

LESSON 2

Alter idem.

The same as oneself.—CICERO

Key Words

altercation
altruism
anathema
antithesis
ephemeral

epitaph
epithet
epitome
eponymous
paradigm

paradox
paragon
parameter
peripatetic
peripheral

Familiar Words

alter
alteration
alternative

Challenge Words

alter ego
subaltern

ALTER <L. "other"

1. **altercation** (ôl' tər kā' shən)
[*altercari* <L. "to have difference with another"]
n. A noisy quarrel.

In the British Parliament of the 1880s **altercations** over Home Rule for Ireland arose frequently between the prime minister William Gladstone and the Irish member Charles Parnell.



altercate, *v.*

2. **altruism** (ăl' trōō ĭz' əm)
n. Concern for the welfare of others; unselfishness.

The economist Barbara Ward asserts that both individuals and governments prosper when sagacious **altruism** governs their cooperation.

altruistic, *adj.*

Familiar Words

epicenter
epidemic
epidermis
epiglottis
epigram
epigraph
epilepsy
epilogue
epiphany
epoch
episode

EPI <G. "on," "toward"

3. **ephemeral** (ĭ fēm' ər əl) [*hemera* <G. "day"]
adj. Lasting for a very short time (literally, for one day); transitory; not everlasting.

The experiment in harmonious community living begun in 1841 at Brook Farm proved to be **ephemeral**, lasting only until 1847 despite the hopes of its members to share intellectual stimulation and manual labor.

ephemera, *n.* (plural)

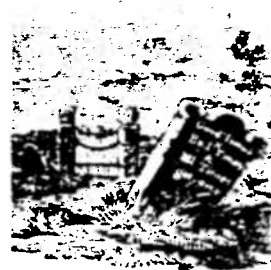


Challenge Words

epicure
epidural
episcopal
episcopo
epistemology
epistrophe
epitasis
epithesis
epithet

4. **epitaph** (ĕp' ə tāf') [*taphos* <G. "tomb"]
n. An inscription on a tombstone in memory of the person buried there; a brief (literary) summary of a dead person's life.

Jane Austen's **epitaph** in Winchester Cathedral attests to "the benevoience of her heart."



5. **epitome** (ī pīt' ə mē) [*temnein* <G. "to cut"]
n. A typical representation of something; a person who embodies a quality.

"A man so various that he seem'd to be / Not one, but all mankind's **epitome**."—John Dryden

epitomize, *v.*

6. **eponymous** (ī pŏn' ə mäs) [*onym* = *onoma* <G. "name"]
adj. Referring to the name of a person, a mythical being, or a literary figure associated with something, or to a word incorporating the name of such a person (as in *braille*, *cardigan*, *silhouette*, *sandwich*, and *spoonerism*).

An arbiter of fashion in the court of Louis XV the **eponymous** Marquise de Pompadour wore her hair upswept from the forehead in the style that became known as the pompadour.



eponym, *n.*; **eponymy**, *n.*

NOTA BENE: Although *epicurean* begins with *epi*, its source is the eponymous Greek philosopher Epicurus, who is sometimes interpreted as endorsing self-indulgence: an *epicure* is someone of refined taste in food and drink. However, Epicurus believed that happiness comes from moderation. He advocated rational thought and self-control as a means of heightening pleasure and avoiding pain.

PARA <G. "beside"

7. **paradigm** (pär' ə dīm', pär' ə dīm') [*deiknūnai* <G. "to show"]
n. An example serving to illustrate a process, pattern, or concept.

For many centuries theater design has followed the Greek **paradigm** of a proscenium with exits at the right and left of a rectangular stage.

Familiar Words

parable
parabola
paragraph
parallel
parallelogram
paralysis
paramecium
paranoid
paraphernalia
paraphrase
paraplegia
parasite

Challenge Words

paragenesis
parallax
parallelepiped
paralogism
paramnesia
parataxis

8. **paradox** (pär' ə dōks')
[*doxa* <G. "opinion," "judgment"]
n. A statement that seems contradictory but contains a truth or valid deduction.

"There is that glorious epicurean **paradox** uttered by my friend the historian, in one of his flashing moments; 'Give us the luxuries of life, and we will dispense with its necessities.'"—Oliver Wendell Holmes

paradoxical, *adj.*



9. **paragon** (pär' ə gōn', pär' ə gən) [*akonan* <G. "to sharpen"]
n. A model of excellence or perfection.

Aspasia became known in Athens as a **paragon** of oratory, inspiring Plato, Socrates, and Pericles with her eloquence and skill in composing speeches.

NOTA BENE: The definitions of *epitome*, *paradigm*, and *paragon* overlap somewhat. Note that an *epitome* is a general representation of something, not necessarily good or admirable. One person may be the epitome of courage and another the epitome of cowardice; a room may be the epitome of tastelessness or of classical grandeur. A *paradigm* provides a basic form of something whose process, pattern, or concept can serve as a model, as in automobile assembly, the conjugation of verbs, or the working of an algebra problem. A *paragon*, usually a person, is someone outstanding for some personal quality or remarkable achievement.

10. **parameter** (pə rām' ə tər) [*metron* <G. "measure"]
n. 1. In mathematics, a constant that has variable values and is used to determine other variables.

If a gorilla were scaled up to the size of King Kong, the **parameters** of its volume and cross-sectional area show that the creature would collapse under its own weight.

2. A factor that determines a range of variations; a boundary.

One of the functions of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is to set **parameters** for the workplace, such as humane schedules and physical safeguards.

Familiar Words

paradise
perigee
perimeter
period
periodical
periscope

Challenge Words

pericardium
pericycle
perihelion
periodontal
periphrastic
peripteral
peristalsis
peristyle
peritoneum

Familiar Words

hypothesis
parenthesis
synthesize
theme
thesaurus
treasure

parametric. *adj.*

PERI <G. "around"

11. **peripatetic** (pĕr' ə pə tĕt' ĭk)
[*patein* <G. "to walk"]
adj. Walking or traveling about.

At age nineteen the English author Laurie Lee made a **peripatetic** journey across Spain, walking from village to village and playing his violin in cafes for meals and lodging.



12. **peripheral** (pə rĭf' ə r əl) [*pherein* <G. "to carry"]
adj. 1. Pertaining to the boundary of an area.

When the Romans invaded Britain, they built camps whose **peripheral** walls still surround central sections of many English cities.

2. Of minor importance.

Gloria Steinem called attention to the fact that the thirteen qualified women astronauts appeared to be **peripheral** because they remained unmentioned in publicity during the early years of the space program.

periphery, *n.*

NOTA BENE: A test of peripheral vision determines the capacity of the eye when focused directly ahead to see objects on the perimeter of the field, out of the corner of the eye.

TITHENAI <G. "to put"

13. **anathema** (ə năth' ə mə) [*ana* <G. "up"]
n. 1. A person or thing detested and shunned.

Freelance photographers known as paparazzi have become **anathema** to celebrities upon whom they obtrude.

2. A curse, especially a formal church ban or excommunication.

Pope Leo X in 1520 proclaimed an **anathema** against Martin Luther for his attack on the sale of indulgences, a practice the Pope himself had encouraged.

Challenge Words

apothecary
diathesis
metathesis
prosthesis

anathematize, *v.*: **anathematic**, *adj.*

14. **antithesis** (ăn tīth' ə sīs) [*anti* < G. "opposite," "against"]

n. 1. An exact opposite; a complete contrast.

Ella Fitzgerald's sinuous vocal improvisations are the **antithesis** of the thunderous drive of rock music although the term *popular music* can refer to both.



2. A rhetorical form juxtaposing contrasting ideas, often in parallel structure.

Minna Antrim juxtaposes two kinds of knowledge to create **antithesis**: "To know one's self is wisdom, but to know one's neighbor is genius."

antithetical, *adj.*

NOTA BENE: History students become familiar with another meaning of *antithesis*. Karl Marx borrowed from Friedrich Hegel a theory of the historical process having three stages: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Envisioning a classless society, Marx perceived economic modes of production as the concern of the first stage, or thesis; internal tensions and disagreements would follow as the second stage, or antithesis; and the resolution of differences would bring the third stage, or synthesis, the completion of the cycle and the realization of the perfect socialist state.

15. **epithet** (ěp' ə thět') [*epi* < G. "on," "toward"]
n. A word or phrase used positively or negatively that characterizes or describes a person or thing, added to or replacing a name.

The repetition of **epithets** in *The Odyssey*, such as "rosy-fingered Dawn" and "gray-eyed Athena," served as a mnemonic for the minstrel as well as for the listener.

EXERCISE 2A

Circle the letter of the best SYNONYM for the word in bold-faced type.

1. A mathematical **paradigm** a. angle b. hypothesis c. model
d. parameter e. equivalent
2. to hurl a(n) **epithet** a. weapon b. disparaging phrase
c. threat d. afterthought e. compliment
3. a(n) **paragon** among chefs a. example of incompetence
b. epitome c. anathema d. example of excellence
e. example of creativity

4. to precipitate **altercations** a. alternatives b. conspiracies
c. solutions d. antitheses e. squabbles
5. appropriate **epitaphs** a. witty sayings b. birth announcements
c. prefatory remarks d. last words e. graveside inscriptions
6. budgetary **parameters** a. excesses b. perimeters c. calculations
d. limits e. interregnums
7. the **epitome** of fair play a. paradigm b. parameter c. anathema
d. embodiment e. antithesis
8. remembered **anathemas** a. ghosts b. beloved persons
c. requiems d. despised beings e. quarrels
9. **paradoxical** situations a. contradictory b. true c. mysterious
d. illustrative e. parallel
10. dedicated to **altruism** a. honesty b. faith c. self-interest
d. altercation e. unselfishness
11. a familiar **eponym** a. bold action b. friendly greeting
c. opening statement d. descriptive phrase e. name's source

Circle the letter of the best ANTONYM for the word in bold-faced type.

12. **peripheral** to the debate a. obtrusive b. essential c. immaterial
d. ephemeral e. tangential
13. **ephemeral** a. short-lived b. eponymous c. enduring
d. daytime e. derivative
14. a **peripatetic** ice-cream vendor a. pitiful b. traveling
c. well-equipped d. stationary e. peripheral
15. **antithetical** political positions a. opposite b. synonymous
c. outrageous d. well-analyzed e. courageous

EXERCISE 2B

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

1. a. Dorothea Lange's famous photograph of a migrant mother and her children **epitomizes** the poverty and despair of dustbowl refugees during the 1930s.
b. In the Deep South moon pies are the **epitome** of snack food, combining the sweetness of marshmallow cream with chocolate- or butterscotch-covered vanilla wafers.
c. The **epitome** of greed, two social-climbing daughters coldly and persistently impoverish their doting father in Balzac's *Pere Goriot*.
d. Mountain climbers did not reach the **epitome** of Mount Everest until 1953.
2. a. For Mahalia Jackson blues and gospel songs are the **antithesis** of one another because "Blues are the songs of despair, but gospel songs are the songs of hope."

- b. Some students became so **antithetical** that they refused to write the major paper required for the term.
 - c. When Juliet hears that her cousin Tybalt has died at the hands of her beloved Romeo, she cries, "Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!" compressing her **antithetical** feelings into the extreme paradox called oxymoron.
 - d. Toni Morrison's two protagonists in *Sula* represent **antitheses** in personal style: Nel Greene is loyal to home and community, while Sula Peace is independent and rebellious.
3. a. After a scalawag cut off the tail of the donkey that Saint Thomas à Becket was riding in Kent, he uttered the memorable **anathema** that all Kentish men be born with donkeys' tails.
- b. To sinners depicted in the classical art and literature, the Furies were **anathema**: relentless avengers against wrongdoing, with heads of writhing snakes and hands bearing whips and torches.
 - c. When **anathematized** by officials of the medieval Catholic church, members lost the right to be buried in sacred ground, to associate with other Christians, or to receive the sacraments of the church.
 - d. A Roman medical manuscript from the sixth century pictures a pain-killing mandragora root and gives a prescription for **anathematizing** patients who are to be "cut or burnt."

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. Although university students in China have pressed for social change, their influence has been _____ because they represent such a small percentage of the population.
2. Setting up their productions on wagons, _____ acting companies in the Middle Ages moved from town to town, performing in churches or village squares.
3. You can conjugate the six tenses of the verb *swim*, *swam*, *swum* by following this _____: "you lie, you lay, you will lie, you have lain, you had lain, you will have lain."
4. Charlotte Perkins Gilman sees the following situation as a(n) _____: "The women who do the most work get the least money, but the women who have the most money do the least work."
5. After her fiancé's death in World War I, Vera Brittain recalled the _____ happiness of her youth in a poem that concludes, "I thought that spring must last for evermore, For I was young and loved, and it was May."
6. While Bernarda Alba tries to restrain her five daughters, their

- repressed passions and hatreds lead to _____ that end in death.
7. _____ have been bestowed on several notable figures in American history, among them Stonewall Jackson, Honest Abe Lincoln, and Boss Tweed.
 8. Because the _____ of budget and technical skill affect the precision of high school students' science experiments, a ten percent margin of error is realistic.
 9. Distressed by the ignorance and poverty in their French town, Bartholomea Capitanio and Vincentia Gerosa committed their lives to the _____ service of teaching the young and nursing the sick.
 10. Louis Pasteur, the _____ of pasteurization, discovered the process of applying heat to kill microorganisms that cause fermentation and disease.
 11. Greta Garbo, a legend in cinematic history, was not only a(n) _____ of beauty but also of instinctive response to her directors and the camera.
 12. "Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much: —surely that may be his _____ of which he need not be ashamed."—Robert Louis Stevenson

EXERCISE 2D

Replace the word or phrase in *italics* with a key word (or any of its forms) from Lesson 2.

The story of Captain Álgar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca is the (1) *complete opposite* of many historical accounts of the Spanish presence in the New World, where (2) *noisy disagreements* between the interlopers and the native peoples often ended in brutality and death. Surviving a shipwreck in 1528, Cabeza de Vaca endured six years of hardship as a slave, gaining trust, however, among the native peoples of the Southwest through prayer, healing, and practical knowledge. He became famous as a(n) (3) *excellent model* of compassion and (4) *concern for the welfare of others*.

In 1534 he joined three other escaped captives, an African slave and two Spaniards, whom he trained in his skills. The native peoples especially admired the African Estavanico for his talent in mime and translation. Traveling westward, escorted from village to village by native guides, the (5) *wandering shamans* earned the (6) *characterizing phrase* "children of the sun" because they always appeared from the east.

As they turned south into Mexico, however, they encountered a(n)

(7) *hated thing*—a Spanish slaving party—but from a sympathetic captain. Cabeza de Vaca secured a guarantee of protection for his followers. When he reached the capital city after eight years of near starvation and one thousand miles of wandering, he and his companions were honored with an official holiday and a banquet.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 4. _____ | |

REVIEW EXERCISES FOR LESSONS 1 AND 2

1 Circle the letter of the best answer.

- Which word is not derived from *ponere*?
a. juxtapose b. opponent c. propinquity d. interpose
e. expound
- Which word is not derived from *tithenai*?
a. epithet b. anathema c. synthesis d. epitome
e. parenthesis
- Which word is not derived from the root given?
a. antithesis < *tithenai*
b. abstruse < *trudere*
c. internecine < *necare*
d. unrequited < *quiescere*
e. rapprochement < *ponere*
- acquiesce : resist : :
a. interpose : meddle
b. juxtapose : join
c. interpolate : omit
d. obtrude : interfere
e. requite : reciprocate
- internecine : bloody : :
a. peripatetic : sluggish
b. eponymous : paradoxical
c. quiescent : noisy
d. altruistic : self-centered
e. peripheral : insignificant

2 Matching: On the line at the left, write the letter of the phrase that provides the most appropriate example of the numbered word.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| _____ 1. paradox | A. a month-old newspaper |
| _____ 2. epitaph | B. peace and war |
| _____ 3. extrusion | C. a deer in the vegetable garden |
| _____ 4. paradigm | D. Siamese twins |
| _____ 5. antithesis | E. "To a [dead] Mouse"* |
| _____ 6. requiem | F. "Gone but not forgotten" |
| _____ 7. juxtaposition | G. $2 + 2 = 4$ |
| _____ 8. interloper | H. Albert Einstein |
| _____ 9. paragon | I. lava from a volcano |
| _____ 10. ephemera | J. a Pyrrhic victory |

3 Fill in each blank with the most appropriate word from Lessons 1 and 2. Use a word or any of its forms only once.

In his Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Jared Diamond attempts to explain why some cultures dominate others.

His explanation does not involve a) _____ (complex) social theory. Instead he applies a(n)

b) _____ (illustrative model) based on technology, epidemiology, and geography.

Diamond believes that when different cultures live in

c) _____ (proximity), they naturally assimilate from their neighbors whatever technologies they find useful, such as domestication of animals and plants, writing, shipbuilding, and navigation. The adoption of the horse by indigenous Americans

from European conquistadors d) _____ (provides a typical illustration of) this process.

e) _____ ly (With seeming contradiction), Native Americans also acquired contagious European diseases such as

* Title of a poem by Robert Burns

smallpox and measles, which decimated their populations. Such diseases contributed to the rapid f) _____ (consent without objection) of great empires like those of the Aztecs and Incas to the will of Spanish invaders, who had tiny armies but superior technology and social organization.

Diamond illustrates the importance of geography by

g) _____ (placing side by side for comparison) the east-west orientation of the Eurasian continent, which permits easy migration within similar climate zones, to the

h) _____ (completely contrasting) north-south orientation of the Americas and Africa, where deserts and jungles make transfer of peoples and cultures difficult. He emphasizes how throughout history, human populations have been

i) _____ (traveling about). For example, he charts how culture and especially language show that most of the peoples of the Pacific islands originated in China.

In Diamond's view, the dominance of the English language and so-called Western culture in the world today is not the result of a superior culture j) _____ (applying pressure, interfering) itself on inferior cultures or genetically inferior peoples, but the accidents of geography and botany.

4

Writing or Discussion Activities

1. Whom do you regard as a paragon, someone whose special style, talent, imagination, or spirit represents a high standard? Reflect on people you admire and choose one as the subject of a paragraph. Mention important details about the person, describe the person's attributes, and give reasons for your admiration.
2. Imagine yourself on a weekend outing—a camping or rafting trip—with one or more of the following companions. Think about the kind of specific behavior you might expect from each one. Choose one person and write a diary entry or a letter to a friend describing in colorful detail your remembered or imagined impression of such a person.
 - a. an interloper
 - b. an altruistic person
 - c. an obtrusive person
 - d. a peripatetic person
 - e. a person who enjoys altercations

