

## UNIT FOUR

### PECC

Latin PECCARE, PECCATUM “to sin, to be flawed”

III Peccadillo entered English from Spanish. The *-illo* suffix means “little, small.”

PECCADILLO (pə kə di' lō) *n.* A small sin or fault  
Leonard grew so irritated by his roommate's *peccadilloes* that he threatened to move out.

IMPECCABLE (im pek' ə bəl) *adj.* Having no flaws  
L. in, “not,” + peccare = *not sinning*  
Oliver's *impeccable* comic timing made him the center of every party.  
syn: perfect *ant:* flawed

PECCANT (pe' kənt) *adj.* Violating a moral law; sinful  
The seamstress was exiled from the colony for her supposedly *peccant* activity.

### PEJ, PAIR

Latin PEJOR “worse”

III Impair is another word that came to English through French. One syllable dropped out of the original pejor root, but the meaning of the word is still closely related to its etymological ancestor.

PEJORATIVE (pe jōr' ə tiv) *adj.* Negative and critical; insulting  
Mosheh was clearly disturbed by the *pejorative* comments used in the review of his latest album.  
syn: belittling, derogatory *ant:* praising

IMPAIR (im pār') *v.* To cause to diminish, as in strength, value, or quality  
L. in, “in,” + pejor = (*to cause to be*) *in worse condition*  
A new report claims that many prescription drugs will severely *impair* one's ability to operate a vehicle.  
syn: harm *ant:* fix

**MAL**

Latin MALUS "bad"

**MALIGN** (mə līn') v. To speak of maliciously; insultL. malus + gignus, "nature" = *bad-natured*; to act *bad-naturedly*The pamphlet tried to help the incumbent win the re-election race for city council by *maligning* the two opposing candidates.

syn: deprecate

ant: praise

**MALINGER** (mə līn' gər) v. To pretend to be sick in order to avoid somethingShannon *malingered* all day Friday because she hadn't studied for her math test.

syn: shirk

**MALAISE** (mə lāz') n. A sense of unease; depressionOne year after the crash of the stock market, the economy remains stuck in a deep *malaise*.

syn: boredom



Boring PLAYS = Audience MALAISE

**NEG**

Latin NEGARE, NEGATUM "to deny"

NEGLEGERE "to neglect"

**NEGLIGENT** (ne' glə jənt) adj. Not properly attentiveL. neglegere = *to neglect*Because the captain had been *negligent* in his maintenance of the ship, the hull developed a leak.

syn: careless

ant: careful; attentive

**NEGLIGIBLE** (ne' gli ji bəl) adj. Unimportant; insignificantL. neglegere + ible = *able to be neglected*Although the automobile accident was terrifying, actual damage to the car was *negligible*.

syn: remote

ant: significant

**NEGATE** (nə gāt') v. To cancel the effect of; nullifyL. negatum = *denied*Donna feared that her years of gymnastics training would be *negated* by an accident during the competition.

syn: deny; contradict

ant: affirm

III A renegade was originally someone who denied the principles of the Catholic Church.

**EXERCISES - UNIT FOUR**

Exercise I. Mix up the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the *italicized* vocabulary word.

1. The general *malaise* felt by the workers on the strawberry farm was probably the result of...
2. People who saw it used *pejorative* language when describing the film because...
3. Patty hoped that the good work she did at the soup kitchen would not be *negated* by...
4. Omar's *impeccable* manners make anyone who dines with him feel...
5. Daniel's ability to take the test was *impaired* by...
6. In an attempt to *malign* Sally, the attorney who was questioning her said...
7. Because the chief of the construction crew was *negligent* when it came to safety standards...
8. Charlene feels that her lying is a *peccadillo* rather than...
9. When Jackie saw that the storm damage done to her house was *negligible*, she...
10. My mother accused my brother and me of *malingering* when we...
11. The priest urged any *peccant* churchgoers to...

Exercise II. Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

peccadilloes                      negligible                      impeccable                      malaise

1. In order to get along in the cramped cabin, we had to ignore one another's \_\_\_\_\_.
2. After the series of economic and natural disasters, many citizens of Squalley's Gulch fell into a deep \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The effect of Chemical X on the human brain was once thought disastrous, but it is now considered \_\_\_\_\_.

Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

malign      negligent      pejorative      malingering      impeccable

4. Leigh explained that her remark was not meant to be \_\_\_\_\_, regardless of how offensive it had sounded.
5. Andy's \_\_\_\_\_ study skills ensured that he never missed a day's homework.
6. Although other writers \_\_\_\_\_ Craig for his strange style, he continues to write in an experimental fashion.
7. Stu's habitual \_\_\_\_\_ exasperated his boss and cost him his job.

Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

negligible      impair      negligent      peccant      negate

8. Studies have found that missing breakfast in the morning may \_\_\_\_\_ a child's ability to pay attention in class.
9. A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ camper had left a pit fire burning, and the flames soon spread to the nearby forest.
10. The nun scolded her group of children, warning them to mend their \_\_\_\_\_ ways.
11. Molly's mother warned her that all the regret in the world could not \_\_\_\_\_ a hurtful word or deed.

Exercise III. Choose the set of words that best completes the sentence.

1. The priest says that minor trespasses and \_\_\_\_\_ may be considered \_\_\_\_\_, but they can be dangerous because they lead to greater wrongdoing.
  - A. malaise; negligent
  - B. peccadilloes; negligible
  - C. pejoratives; malign
  - D. malaise; pejorative
2. Charlie was shocked to find his \_\_\_\_\_ academic record \_\_\_\_\_ by a hostile professor.
  - A. negligent; negated
  - B. peccant; malingered
  - C. impeccable; maligned
  - D. negligible; impaired

3. The \_\_\_\_\_ under which Ivan had been suffering for weeks made it difficult for him to pay attention; as a result, he was \_\_\_\_\_ in several areas of his job.
- peccadillo; negligible
  - peccant; pejorative
  - malaise; peccadillo
  - malaise; negligent
4. Was Steve's ability to walk really \_\_\_\_\_, or was he simply \_\_\_\_\_ to get out of any heavy lifting?
- negated; maligning
  - peccant; impairing
  - negligent; malingering
  - impaired; malingering
5. No amount of flattery can \_\_\_\_\_ the hurtful and \_\_\_\_\_ term you used to describe me.
- negate; pejorative
  - impair; peccant
  - maligner; negligent
  - malign; negligible

Exercise IV. Complete the sentence by inferring information about the *italicized* word from its context.

- When Iggy begins listing some of Meredith's *peccadilloes*, Meredith will probably feel...
- If Horatio is *negligent* in his gardening duties, the flowers may...
- If Tamara wants to get out from under her *malaise*, she should try to...

Exercise V. Fill in the blank with the word from the Unit that best completes the sentence, using the root we supply as a clue. Then, answer the questions that follow the paragraphs.

As spring approaches each year, millions of avid backyard gardeners stream into local hardware stores and nurseries, while others pore over catalogues and scour the Internet in a relentless quest to create a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ (PECC) garden. These people take time from their busy schedules to share in a primal, soothing activity: creating beauty and sustenance by joining forces with nature.

Establishing a worthy garden is not a simple task; it requires dedicated planning and constant attention. Choosing the appropriate seeds and plants demands knowledge of climate, soil, sunlight, and drainage conditions. Oftentimes, gardeners must also devise blueprints detailing specific positioning of plants in the garden, as certain plants need or deplete certain minerals. Gardeners must also turn the soil, mixing it with a nutrient-rich growing medium to replenish necessary resources. Once physically structured, the garden is ready for planting.

Many gardeners pay careful attention to the preparation of their seeds. They begin the growing period indoors, usually six to eight weeks before spring. This produces sturdy plants ready for transplanting outdoors; however, transferring the seedlings is a delicate process. Relocating plants too hastily may \_\_\_\_\_ (PAIR) their ability to grow and thrive in a new environment. To avoid this dilemma, many gardeners place seedlings outside in the daylight and shelter them overnight for one to two weeks prior to transplanting. Seeds planted directly in the garden require slightly less care because this process does not entail an adjustment period. Whether the garden consists of plants grown inside or outside, it still needs daily attention once established.

A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ (NEG) gardener who fails to water or weed the garden will find the plants wilting and starving for nutrients. Most garden plants do not tolerate drought conditions; but weeds can thrive in such situations,

stealing whatever nourishment they require from the other vegetation. Devoted gardeners would never cause such harm to their masterpieces. They diligently clear weeds, provide fertilizer, and deliver moisture as their precious plants command; as a result, they produce lush, healthy, fruitful gardens.

Gardening is a time-consuming, demanding, yet rewarding diversion. Producing sturdy, flourishing, and productive plants provides immense satisfaction and a grand sense of accomplishment. Few other activities in today's busy world share such rewards.

1. According to the passage, a successful gardener is
  - A. persistent and stubborn.
  - B. dedicated and knowledgeable.
  - C. patient and nimble.
  - D. meticulous and diplomatic.
  
2. Why must a gardener clear weeds from the garden, according to the article?
  - A. The weeds block sunlight from the seedlings.
  - B. The weeds tangle around the garden plants and stunt their growth.
  - C. The weeds deplete the soil of important nutrients.
  - D. The weeds infect the garden plants with mold.
  
3. According to the author, plants that use up minerals
  - A. specifically position the soil in the garden.
  - B. must have a particular location in the garden.
  - C. must be mixed with a richer soil.
  - D. require constant attention.

Exercise VI. Drawing on your knowledge of roots and words in context, read the following selection and define the *italicized* words. Note that *fac* means "make," and *ab* means "from." If you cannot figure out the meaning of the words on your own, look them up in a dictionary.

Although some have seen Prince Mikhail as the greatest *malefactor* in the tiny country's troubled history, recent scholarship has shown that some of his deeds were not so terrible for the well-being of his subjects as previously thought. Then, too, when he decided he was unfit to rule, he immediately *abnegated* control. Surely the sacrifice of power for the nation's greater good redeems him, despite his mistakes.