

## Lesson Sixteen

1. **arcane** (är kān´) *adjective* known or understood by only a few; mysterious  
Druid priests and priestesses performed *arcane* rituals in their religious ceremonies.  
*syn: secret, obscure* *ant: well-known, obvious*
  
2. **bourgeois** (böör zhwá´) *adjective* conformity to the middle class or average standards  
After Scott was introduced to radical new thoughts and ideas in college, his parents' *bourgeois* beliefs irritated him.  
*syn: conventional, ordinary*
  
3. **exculpate** (ek´ skəl pāt´) *verb* to clear of guilt; declare innocent  
After a successful appeal proved previous trial errors, the convicted armed robber was *exculpated* of his crime.  
*syn: vindicate* *ant: charge*
  
4. **fulsome** (fööl´ səm) *adjective* insincere; overly flattering  
His often *fulsome* praises for the boss won him the designated title of "yes-man" at the office.  
*syn: unctuous*
  
5. **masticate** (mäs´ tı kāt´) *verb* to chew  
Snakes do not *masticate* their food; instead, they swallow it whole.
  
6. **matriculate** (mə trik´ yə lāt´) *verb* to be admitted into college  
Sam's father constantly pushed him to *matriculate* at his old alma mater.
  
7. **mercurial** (mə kyöör´ ē əl) *adjective* volatile; quickly changing  
The rapid changes in his temperament, from peaceful to *mercurial*, made him a difficult person to work with.  
*syn: capricious* *ant: phlegmatic, steady*
  
8. **nascent** (nā´ sənt) *adjective* emerging; beginning to exist  
Poverty, more than any other factor, stifled his *nascent* generosity and good will.  
*syn: innate, new* *ant: extrinsic*
  
9. **parity** (pär´ ıtē) *noun* equality  
In order to obtain *parity* with New Hampshire, Maine requested more educational funds from the government.  
*syn: equivalence* *ant: difference*
  
10. **salubrious** (sə löö´ brə əs) *adjective* healthful  
He found that taking a daily walk was a *salubrious* addition to his daily routine.  
*syn: salutary* *ant: ill*

11. **squelch** (skwĕlch) *verb* to suppress; squash  
The embarrassed fourth-grader tried to *squelch* rumors that he liked a girl.  
*syn: repress* *ant: allow*
12. **tangential** (tǎn jĕn' shəl) *adjective* digressive from the main point  
"Stick to the point," she yelled, "and don't argue about *tangential* issues!"  
*syn: unrelated* *ant: relevant*
13. **trenchant** (trĕn' chənt) *adjective* keen; incisive  
The expert's *trenchant* comments silenced his critics.  
*syn: acute, sharply defined* *ant: ambiguous*
14. **tyro** (tīōrō) *noun* a beginner; novice  
The veteran pitcher loved striking out *tyros* who were just beginning their careers.  
*syn: amateur* *ant: professional*
15. **venial** (vē' nē əl) *adjective* easily excused  
Some people feel that shoplifting is so minor and *venial* that it isn't even a crime.  
*syn: minor, pardonable* *ant: major, punishable*

### Exercise I — Words in Context

From the words below, supply the words needed to complete the sentences.

**mercurial**                      **parity**                      **squelch**                      **tyro**                      **trenchant**

- A. The two teams finally achieved \_\_\_\_\_ in their play, which was enough to \_\_\_\_\_ the constant bragging.
- B. To the expert, the result was simple and obvious; to the \_\_\_\_\_, however, even with the professor's \_\_\_\_\_ explanation, the answer remained \_\_\_\_\_ and beyond comprehension.

From the words below, supply the words needed to complete the sentences.

**venial**                      **tangential**                      **salubrious**                      **masticate**                      **nascent**

- C. "To become more \_\_\_\_\_," said the nutritionist, "people must \_\_\_\_\_ their foods well."
- D. No argument \_\_\_\_\_ to the case was allowed in Judge Vaughn's courtroom. When lawyers tried to do so, they soon learned that their sin was not considered a \_\_\_\_\_ one.
- E. The toddler's \_\_\_\_\_ ability to speak was beginning to show.