

Vocabulary Power



Lesson 26 The Prefixes *mono-* and *bi-*

When the prefixes *mono-* and *bi-* are combined with a variety of roots, the result is a countless number of new words. For example, the prefix *mono-*, meaning “single,” when combined with the root *oculus*, meaning “eye,” provides us with the word *monocle*, an eyeglass for one eye. A monogram is the initials of a name combined in a single design. In the same way, the prefix *bi-*, meaning “two,” when combined with the root *caput*, meaning “head,” produces the word *biceps*, a muscle with two points of origin. All of the words in this lesson share the meaning of “single” or “double.”

Word List

bicuspid	bilateral	monolith	monotheism
biennial	bilingual	monologue	monotony
bigamy	monogamy		

EXERCISE A Definitions

Write the word from the list that best matches each clue. On the line provided, write your own definition of the word; then, check it against the dictionary definition of the word.

- This word is made up of the prefix *bi-* and the root *gamos*, meaning “marriage.” The person involved in this commits a crime. _____
Dictionary definition _____
- This word is made up of the prefix *mono-* and the root *lith*, meaning “stone.” You might find one of these at Stonehenge in England. _____
Dictionary definition _____
- The prefix *bi-* is attached to a root meaning “sharp points.” If you had trouble with what this word names, you might see a dentist. _____
Dictionary definition _____
- The prefix *mono-* and the root *theism*, meaning “deity,” combine to form the word that describes the religion practiced by Muslims, Christians, and Jews. _____
Dictionary definition _____
- This word is formed by joining the prefix *bi-* with the root *annum*, meaning “year.” It may apply to the lifetime of a plant or the frequency of events. _____
Dictionary definition _____
- This word, formed by uniting the prefix *mono-* and the root *logue*, meaning “talk,” refers to monopolizing the conversation. _____
Dictionary definition _____



Vocabulary Power *continued*

7. Adding the prefix *bi-* to the root *lingua*, or “language,” makes a word that refers to something that interpreters need to be.

Dictionary definition _____

8. The prefix *mono-*, when added to the root *tone*, or “sound,” applies to the way some people speak.

Dictionary definition _____

9. The prefix *bi-* plus the root *latera*, meaning “sides,” produces a word that can apply to triangles or symmetry.

Dictionary definition _____

10. The prefix *mono-* plus the root *gamos*, meaning “marriage,” is the legal relationship most people are familiar with.

Dictionary definition _____

EXERCISE B Usage

If the boldfaced word is correctly used in the sentence, write *correct* above it. If not, draw a line through it and write the correct vocabulary word above it.

1. The orthodontist promised that braces would align my **bicuspid**s with the rest of my teeth.
2. The massive obelisk was sculpted from a **monologue**.
3. Students from Asia or South America whose English skills are just developing often benefit from **biennial** classes that reinforce the old language while teaching the new.
4. The ancient Greeks did not believe in **monotheism**; instead, they worshipped various gods and goddesses.
5. Although many bird species have several mating partners throughout their lifetimes, the cardinal practices **bigamy**.
6. Although we celebrate our birthdays each year, my cousin and I like to have a **bilateral** party so that we can see each other’s friends and get twice as many gifts.
7. The **monotony** of the announcer’s voice put everyone to sleep on a hot Friday afternoon.
8. Comedians who deliver effective and funny **monologues** have to be masters of timing and invention.
9. Israel and Iraq signed a **bilateral** agreement that ensured peace and prosperity for both nations for at least ten years.
10. In the event that Mrs. Cardon’s divorce did not go through as planned, she decided to postpone her second marriage for several weeks so that she did not accidentally commit **monogamy**.