Prefixes and Suffixes

Suffix: -ify means "to make"
Suffix: -ist means "one who does" or "follower of"
Suffix: -ian means "act of", "state of", or "result"
Suffix: -ous means "full of"

Vocabulary List 1
(see next page for definitions and activities)

belittle
blasé
concoct
decade
diverse
enunciate
hurtle
improvisе
jostle
libel
mammoth
paradox
provincial
realm
undermine
Pronunciation Guide

a — track
ã — mate
ä — father
â — care
e — pet
ē — be
i — bit
ɾ — bite
o — job
õ — wrote
ô — port, fought
ōō — proof
ōō — book
u — pun
ũ — you
û — purr
ə — about, system, circus
ïɾ — steer
oi — toy
Lesson Two

1. belittle (bi lit' ĕl) v. to speak of someone or something as small or unimportant; to speak of negatively
   The arrogant professor sometimes belittled his students.
   syn: demean; criticize  ant: praise; honor

2. blasé (blä zä') adj. uninterested or unimpressed because of frequent exposure or excess
   Jillian's blasé attitude during the job interview convinced the manager to find a different applicant for the job.
   syn: unconcerned  ant: enthusiastic

3. concoct (kən kōkt') v. to devise cleverly; to invent
   The writers concocted a new dilemma for the hero to overcome each week.
   syn: create; fabricate

4. decade (dek' ād) n. ten years
   Over the course of a decade, the tiny seed grew into a sizable tree.

5. diverse (dī vûrs') adj. differing from each other; many and distinctly unalike
   Adam has diverse tastes in music; he listens to everything from classical to hip-hop.
   syn: varied; assorted  ant: homogeneous

6. enunciate (i nûn' sē āt) v. to speak articulately; to express clearly
   Please enunciate your words so the rest of the class can understand you.
   ant: slur; mumble

7. hurtle (hûr' təl) v. 1. to move with great speed and force
   2. to throw forcefully; to hurl
   (1) The runaway train hurtled down the tracks.
   (2) Kyle hurtled the dog's toy to the back of the yard.
   (1) syn: race; bolt  ant: saunter; stroll
   (2) syn: heave; fling

8. improvise (im' prə vîz) v. 1. to do or make with no preparation
   2. to fashion using only immediately available materials
   (1) Dylan forgot the lyrics while he was on the stage, so he improvised the second half of the song.
   (2) The castaway improvised a crude raft out of barrels and rope.
9. jostle (jós'əl) v. to bump, push, or shove
Mark jostled the frozen log until it broke free from the ground.
syn: manhandle

10. libel (lɪˈbɛl) n. the act of printing a false statement that harms someone's reputation
   v. to defame someone by publishing false statements
 (n) The politician sued her opponent for libel after she read the obvious lie printed in the advertisement.
 (v) The newspaper refused to print the letter because it libeled a public figure.
 (n) syn: defamation
 (v) syn: vilify
   ant: flattery
   ant: praise; laud

11. mammoth (məmˈəθ) adj. huge n. a large, hairy, extinct elephant
 (adj) To promote business, the bakery made a mammoth 800-pound cookie.
 (n) The remains of the mammoth had been frozen in a glacier for thousands of years.
 (adj) syn: enormous; immense
   ant: tiny; petite

12. paradox (pærˈədoks) n. a statement or situation that is true, but seems impossible or self-contradictory
   To her friends, Dana's apparent ability to eat whatever she wants without gaining any weight is a paradox.
   syn: contradiction; impossibility

13. provincial (prə vinˈshəl) adj. 1. rural; pertaining to the customs of non-city dwellers 2. narrow in perspective; unsophisticated
   (1) After eight years of working in the city, Phil missed his provincial country home.
   (2) His provincial argument failed to convince the principal to change her mind.
   (1) syn: rustic
   (2) syn: insular; unrefined
   ant: urban
   ant: broad-minded

14. realm (relm) n. a domain; a field; a territory
   The setting of the novel is a realm of fantasy, where elves and dragons exist.
   syn: world

15. undermine (un dər mɪn′) v. to weaken by wearing away the foundation or support
   The sailor undermined the mission by turning the crew against the captain.
   syn: sabotage; destabilize
   ant: bolster; strengthen
EXERCISE I – Words in Context

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

1. Stranded and injured, Robinson used sticks and vines to ________ a sling for his broken arm.

2. She is a good amateur golfer, but years will pass before she enters the _________ of professional golf.

3. Uncle Pete _________ a disgusting beverage that he claimed would cure the common cold.

4. The reporter lost his job after he _________ a respected judge in a newspaper article.

5. Since Ed has _________ tastes, he is seldom seen trying any new foods.

6. You must _________ your words if you want to be heard clearly.

7. Everyone knew that the composer's career would soon be over when they saw the king's _________ expression during the concert.

8. The _________ boulder tumbled down the mountain and smashed the sturdy, old cabin into pieces.

9. The 1940s was a[n] _________ of war and invention.

10. The statement, “this sentence is false,” is a[n] _________ because it cannot be both true and false.

11. Joe _________ the company by merely pretending to be working.

12. The meteor _________ toward earth at ten times the speed of sound.

13. The _________ team included people from various nations.

14. On the morning after Thanksgiving, aggressive shoppers _________ each other while trying to be first to enter the department store.

15. Many students _________ Donna's dedication to studying until she passed a test that everyone else failed.
EXERCISE II – Sentence Completion

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

1. Afraid that he would be punished if he told the truth, Martin concocted...

2. Sam's provincial view of life is exemplified by...

3. In the realm of her own dreams, Wanda is...

4. The arrogant man belittled us because...

5. It is a paradox that the company can lose money every year but still...

6. The angry golfer hurtled his golf club into the pond after...

7. The blasé film critic disliked the movie because...

8. Eating diverse foods will ensure...

9. She had to improvise her speech because...

10. He jostled people in the crowd as he...

11. She enunciated each word so...

12. Johnny undermines the respect of his friends by...

13. Over the course of a decade, the young maple sapling grew into...

14. When the giant dropped his mammoth hat on the village, it caused...

15. After being found guilty of libel, the reporter was ordered to...
EXERCISE III – Prefixes and Suffixes

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

The suffix -ify means “to make.”
The suffix -ion means “act of,” “state of,” or “result of.”
The suffix -ist means “one who does” or “follower of.”
The suffix -ous means “full of.”

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. (libel) Though it was not truthful, the ________ article in the magazine ruined the actor’s reputation. N  V  ADJ

2. (diverse) The stockbroker says clients should ________ their investments because it is risky to put all of one’s savings in one place. N  V  ADJ

3. (libel) The reporter earned a reputation as being a[n] ________ after he submitted a false story. N  V  ADJ

4. (diverse) The canoe trip was a nice ________ from an otherwise humdrum camping excursion. 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.

Stephanie Kwolek was born in 1923, in the small coal-mining town of New Kensington, Pennsylvania, but her interests were anything but provincial. Exploring the wilderness with her father filled Kwolek with a strong curiosity of the natural world before she was ten years old. From her mother, Kwolek learned to love sewing and working with fabrics. Some might call it a paradox that Stephanie Kwolek, a woman who enjoyed nature and sewing as a young girl, someday would devise a synthetic textile capable of stopping bullets.

Kwolek developed her interest in science and medicine, and after high school, she enrolled in Margaret Morrison Carnegie College, the women's college of what is now Carnegie Mellon University. She graduated in 1946 with a degree in chemistry and applied for several jobs, one of which was a research position for DuPont—a company already famous for its innovations in plastic and synthetic fibers such as nylon.

Confidence and a little boldness landed Kwolek a job with the DuPont textile fiber laboratory in Buffalo, New York. Skill and determination allowed her to retain her position in the years following the end of World War II, a time in which many women scientists were jostled from their positions to make jobs for returning male soldiers. During her first years at DuPont, Kwolek became very interested in the realm of polymers, or chains of long molecules that make up synthetic fibers. She abandoned her plans to go to medical school and focused on her research at DuPont.

In 1950, Kwolek transferred to DuPont's new research laboratory in Wilmington, Delaware. During the decade following the transfer, Kwolek labored to identify new polymers and perfect low-temperature processes to create polymers. Finally, in the 1960s, Kwolek discovered a phenomenon that resulted in a whole new branch of the synthetic fiber industry: liquid crystal polymers (LCP). The new polymers were merely the first part of a mammoth discovery. In 1965, Kwolek prepared a cloudy, seemingly impure LCP solution with peculiar physical properties. She opted to spin the strange solution into fiber, but a reluctant technician initially refused for fear of damaging the equipment. Kwolek insisted on spinning the solution, and the results changed the world. The resultant fibers were half the density of fiberglass but five times stronger than their weight in steel. Kwolek had invented Kevlar®—the fiber now famous for its use in bulletproof vests.

DuPont spent six years perfecting a commercial version of Kevlar, and since entering the market in 1971, Kevlar has become the material of choice for products that must be lightweight but durable enough to withstand physical extremes. Kevlar is now found in hockey sticks, canoes, suspension bridge cables, spacecraft shields, and hundreds of other products; however, its most celebrated role is in that of lifesaving. Layers of Kevlar in body armor and protective clothing
protect thousands of police officers and soldiers from bullets, knife blades, and shrapnel each day.

Kwolek continued her research at DuPont until her semi-retirement in 1986. The discovery of Kevlar was a highlight of Kwolek's career, but it was certainly not the only one. Kwolek has received seventeen patents, and in 1994, she became the fourth woman in history to be inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame. In 1997, Kwolek became the second woman in a century to win the prestigious Perkins Medal for industrial chemistry. She has received the National Medal of Technology, the Lemelson-MIT Lifetime Achievement Award, and, of course, the gratitude of the many whose lives were saved by Kwolek's discovery. Stephanie Kwolek is now an inspiration and mentor to scientists and students alike.

1. Kwolek did not attend medical school because
   A. medicine bored her.
   B. she could not afford it.
   C. only men could become doctors.
   D. she worked at a hospital in Buffalo.
   E. she enjoyed her job at DuPont.

2. As used in line 17, the word jostled most nearly means
   A. removed.
   B. replaced.
   C. empowered.
   D. threatened.
   E. promoted.

3. Stephanie Kwolek invented
   A. body armor made of nylon.
   B. a type of synthetic fiber.
   C. steel alloy used in textiles.
   D. medical-grade nylon.
   E. polymers.

4. As used in line 27, mammoth most nearly means
   A. widespread.
   B. full-size.
   C. major.
   D. lifesaving.
   E. inconsequential.

5. This passage is best described as
   A. biographical.
   B. persuasive.
   C. comical.
   D. generous.
   E. bleak.