

## Lesson Seventeen

1. **ascetic** (ə sĕt' ĭk) *noun* a person who renounces material comforts  
The Hindu *ascetic's* fragile frame and peaceful demeanor indicated his devotion to his arcane beliefs of self-deprivation.  
*syn: recluse*
  
2. **attenuate** (ə' tĕn yə āt) *verb* to reduce, weaken, or lessen  
Constant exposure to the cold virus *attenuated* his immune system, causing him to become ill.  
*syn: dilute* *ant: strengthen*
  
3. **attribute** (ə trīb yōōt') *verb* to ascribe; relating to a cause or source  
Tim *attributed* his loss of hearing to the rock concerts he attended when he was a teenager.  
*syn: credit*
  
4. **depravity** (dĭ prāv' ĭ tē) *noun* moral corruption; perversion  
When the serial killer displayed no remorse for the murders, the press vilified him as "the ultimate in *depravity*."  
*syn: iniquitous* *ant: decorousness*
  
5. **discourse** (dĭs' kōrs') *noun* discussion  
Despite a lengthy *discourse*, the committee still had difficulty coming to an agreement.  
*syn: communication*
  
6. **encomium** (ĕn kō' mē əm) *noun* praise; tribute  
The newspaper's *encomium* for the author's first novel heralded her as a major literary talent.  
*ant: vituperation*
  
7. **ethereal** (ĭ thĭr' ē əl) *adjective* delicate, insubstantial  
The frail blond child had an almost *ethereal* beauty.  
*syn: light, airy* *ant: rough*
  
8. **extrinsic** (ĭk strĭn' sĭk) *adjective* foreign; not essential  
When looking for a dependable car, he considered the color an *extrinsic* consideration.  
*syn: unnecessary* *ant: necessary*
  
9. **megalomania** (mĕg' ə lō mǎ' nē ə) *noun* obsession with doing great things  
Some of the greatest concepts in the modern world were developed by obsessed, single-minded *megalomaniacs*.
  
10. **mutable** (myōō' tə bəl) *adjective* subject to change  
The season's arrival is *immutable*, totally dependent on weather.  
*syn: variable* *ant: stable*

11. **poignant** (poin' yənt) *adjective* touching, sentimental  
It made my grandmother sad to see *poignant* movies about the Depression.  
*syn: heartfelt* *ant: insincere*
12. **primordial** (prɔ̄môr dē əl) *adjective* primitive, first, initial  
Asteroids, meteors, and comets constantly bombarded the *primordial* Earth.  
*syn: original* *ant: later, older*
13. **remuneration** (rĭ myōō' nə rā' shən) *noun* compensation, payment  
Tim received a generous *remuneration* in legal fees after being the victim of a drunk-driving accident.  
*syn: reimbursement*
14. **tactile** (tāk' təl) *adjective* able to be touched or felt  
The blind man's *tactile* sense sharpened to compensate for his loss of sight.  
*syn: tangible*
15. **transient** (trān' shənt) *adjective* remaining only a short time  
The *transient* migrant worker's children were forced to move so often that they missed many days of school.  
*syn: fleeting* *ant: permanent*

### Exercise I — Words in Context

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

**discourse**      **remuneration**      **poignant**      **primordial**      **attributed**

- A. A highly emotional \_\_\_\_\_ began over the author's proper \_\_\_\_\_ for his book.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ animals gradually evolved into modern ones; the theory of evolution is generally \_\_\_\_\_ to Darwin.
- C. After a long, \_\_\_\_\_ movie, I frequently cry.

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

**extrinsic**      **ethereal**      **transient**      **tactile**      **ascetic**

- D. A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ usually concentrates his or her thoughts on interior matters, not on the \_\_\_\_\_. Subjects like money and power are merely \_\_\_\_\_ in their thinking, if those thoughts occur at all. The \_\_\_\_\_ nature of their practices makes it difficult to live in the modern world with its emphasis on speed, accuracy, pleasure, and other \_\_\_\_\_ concepts.