Annie* **abounds** in energy and optimism.

abundance, *n.*; **abundantly**, *adv.*



3. **abscond** (ăb skōnd)
[*condere* <L. "to put together," "to form"]
intr. v. To leave quickly and secretly and hide oneself.

Although grateful for the Bishop's kindness, Jean Valjean nevertheless **absconds** with his host's silverware.



4. **abhor** (ăb hōr') [*horrere* <L. "to shudder"]
tr. v. To detest thoroughly.

To show that they **abhor** the slaughter of whales, the protesters blocked the path of whaling vessels.

abhorrence, *n.*; **abhorrent**, *adj.*

5. **abstemious** (ăb stē'mē əs)
[*temetus* <L. "liquor," "mead," "wine"]
adj. Sparing or moderate, especially in eating and drinking.

On a long sea voyage in a small craft with limited food supplies, the crew must be **abstemious**.

abstemiously, *adv.*; **abstemiousness**, *n.*

**Familiar Words**

certain
concern
decree
secrecy
secret
secretion
secretive

CERNO, CERNERE, CREVI, CRETUM <L. "to separate," "to sift," "to decide"

6. **discreet** (dīs krēt') [*dis* <L. "apart"]
adj. Showing tact, respect, and restraint in speech or behavior.

Few of Shakespeare's characters are more gentle and **discreet** than Desdemona, who suffers false accusations with patience.

Challenge Words
discrete
dictionary

discreetly, *adv.*; **discreetness**, *n.*; **discretion**, *n.*
Antonym: **indiscreet**.

NOTA BENE: *Discrete* looks almost the same as *discreet* but has *two* different meanings: “separate from others” and “having separate parts,” as in “The short stories in the Edgar Allen Poe collection are *discrete* literary works.”

7. **ascertain** (ăś'ər tăn') [*ad* <L. “to”]
tr. v. To find out something for certain.

The handwriting expert **ascertained** that a diary supposedly written by Hitler was a forgery.

ascertainable, *adj.*

8. **discern** (dī sŭrn', dī zŭrn') [*dis* <L. “apart”]
tr. v. To perceive; to detect differences.

Through the sophisticated telescope at Palomar Observatory, astronomers can **discern** stars millions of light years away.

discerning, *adj.*; **discernible**, *adj.*;
discernment, *n.*



Familiar Words
fraction
fracture
fragile
fragment

FRANGO, FRANGERE, FREGI, FRACTUM <L. “to break”

9. **infraction** (ĭn frăk'shən) [*in* <L. “in”]
n. A violation, especially of a law.

Crossing against a red light is a more serious **infraction** for a driver than for a pedestrian.

infarct, *v.*

10. **infringe** (ĭn frĭnj') [*in* <L. intensifier]
intr. v. To go beyond set limits (used with *on* or *upon*).

As computers store more and more personal data, citizens may worry that they **infringe** upon an individual's privacy.

infringement, *n.*

Challenge Words
fracas
fractionous
frangible

11. **suffrage** (sŭf'rĭj) [*suf* = *sub* <L. “under.” (In Roman times a broken piece of poetry was used to signify a vote.)]
n. The right to vote, or a vote itself.

In 1920 Congress amended the Constitution to grant **suffrage** to women.

suffragist, *n.*

NOTA BENE: *Suffragette* is also a related word but applies chiefly to the women's suffrage movement in Great Britain.

NOTA BENE: The Greek word for "break" is *klan*; an *iconoclast* is one who breaks an *icon* or "image," one who overthrows or destroys established traditions or attitudes. Other forms of the word are the adjective *iconoclastic* and the noun *iconoclasm*.

EXERCISE 7A

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

1. **abstemious** at the dinner table a. gluttonous b. moderate
c. fussy d. talkative e. tenacious
2. to **infringe** upon others' property a. intrude b. expound
c. mediate d. rely e. caper
3. to **abscond** with the prize money a. return b. defer c. exult
d. abstain e. flee
4. **abounding** good will a. cheering b. diminishing c. endless
d. occasional e. deferring

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

5. **abrasive** in conducting business a. rude b. inept c. courteous
d. rough e. enterprising
6. **abhorrence** of cruelty a. hatred b. love c. subjugation
d. negation e. discernment
7. a(n) **discreet** reply a. percussive b. mild c. discerning
d. contrite e. abrasive
8. to **ascertain** the earth's circumference a. calculate b. infer
c. be ignorant of d. distort e. describe

EXERCISE 7B

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

1. a. An admirer of the work of Mary Cassatt **discerned** a fake listed as one of her impressionistic paintings at the auction.
b. Columbus **discerned** American in 1492.
c. Sherlock Holmes's **discernment** of hidden clues often dazzles his friend Dr. Watson, a qualified doctor but an amateur sleuth.
d. We sometimes have trouble **discerning** fact from fiction.

2.
 - a. Songs, folk plays, riddles, and games **abounding** in Spanish folklore have kept the Spanish language alive in the American Southwest.
 - b. Passenger pigeons, which **abounded** in the United States a century ago, are now extinct.
 - c. Varieties of tempting pastries **abounded** in the bakery window.
 - d. The Gobi Desert **abounds** with water.
3.
 - a. Ugly, smelly decay of plants and animals may seem an **abhorrence**, but it is in fact nature's efficacious process of recycling and revival.
 - b. The philosopher Spinoza observed, "Nature **abhors** a vacuum."
 - c. We made some really **abhorring** costumes for the Halloween party.
 - d. Psychologists tell us that people living in rooms painted purple develop an **abhorrence** of that color.
4.
 - a. Successive dry summers and scanty harvests in 1798 and 1799 caused severe **suffrage** for Scottish farmers.
 - b. Strife in South Africa has centered around the denial of **suffrage** to the nonwhite population.
 - c. Until amended in 1920, the U.S. Constitution granted **suffrage** only to males.
 - d. British "**suffragettes**" went on hunger strikes in prison to shame the government into letting women vote.
5.
 - a. The woman known as Typhoid Mary committed numerous **infractions** of health laws by knowingly spreading typhoid fever germs while employed as a cook.
 - b. If we look carefully we can see a small **infraction** in this heirloom vase.
 - c. Hitchhiking on freeways is an **infraction** of state law.
 - d. After meeting the Queen of Hearts in Wonderland, Alice learns that the smallest **infraction** sets up the shout, "Off with her [or his] head!"
6.
 - a. An **abrasive** brush will clean and polish metal pans.
 - b. In Rome air pollution has so **abraded** bronze statues that some are permanently damaged.
 - c. Talk show hosts intrigue television audiences with clever retorts but may offend people when they become **abrasive**.
 - d. The students realized too late that they had committed an **abrasion** of judgment by crashing the party.
7.
 - a. Even when handcuffed and locked in a capsule submerged in water, Harry Houdini could **ascertain** an escape.
 - b. Scientists have **ascertained** that fear of punishment retards learning.
 - c. With television coverage of government sessions, the public can **ascertain** the effectiveness of elected officials.
 - d. Opinion polls on every subject from food to politics attempt to **ascertain** our preferences, which, however, shift from day to day.

EXERCISE 7C

Fill in each blank with the most appropriate word from Lesson 7. Use a word or any of its forms only once.

1. After persuading gullible victims to hand over their life savings, the trickster _____ed.
2. Uninvited sales pitches over the telephone _____ upon our time and privacy.
3. Although the confidante of many friends, she was always _____, never revealing any secrets.
4. Hosts who have prepared a grand dinner do not want their guests to be _____.
5. Driving above the speed limit is a(n) _____ which, if it goes on file, may increase the cost of car insurance.
6. Although American citizens are eligible to vote at age eighteen, a sizeable number of them do not exercise their right of _____.
7. Only when the fog lifted could we begin to _____ the outlines of New York's skyscrapers.

LESSON 8

Toto caelo.

(Separated) by the whole heavens (diametrically opposite).

Key Words		
absolve	concise	resolve
analyze	herbicide	superfluous
catalyst	precise	superlative
	resolute	

Familiar Words

- superabundant
- superficial
- superior
- superman
- supermarket
- supernatural
- superstar
- superstition
- supervise
- supreme

SUPER <L. "above"

1. **superlative** (sōō pūr'lə tiv) [*latum* <L. "carried"]
adj. The highest; above the rest.

Superlative builders of irrigation systems, the Pueblo peoples had much to teach seventeenth-century colonists in New Mexico.

NOTA BENE: *Superlative* is also a grammatical term used to describe the third form in a series of adjectives: *tall* (positive); *taller* (comparative); *tallest* (superlative).