



*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** (dēs'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** (dī kǎth'lən, dī kǎth'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** (bī'sĕn tĕn'ĕ ē) [*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' ē)

*adj.* Pertaining to a 100-year period.

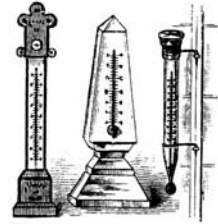
Our town is preparing a time capsule of contemporary articles to be opened at its next **centenary** celebration.

*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.