

## Lesson One

1. **abjure** (ăb jŏŏr´) *verb* to renounce  
The defendant *abjured* his former illegal activities and consequently received a lighter sentence.  
*syn: recant, retract* *ant: pledge*
  
2. **anomaly** (ə nŏm´ə lē) *noun* deviation from the norm; odd or peculiar occurrence  
The aggressive drill sergeant's interest in romantic poetry was considered an *anomaly* by his colleagues.  
*syn: unnatural, irregularity* *ant: norm*
  
3. **equanimity** (ē kwə nĭm´ī tē) *noun* stability, calmness  
Oddly enough, the plaintiff recounted the story of her attack with perfect *equanimity*.  
*syn: composure, sangfroid* *ant: perturbation*
  
4. **estrangle** (ĭ strānj´) *verb* to alienate  
Jill's overbearing mother-in-law *estranged* Jill from her husband.  
*syn: disunite* *ant: reconcile*
  
5. **flay** (flā) *verb* to whip; to remove skin  
Many years ago, prisoners were sometimes tortured, then *flayed* alive by their captors.  
*syn: skin*
  
6. **florid** (flŏr´ ĭd) *adjective* rosy-colored, reddish  
Her face was *florid* after her morning five-mile run.  
*syn: ruddy* *ant: pale, wan*
  
7. **interminable** (ĭn tŭr´ mə nə bəl) *adjective* tiresome and long  
In grade school, the last few days before a holiday vacation always seemed *interminable*.  
*syn: unending, continuing*
  
8. **lugubrious** (lŏŏ gŏŏ´ brē əs) *adjective* mournful, gloomy  
The comic tone of the play was undermined by the *lugubrious* funeral scene.  
*syn: sorrowful* *ant: joyful*
  
9. **nondescript** (nŏn´ dĭ skript´) *adjective* having no individuality  
Inmates complain that each day in prison is uneventful, ordinary, and *nondescript*.  
*syn: amorphous* *ant: unusual*
  
10. **propitious** (prŏ pĭsh´ əs) *adjective* favorable; auspicious  
Discovering the old manifest for the sunken Spanish galleon proved *propitious* since it also showed the location of the gold.  
*ant: adverse*

11. **rife** (rɨf) *adjective* abundant, prevalent  
Tense hostage situations are becoming more and more *rife* in modern society.  
*syn: dominant, full*
12. **truncate** (trʌŋk'kāt) *verb* to shorten  
The candidate *truncated* his campaign because of a family illness.  
*syn: abridged, abbreviated ant: lengthened*
13. **ubiquitous** (yōō bɪk'wɪtəs) *adjective* occurring everywhere; omnipresent  
It was a horrible camping trip; the mosquitoes were *ubiquitous* and hungry.  
*syn: universal*
14. **vernacular** (vər nḅk'yələr) *noun* everyday language  
Use of slang, profanity, or *vernacular* is prohibited in scholarly papers.  
*syn: dialect*
15. **zealous** (zəl'əs) *adjective* fervent; fanatical  
The shaman was *zealous* about guarding his secret cures from outsiders.  
*syn: passionate, enthusiastic ant: apathetic*

### Exercise I — Words in Context

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

- florid          abjure          flayed          equanimity          propitious**

- A. The Pope spoke with \_\_\_\_\_ to worshipper and atheist alike.
- B. At the \_\_\_\_\_ moment, an umbrella was brought to shade the \_\_\_\_\_, sleeping tourist.
- C. In ancient times priests were forced to \_\_\_\_\_ their beliefs to avoid being \_\_\_\_\_ alive.

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

- truncated          nondescript          lugubrious          rife          interminable**

- D. The spy's wait for his contact seemed \_\_\_\_\_ to him, especially since he was trying to appear \_\_\_\_\_ and ordinary.
- E. The politician's \_\_\_\_\_ speech was \_\_\_\_\_ after booing by protesters.
- F. The plains of the Western United States had long been \_\_\_\_\_ with buffalo.