SAMPLE LESSON

VOCABULARY FROM CLASSICAL ROOTS

Strategic Vocabulary Instruction through Greek and Latin Roots

Grades 4–11

Book C: Lesson 4
LESSON 4

De mortuis nil nisi bonum.
[Say] nothing about the dead but good.—TRADITIONAL

Key Words

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PUER <L. “a male child”

1. **puerile** (pyoo′arl, pyoo′ril, pwër′ril) adj. Childish; immature.
   Forced to take my little sister to the party, I was humiliated by her puerile giggling.

PAIS, PAIDOS <G. “child,” “boy”

2. **orthopedics** (ôr′θo pē′diks) [ortho <G. “straight,” “correct”] n. Branch of medicine treating disorders of the skeletal system and tissues related to movement.
   The specialist in orthopedics set my broken leg.
   orthopedic, adj.; orthopedist, n.

   The Oxford Cleric in Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales is a devoted pedagogue who would “gladly . . . learn and gladly teach.”
   pedagogic, adj.; pedagogical, adj.; pedagogy, n.

4. **pedant** (pēd′ənt) n. 1. A person who pays excessive attention to learning rules rather than to understanding.
   A true scholar seeks to understand the causes of historical events, but a pedant only memorizes their dates.
2. A scholarly show-off.

Instead of saying “horse,” the pedant Mr. Bounderby in Charles Dickens’s *Hard Times* refers to a “granivorous quadruped.”

pedantic, adj.; pedantry, n.

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**SUM, ESSE, FUI, FUTURUM** <L. “to be”

5. entity (ēn′ tə tē)  
   *n.* Something that has a real or independent existence.

   Each twin wanted to be treated as an entity.

   Antonym: nonentity

6. nonentity (nōn ēn′ tə tē)  
   *n.* 1. A person or thing of no importance.

   How did such a nonentity achieve so much power?

   2. Something that does not exist or exists only in the imagination.

   Although a monster in a nightmare is a nonentity, it can cause real fear.

   Antonym: entity

7. essence (ēs′ əns)  
   *n.* 1. The basic element; the identifying characteristic.

   During the 1920s Bessie Smith’s singing represented the essence of the blues.

   2. A substance in concentrated form obtained from a plant or drug.

   Ground seeds of the cacao bean are the essence of cocoa.

   3. A perfume.

   The delicate essence of lavender scented the room.

   (*Quintessence* means “an even purer, more concentrated form” or “a perfect embodiment of something.”)
MORIOR, MORI, MORTUUM <L. “to die”

8. moribund (môr′ə būnd, mōr′ə būnd) adj. About to die or end.

As automobiles became popular, the speed limits set for horse-drawn vehicles became moribund.

moribundity, n.

9. mortify (môr′tə fī) [-fy = facere <L. “to make”] tr. v. 1. To shame.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mrs. Bennet’s crude efforts to marry off her five daughters mortify Elizabeth Bennet.

2. To discipline oneself by denial.

Some Hindus seek to mortify the flesh by prolonged fasting.

mortification, n.

10. postmortem (pōst mōr′təm) [post <L. “after”] n. 1. An examination to determine the cause of death; an autopsy.

The postmortem eliminated the possibility of death by poison.

2. (informal) An analysis of something that is over.

Every Monday at lunch there is a postmortem of Sunday’s baseball game.

THANATOS <G. “death”

11. euthanasia (yōō′ thə nā′zha, yōō′ thə nā′shə) [eu <G. “well”] n. The act of painlessly killing a suffering person or animal; mercy killing.

Controversy continues over a patient’s right to euthanasia.

NASCOR, NASCI, NATUM <L. “to be born”


Voice lessons have improved his innate singing talent.

innately, adv.
13. **naive** (nä́ čv′)  
*adj.* 1. Childlike; unsophisticated.  
She retained a **naive** belief that her toys came alive by night.  
2. Gullible.  
The **naive** tourists bought “ancient coins” from dishonest street vendors.

**naivete**, *n.*

14. **nascent** (nàs′ənt, nàs′ənt)  
*adj.* Emerging; coming into existence.  
Good teachers encourage the **nascent** skills of young writers.

15. **renaissance** (rēn′ə sāns′, rēn′ə zāns′)  
[L. “back,” “again”]  
*n.* 1. A rebirth; a renewal.  
The twentieth century has witnessed a **renaissance** of interest in indigenous American art.  
2. (capitalized) A revival of humanism in fourteenth-century to sixteenth-century Europe.  
During the **Renaissance** the humanities were greatly influenced by Greek and Roman models.

**EXERCISE 4A**  
Circle the letter of the best **ANTONYM** (the word or phrase most nearly opposite the word in bold-faced type).

1. their **puerile** choice a. mature b. innocent c. girlish d. pearl-like e. avuncular  
2. our hopes were **moribund** a. nascent b. boundless c. foolish d. naive e. arrested  
3. a **naive** remark a. silly b. dishonest c. strange d. rude e. sophisticated  
4. intentionally chose a(n) **nonentity** a. important person b. pedant c. basic element d. careless person e. mature person  
5. a **renaissance** in bluegrass music a. pedagogue b. genesis c. decline d. patrimony e. progeny

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

6. this **innate** quality a. hereditary b. secret c. destructive d. boring e. nascent  
7. **mortifying** situations a. funny b. expensive c. fatal d. moribund e. painfully embarrassing  
8. recognized your **nascent** talent a. decent b. athletic c. familial
9. became increasingly **pedantic**  
a. interested in shoes  
b. evil  
c. humiliating  
d. witty  
e. foolishly attentive to detail  

10. **pedagogic** success  
a. educational  
b. mathematical  
c. medical  
d. immature  
e. essential  

**EXERCISE 4B**

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

1. a. **Pedants** have the right-of-way at intersections.  
b. Only a **pedant** would be so picky about footnotes in a personal letter.  
c. Despite his occasional **pedantry** he is a teacher beloved by his students.  
d. Her **pedantic** lecture on carbon dating destroyed my interest in archaeology.  

2. a. **Orthopedic** shoes can help correct a child’s club foot.  
b. An **orthopedist** at a ski resort has a large practice during the winter.  
c. Help! There’s a green **orthopede** in my sleeping bag.  
d. Modern **orthopedics** can improve most curvatures of the spine.  

3. a. Our plans to remodel the house have become **moribund** since the economic recession.  
b. Because of competition from the airlines, many railroads are now **moribund**.  
c. He wore a plaid **moribund** with his tuxedo.  
d. Hypochondriacs think they’re **moribund** when they have only have a cold.  

4. a. However good the intentions, **euthanasia** is extremely controversial.  
b. The lawyer’s strong statement supporting **euthanasia** won the sympathy of the jury.  
c. Her **euthanasia** for sailing led to a year-long yachting trip.  
d. The debating team chose the topic “Resolved: **Euthanasia** should be permitted in cases of terminal disease.”  

5. a. Only someone **nascent** to the United States may run for president.  
b. Her teacher encouraged her **nascent** interest in Mayan culture.  
c. Political analysts observed a **nascent** radicalism among rural voters.  
d. Their **nascent** sense of independence was frustrated by the school’s rigid rules.  

6. a. His **innate** tact and consideration make him an excellent diplomat.  
b. Cats **innately** hate water.  
c. The ability to speak is **innate** in human beings.
d. When she received the bill, she was so innate that she threatened to sue.

7. a. Our English teacher used odd pedagogic techniques like wearing funny hats and singing rules for punctuation to keep our attention.
   b. Jan was a child pedagogue, playing with the Vienna Philharmonic at age twelve.
   c. Education courses stress effective pedagogy.
   d. Lecturing is still common pedagogical practice at the university level.

8. a. This new perfume is called “Essence of Violets.”
   b. His frequent travel and fluency in many languages make him the essence of worldliness.
   c. Some people are born with limited essences of smell.
   d. Claude Brown’s autobiography captures the essence of Harlem in the 1940s and 1950s.

9. a. He had an entity for exotic foods.
   b. Hard work and concern for constituents turned the senator into an influential political entity.
   c. Although she began her career with a large firm, she later went into business for herself as a separate entity.
   d. Although certain phenomena have no physical entity, scientific instruments can prove their existence.

EXERCISE 4C

Fill in each blank with the most appropriate word from Lesson 4. Use a word or any of its forms only once.

1. Refusing to let boos from the balcony _________________________ her, the composer made a dignified bow after the world premiere of her symphony.

2. The health department ordered a(n) _________________________ to determine whether the dead dog had rabies.

3. Anyone with such________________________ behavior cannot be given a responsible job.

4. The _________________________ brace relieved the pain from his neck injury.

5. My city cousins were so _________________________ about backpacking that they brought along a hairdryer and a tapedeck.

6. He is _________________________ to insist that we say “I shall” instead of “I will.”
Recommended Companion Material

EPS offers a wide range of products and programs that complement the vocabulary skills in *Vocabulary from Classical Roots*. We recommend the following series to enhance vocabulary development and strategies.

**Wordly Wise 3000**
Recommended for grades 2–12

*Wordly Wise 3000*, an EPS bestseller, develops vocabulary and comprehension skills for students in early elementary through high school. Each lesson features a word list, exercises that reinforce key vocabulary concepts, and a nonfiction narrative that uses all the words from the list to build reading comprehension skills by identifying and applying words in context. The series also includes blackline master test booklets in state standards-compliant formats.

**Analogies 1, 2, and 3**
Recommended for grades 7–12

Studying analogies helps students to sharpen reasoning ability, develop critical thinking, understand relationships between words and ideas, learn new vocabulary, and prepare for the SATs and other standardized tests. Each of the three books in this useful series consists of three parts written in a clear, conversational style with few technical terms. Use Analogies 1, 2, and 3 to increase your students’ critical thinking and vocabulary skills.

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