Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefix: de- means "to remove" or "to reverse"
Suffix: -less means "without" or "lacking"
Suffix: -ate means "one who is characterized by"
Suffix: -or means "one who does"

Vocabulary List 16
(See next page for definitions and activities)

concise
dubious
dupe
feudal
illegible
indigent
inhibition
merit
potent
protagonist
ruse
straightforward
subsequent
vogue
writhe
Lesson Sixteen

1. concise  (kən sīs')  adj.  brief and to the point
   You will have only three minutes to interview the governor, so keep your
   questions concise.
syn: short; succinct  ant: wordy; lengthy

2. dubious  (dōōˈ bēəs)  adj.  1. uncertain in thought
   2. questionable; suspicious
   (1) Dave had a dubious opinion about computers until he learned how to
       use one.
   (2) I knew the man was impersonating a police officer when I saw his
       dubious badge.
   (1) syn: unconvincing; undecided  ant: sure; confident
   (2) syn: suspect; fishy  ant: reliable; certain

3. dupe  (dōōp)  v. to fool; to delude
   The crook tried to dupe the couple by convincing them to invest in a fic-
   tional company.
syn: cheat; con

4. feudal  (fyōōˈ dəl)  adj.  pertaining to the practice of sovereign lords
   granting land to nobles in exchange for money and military service
   In a feudal economic system, barons and dukes govern lands but pay
   taxes to the king.

5. illegible  (il lejˈ ə bəl)  adj.  incapable of being read
   The student was told to rewrite his essay because his handwriting was
   illegible.
syn: scrawled; undecipherable  ant: clear; neat

6. indigent  (inˈ də jənt)  adj.  poor; destitute
   The greedy king seldom considered the indigent peasants living beyond
   the castle walls.
syn: needy; impoverished  ant: affluent; wealthy

7. inhibition  (inˈ hə bishˈ ən)  n.  a mental restraint or hindrance
   Kelly's inhibitions prevent her from singing at the karaoke lounge.
syn: reserve; self-consciousness  ant: daring; bravado
8. merit (mâr’ ət) n. 1. superior quality or worth
   2. demonstrated achievement or ability
   v. to deserve
   (n.1) Her merits outnumbered her faults.
   (n.2) Ursula knew that Robert had the merit to become a great leader.
   (v) Finding a single, Native-American arrowhead on the ground does not merit turning our baseball field into a full-fledged archaeological dig.
   (n.1) syn: excellence                        ant: incompetence
   (n.2) syn: capacity; capability              ant: inadequacy
   (v) syn: entitle; earn; justify              ant: prohibit; forbid

9. potent (pôt’nt) adj. producing great effects; powerful
   That potent medicine can cause death if taken in large doses.
   syn: strong; mighty                        ant: weak; ineffective

10. protagonist (prô tag’ə nist) n. 1. the main character in drama or literature 2. the leader or great supporter of a cause
   (1) Throughout the course of the story, the protagonist grows from a young girl into an old woman.
   (2) The group’s protagonist speaks at rallies and public gatherings.
   (1) syn: hero/heroine; star                 ant: antagonist
   (2) syn: champion                           ant: enemy

11. ruse (rōōz’) n. a strategic act of deception; a ploy
   The general used a ruse to defeat the considerably larger enemy.
   syn: stratagem; scheme

12. straightforward (strät för’ wôrd) adj. honest and frank; not evasive
   The politician was never known to give a simple, straightforward answer to a question.
   syn: candid; forthright                     ant: evasive; confusing

13. subsequent (sub’ si kwent) adj. following in time or order; resulting
   The blizzard struck without warning, and subsequent snowdrifts caused the highways to close for days.
   syn: ensuing; consequent                   ant: previous; prior

14. vogue (vög) n. the fashion at a particular time
   People often laugh at the clothing styles that were once in vogue.
   syn: fad; style                             ant: anachronism

15. writhe (rith) v. to twist and squirm, as from pain
   Tim writhe in pain after breaking his ankle during the soccer match.
   syn: thrash; wriggle
EXERCISE 1 – Words in Context

Using the vocabulary list for this lesson, supply the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. In a[n] ________ to catch the thief, the campers pretended to be asleep.

2. Under the rules of the ________ system, barons had to provide soldiers to fight in the king's army.

3. Howard was from a wealthy family, but he wanted to achieve success on his own ________.

4. The ________ people were forced to leave town to find work.

5. The ________ announcement lasted only seconds, but it contained all the important information.

6. Reese stepped on a nail, and the ________ wound caused him to limp.

7. The ________ of the story learns a new lesson with each of her adventures.

8. Since the terrible accident, Sam has had a[n] ________ feeling about whether he wants to drive on the expressway again.

9. That music is in ________ right now, but it will be forgotten in a few months.

10. The migraine headache caused him to ________ in pain for ten minutes.

11. Pauline wanted a[n] ________ answer, but no one wanted to hurt her feelings by telling the truth.

12. No one could read the ________ message scribbled on the dusty window.

13. The ________ cleaning solution will bleach your clothes unless you dilute it with water.
14. Ursula loved the class, but she had too many _________ about speaking in public to participate in the frequent debates.

15. Sam's family _________ him by pretending that they forgot his birthday.

EXERCISE II – Sentence Completion

*Complete the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the italicized vocabulary word.*

1. The **protagonist** of the disaster-relief effort is often seen on television asking...

2. The salesman **duped** the customer by...

3. If the writing on the map is **illegible**, then the treasure hunters will...

4. Some clothing styles will be **in vogue** for only months, while other styles will...

5. Martin appreciates **straightforward** criticism of his music because his fans merely...

6. The company rewards employees for their **merit** by...

7. Brent's **inhibitions** prevented him from...

8. The essay you write for the test must be very **concise** because...

9. Gale tried to rid the house of the **potent** paint fumes by...

10. Jeff **wretted** in agony after he...

11. In a **ruse** to stay home from school, Liam pretended...

12. The oil tanker struck an iceberg, and the **subsequent** spill...

13. After the devastating tidal wave, many **indigent** families were...

14. In a **feudal** system, a farmer with land might be forced to...

15. The **dubious** customer entered the store just before closing time, and the clerk worried that...
EXERCISE III – Prefixes and Suffixes

Study the entries and use them to complete the questions that follow.

The prefix de- means "to remove" or "to reverse."
The suffix -less means "without" or "lacking."
The suffix -ate means "one who is characterized by."
The suffix -or means "one who does."

Use the provided prefixes and suffixes to change each word so that it completes the sentence correctly. Then, keeping in mind that prefixes and suffixes sometimes change the part of speech, identify the part of speech of the new word by circling N for a noun, V for a verb, or ADJ for an adjective.

1. (potent) The telecommunications ________ controls one of the largest corporations in the world.
   N V ADJ

2. (merit) The student received a[n] ________ for being late to class.
   N V ADJ

3. (inhibition) The special paint is a rust ________, so it will help the metal last longer.
   N V ADJ

4. (merit) Casualties were heavy, and neither side gained any ground during the ________ battle.
   N V ADJ
EXERCISE IV – Critical Reading

The following reading passage contains vocabulary words from this lesson. Carefully read the passage and then choose the best answers for each of the questions that follow.

Imagine living in a castle, behind heavy, protective walls of solid stone in a building that will stand for a thousand years. Well, the feudal days of kings and castles may be long gone, but that does not mean that new castles are not available for sale or rent. There is just one minor hitch: the new castles are underground.

During the 1960s, the U.S. government dug hundreds of massive holes throughout the nation. Builders lined each hole with steel and concrete thick enough to withstand a nuclear blast. Offices, living quarters, and recreation areas were added, and the holes became complete missile silos, or parking spaces for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), most of which were aimed at the former Soviet Union. Doomsday did not occur, fortunately, so, during the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent reduction of the U.S. nuclear stockpile, the government disassembled the enormous missiles and abandoned the $18-million dollar silos.

It did not take long for realtors to see the investment opportunity of the old silos. In New York, Wyoming, California, and numerous other states, developers purchased the silos and converted them into museums, storage vaults, businesses, schools (one in Kansas is more than thirty years old), and even homes. That’s right—private underground fortresses! If you are dubious about buying one for yourself, consider that more than twenty people have actually converted these Cold War relics into quite livable homes.

As homes, the silos offer luxury, plenty of room (Atlas missiles stood nearly 100 feet tall), security, stability, and seclusion. You will not find this home sagging with time or needing a new roof or siding. The temperature remains a crisp 64-degrees year-round, so air conditioning is unnecessary. One owner happily brags that tornadoes cannot harm his underground house, and termites cannot eat it since it is lined with steel. Who would not sleep soundly in a house that is safe from strong wind or pesky insects—or wayward comets?

One Kansas family bought a silo home, as these converted facilities are sometimes called, and added a nuclear-biological-chemical air filtration system that will defend the silo from the most potent agents. Generators, battery arrays, solar panels, and wind turbines ensure power will be available during emergencies. The family even installed an underground greenhouse and several large fish tanks in order to have a self-sus-
taining food supply in addition to the stacks of canned food in the ample storage area below the living quarters. Why, you might ask? Some people collect stamps or baseball cards. Others prepare for errant asteroids or alien invasions.

Most ordinary homes today are just over 2,000 square feet in area, but these underground mansions exceed 20,000 to 30,000 square feet, which ensures that the owner will have plenty of space for children’s birthday parties, guest rooms, and art collections. The silos are, of course, in vogue among people who enjoy privacy because it is virtually impossible to approach a silo without being seen. Thieves would dupe only themselves by trying to break into a silo home, unless, of course, they bring a crane that can open 100-ton blast doors.

There are certainly merits in owning a former missile silo, but these homes are definitely not for the average homebuyer; plan to spend at least a half-million dollars for a smaller, first-generation silo, and well over two million for a larger, renovated silo. They are unfurnished, but just think of the money you will save on curtains.

1. As used in line 13, the word subsequent most nearly means the opposite of
   A. resulting,
   B. following.
   C. subordinate.
   D. preceding.
   E. superior.

2. What is the author’s intent in lines 30-31?
   A. Ridicule, because the silo-owner should know that steel eventually rusts.
   B. Humor, because it is silly to compare termite and wind damage to catastrophes of unimaginable size.
   C. Praise, because everyone wants a home that will withstand the forces of nature.
   D. Warning, because the author suggests that space is more of a threat than any nuclear war.
   E. Discredit, because no structure would be able to withstand the direct impact of a comet.
3. The home in Kansas has all of the following except
   A. a hydrogen-fuel heating system.
   B. a wind turbine.
   C. solar panels.
   D. a greenhouse.
   E. lots of storage area.

4. As used in line 34, potent most nearly means
   A. powerful and tempting.
   B. strong and dangerous.
   C. persuasive and intimidating.
   D. weak and malodorous.
   E. mild and calming.

5. The purpose of this passage is to
   A. compare and contrast.
   B. persuade and advise.
   C. inform and entertain.
   D. appeal and convince.
   E. ridicule and tease.