



Literacy and Intervention

SAMPLE LESSON

VOCABULARY FROM CLASSICAL ROOTS

**Strategic Vocabulary Instruction through
Greek and Latin Roots**

Grades 4–11

RTI



Book A: Lesson 2

LESSON 2

Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres.

All Gaul is divided into three parts.—JULIUS CAESAR

Key Words

bicentennial
centenary
centigrade
decathlon

decimate
quadrant
quartet

quatrain
trilogy
trisect
triumvirate

Familiar Words

tricycle
trillion
trimester
trio
triple
triplet
triplicate

Challenge Words

tricentennial
trident
triennial
trinity
tripartite
triplex
triptych

TRI <G. “three”
TRES <L. “three”

1. **trilogy** (trī'lə jē) [*logos* <G. “word,” “speech”]
n. A group of three literary or musical works that have a related theme.

The *Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien’s popular **trilogy**, contains these novels: *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, and *The Return of the King*.

2. **trisect** (trī'sēkt, trī sēkt') [*secare* <L. “to cut”]
tr. v. To divide into three parts.

The two freeways **trisected** the once-united community into three separate neighborhoods.

trisection, *n.*; **trisector**, *n.*

3. **triumvirate** (trī ūm'vər ĭt) [*triumviri* <L. “board of three” <L. *vir*, “man”]
n. A group of three, especially in authority.

In ancient Rome the Second **Triumvirate** was composed of Mark Anthony, Augustus Caesar, and Lepidus.



QUARTUS <L. “fourth”
QUATUOR <L. “four”

4. **quadrant** (kwōd'rənt)
n. 1. (mathematics) A quarter of a circle or of its circumference.
A **quadrant** contains 90 degrees of the 360 degrees of a circle.

Familiar Words

quadrangle
quadruple
quadruplet
quart
quarter
squad
square

Challenge Words

quadruphonic
quadrennial
quadrille
quadripartite
quarry
quarto
quatrefoil

2. An early machine for measuring altitudes.

Although primitive, the **quadrant** enabled explorers to take accurate measurements.

3. Any of the four parts of an area divided by perpendicular lines.

Rescuers divided the forest into **quadrants** and searched each thoroughly for survivors.

5. **quartet** (kwôr tět')

n. 1. A musical composition for four voices or instruments.

Most operas contain a **quartet** for two women (a soprano and an alto) and two men (a tenor and a bass).

2. A set of four, especially of four musicians.

During the complicated heart operation, a **quartet** of surgeons worked for ten hours.



6. **quatrain** (kwõt'rān', kwõ'trān')

n. A stanza or group of four lines of poetry.

Most nursery rhymes, like "Little Bo Peep Has Lost Her Sheep," are written in **quatrains**.

NOTA BENE: *Pente* and *quinque* are both roots that mean "five." They appear in many words. *Pente*, for example, is the root in *pentagon*, "a five-sided figure," and *pentathlon*, "an Olympic event testing five different skills." *Quinque* is the root for words like *quintet*, "a group of five," and *quintuplets*, "five babies born to one mother at the same time."

You will recognize the roots *sex*, *septem*, *octo*, and *novem*, which mean "six," "seven," "eight," and "nine" respectively, in many familiar words. For example, *September*, *October*, and *November* were the seventh, eighth, and ninth months of the Roman calendar.

Combined with the root *-ginta*, which means "ten times," they form the words to indicate a person whose age is between 60 and 70, a *sexagenarian*; between 70 and 80, a *septuagenarian*; between 80 and 90, an *octogenarian*; and between 90 and 100, a *nonagenarian*.

Combined with the root *plus*, which means "fold," these roots make *sextuple*, *septuple*, *octuple*, and *nonuple*, indicating six, seven, eight, or nine times.

Familiar Words

decade
December
decimal

Challenge Words

decagram
Decalogue
deciliter
decimeter
duodecimal

Familiar Words

cent
centennial
centimeter
centipede
century
percent

Challenge Words

centavo
centenarian
centiliter
centime

DECEM <L. "ten"

7. **decimate** (dĕs'ə māt)

tr. v. 1. To destroy a large part of.

European diseases like measles **decimated** Native American populations because they had no immunity.

2. To kill one in every ten.

To punish a legion that had shown cowardice, the Roman army sometimes **decimated** soldiers of all ranks on the basis of a lottery.

decimation, *n.*

8. **decathlon** (dĭ kăth'lən, dĭ kăth'lŏn) [*athlon* <G. "contest"]

n. An athletic contest in which each contestant takes part in ten events.

The winner of the Olympic **decathlon** can be considered an all-around athlete.



NOTA BENE: Several Olympic competitions combine several sports. In the *biathlon* athletes compete in two sports: cross-country skiing and rifle shooting. The five sports of the *pentathlon* are usually running, fencing, swimming, horseback riding, and pistol shooting. The *decathlon* includes ten track and field events.

CENTUM <L. "hundred"

9. **bicentennial** (bĭ'sĕn tĕn'ĕ ĕl) [*bi* <L. "two"; *annus* <L. "year"]

n. A two-hundredth anniversary.

In 1989 the **bicentennial** of the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, was celebrated.

adj. Happening every 200 years.

As part of **bicentennial** events honoring the French Revolution, the Louvre, the great Parisian museum, was enlarged in 1988.

bicentennially, *adv.*

10. **centenary** (sĕn tĕn'ə rĕ, sĕn'tə nĕr' ĕ)

adj. Pertaining to a 100-year period.

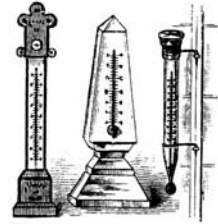
Our town is preparing a time capsule of contemporary articles to be opened at its next **centenary** celebration.

n. A centennial.

By its first **centenary** Boston's population had tripled.

11. **centigrade** (sĕn'tĭ grād') [*gradus* <L. "step"]
adj. Referring to a thermometer scale of 100 degrees where water freezes at 0° and boils at 100°.

Although most Americans continue to use the Fahrenheit scale where water freezes at 32° and boils at 212°, scientists use the **centigrade** scale because it makes calculations easier.



EXERCISE 2A

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

- reached **0° centigrade** a. freezing b. boiling c. 100° Fahrenheit
d. 212° Fahrenheit e. the melting point
- to **decimate** the population a. slaughter b. increase c. infect
d. educate e. unite
- a lyric **quatrain** a. courtyard b. party of four c. dance for four
d. four-line verse e. four-week period
- occur **bicentennially** a. every two years b. every 200 years
c. twice in 100 years d. twice in 200 years e. every 2000 years
- a(n) **centenary** celebration a. surprise b. annual c. bicentennial
d. one-sided e. hundredth anniversary
- controlled by a **triumvirate** a. noble person b. triplet
c. dictator d. group of three people e. trilogy
- applaud the **quartet** a. dancers b. orchestra c. pair of cellists
d. chorus e. four performers

EXERCISE 2B

Fill in each blank with a word from Lesson 2. Use a word only once.

- 3 closely related musical works = _____
- 3 political leaders = _____
- 4 people playing musical instruments = _____
- 4 lines of poetry = _____
- 10 track and field events = _____
- scale of 100 degrees = _____
- 200 years = _____

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. Ursula LeGuin's *The Earthsea* _____ contains three separate novels involving the same characters in different stages of their lives.
2. One of the most grueling events of the Olympics, the _____ requires skill in ten different sports.
3. "I never saw a purple cow,
I never hope to see one.
But I can tell you, anyhow,
I'd rather see than be one."—Gelett Burgess
This nonsense verse is an example of a _____.
4. The monarch's three children _____ ed the realm among themselves.
5. Antarctic explorers carried a _____ in order to determine the altitude of newly discovered peaks.
6. Decisions at our school are generally made by the _____ of principal, vice-principal, and dean of students.
7. I wonder how the first moon landing will be regarded at its _____ in 2169.
8. A barbershop _____ usually sings popular songs in harmony for four voices.
9. Until whales were protected by international treaties, excessive hunting nearly _____ d them.