

Lesson Two

1. **arable** (är' ə bəl) *adjective* fit for cultivation (land)
Death Valley and the Badlands are both characterized by their lack of *arable* soil.
syn: fertile *ant: parched*

2. **brigand** (brīg' ənd) *noun* a robber or bandit
The wealthy stagecoach passengers kept a nervous watch for *brigands* when traveling through the dark forest.

3. **carte blanche** (kärt' blānch') *noun* authority with no bounds
The dictator's aide was given *carte blanche* to order the assassination of a well-known protester.

4. **consommé** (kɔn' sə mǎ') *noun* clear soup
The hostess served *consommé* and salad for the first two courses of the dinner.

5. **contemptuous** (kən tɛmp' chōō əs) *adjective* scornful, haughty
The *contemptuous* bank loan officer treated the poorly dressed applicants rudely.
syn: defiant *ant: humble*

6. **cosmopolitan** (kɔz' mə pɔl' ĭ tn) *adjective* worldly, sophisticated
The vast number and large variety of stickers on his luggage indicated that he was an experienced, *cosmopolitan* traveler.
ant: provincial

7. **discerning** (dĭ sŭr' nĭng) *adjective* distinguishing differences, detecting
The art critic's *discerning* eye could tell a real Picasso from a forgery in an instant.
syn: perceptive

8. **donnybrook** (dɔn' ē brɔɔk') *noun* fight, uproar
European soccer games, when the home team loses, are frequently followed by *donnybrooks* involving thousands of fans.
syn: brawl

9. **incantation** (ĭn' kǎn tǎ' shən) *noun* charm; recited magical spell
The sorceress uttered a long *incantation* as she created the magic potion.

10. **interlocutor** (ĭn' tər lɔk' yə tər) *noun* questioner; an on-stage speaker
The delusional man wandered down the street, conversing with some invisible *interlocutor*.

11. **metamorphosis** (mɛt' ə mɔr' fə sĭs) *noun* transformation or dramatic change
The *metamorphosis* from child to adult was complete as soon as Li became the Emperor of China at age seven.
syn: mutation

12. **nomenclature** (nō' mən klā' chər) *noun* naming system in an art or science
We had to learn the Latin *nomenclature* for the common prescription medicines.
syn: classification
13. **serendipity** (sēr' ən dīp' ɪ tē) *noun* a fortunate discovery made by accident
Karen mused that it was only through much *serendipity* that she found her long-lost wedding ring while mowing the grass.
14. **stentorian** (stĕn tōr' ē n) *adjective* extremely loud
The Civil War general issued a *stentorian* "Charge!" loud enough for everyone to hear.
syn: earsplitting *ant: quiet, silent*
15. **vestige** (vēs' tīj) *noun* trace; evidence.
Invading armies destroyed the final *vestiges* of resistance overnight.
syn: fragment, remnant

Exercise I — Words in Context

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

interlocutors brigand nomenclature carte blanche discerning

- A. The young _____ robbed all passengers indiscriminately, as if he had _____ from the government.
- B. The press corps served as _____ during the political debates.
- C. The biology professor was extremely _____ in using the proper Latin _____ for each insect.

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

stentorian donnybrook contemptuous consommé vestiges

- D. An ugly _____ broke out after the football game.
- E. _____ was often served as a first course, but the gourmet was frequently _____ of new restaurants.
- F. The enraged elephant issued a _____ trumpeting, which removed the last _____ of the hunter's bravery.