Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 17: Terms from the Law

• there are many words in English which come originally from legal terminology – especially Latin – for two reasons:
  – Roman law is the basis of most Western legal systems
  – the Normans imposed on England a legal structure conducted in Anglo-Norman (based on Latin)
• I won’t add any terms to those in Ayers
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 17: Terms from the Law

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 245-247

  • martyr (“a person tortured or killed for his/her beliefs”)
    – originally, “witness” (Greek)
  • paraphernalia (“personal belongings, equipment, gear”)
    – originally, “a wife’s property not counted as part of her dowry” (Greek)
  • privilege (“right, benefit”)
    – originally, “a law made in favor of or against an individual”
  • peculiar (“distinctive, special”)
    – originally, “p.t. (one’s own) cattle/property”
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 17: Terms from the Law

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 245-247
  • ordeal (“severe test, calamity”)
    – from an Anglo-Saxon word for “judgment”
    – cf. trial by fire
  • roué (“a dissipated man, a rake, a debauchee”)
    – originally, a person deserving torture on the “wheel”
  • subpoena (“a writ summoning someone into court”)
    – literally from Latin, “under penalty (of law)”
  • size/assize (“measurement/to assess the measure of something”)
    – originally from Latin ad/sedere, “to sit in judgment”
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 17: Terms from the Law

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 245-247

  • bailiwick (“a jurisdictional district, a field of expertise”)
    – originally, “the village (-wick) governed by a bailiff (a representative of the king)”

  • escheat/cheat (“confiscate [for the state]”/“dupe, steal”)
    – because those working for the king were often seen as “stealing” an estate from its rightful heirs

  • ignoramus (“dunce”)
    – originally, “we are ignorant” [Latin]
    – a term used when a grand jury determined that there was not enough evidence to bring an indictment
    – later, the name of a particularly stupid lawyer in a 17th-century play written by George Ruggle; hence, “dunce”
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 18: Literary Terms

• literary works have naturally had an enormous impact on the evolution of English
• while Ayers demonstrates that well in Lesson 18, he short-changes drama and theatre
• let’s correct that oversight right now!
Lesson 18: Literary Terms

- Literary terms from drama and theatre
  - **exposition**: “the backstory of a play or movie”
    - literally, “place/lay out” (from Latin)
  - **climax**: “the final point of excitement and tension near the end of a play”
    - literally, “ladder” (from Latin via Greek)
  - **denouement**: “the final resolution of a dramatic plot following the climax”
    - literally, “un-knot” (from Latin, *dis- + nodo*, “knot”)
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 18: Literary Terms

- literary terms from drama and theatre
  - **bohemian**: “a person who lives an unconventional lifestyle, usually an artist”
    - originally, “a person from Bohemia, a gypsy”
    - “bohemian” in the sense of “wild” was popularized by Wm. Thackeray who used it to describe Becky Sharp’s parents in *Vanity Fair*:

      She was of a wild, roving nature, inherited from her father and mother, who were both Bohemian by taste and circumstance.
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 18: Literary Terms

• literary terms from drama and theatre
  – farce: “short, broadly comical play; ridiculous scene”
    • literally, “stuffing” (Latin)
    • because farces were originally used as comic interludes in longer plays
    • later, > “anything absurd”
      – example of the change from concrete-to-abstract
    • “farce” can still be used as a cooking term meaning “to stuff a fowl with mixed ingredients”
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 18: Literary Terms

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 248-250
  • hypocrite (“one who pretends to someone or something he or she is not”)
    – originally, “actor” (from Greek)
  • episode (“an installment in a serialized story; an event”)
    – originally, “the part of a Greek tragedy between choral songs”
  • chorus (“a group that sings together, and often dances also”)
  • orchestra (“a large musical ensemble”)
    – originally, “a place for dancing in the Greek theatre”
    – later, the front of the theatre; the seating there; the place where the musicians sit and play; the musicians themselves
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 18: Literary Terms

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 248-250

  • scene (“the place where something happens or is imagined”)
    – originally, “tent on which a background was painted in Greek theatre”

  • person (“an individual”)
    – originally from Latin, “mask, often designating a character type”

  • explode (“blow up”)
    – originally, “clap off the stage” (from Latin; cf. applaud)

  • pants (“clothing covering the legs separately”)
    – originally, “pantaloons” (clip); from the character Pantalone who was
      seen often in Renaissance Italian theatre (commedia dell’arte) and
      wore a distinctive pants-like costume
    – later, “any such legwear” (generalization)
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 18: Literary Terms

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 248-250

  • **limelight** (“a prominent or conspicuous position”)
    – originally, “a strong spotlight created by oxidized lime”
  
  • **robot** (“mechanical assistant, automaton”)
    – originally from the Czech playwright Karel Capek’s 1923 play *R.U.R.* (*Rossum’s Universal Robots*) which featured mechanical workers
    – ultimately from the Czech word *robota* (“compulsory service”); cf. German *arbeit*

  • **romance** (“a story about love and adventure; a love affair”)
    – originally, “Roman” (vs. Latin)
    – in reference to medieval works aimed at a non-scholarly audience and published in the popular languages which had evolved from Latin
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 19: Terms from Various Occupations

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 253-254
  – from weaving
    • **tease** (“irritate, harass”)
      – originally, “separate or pull apart fibers of wool, flax, etc.”
    • **heckle** (“annoy with interruptions”)
      – originally, “comb out in preparation for spinning”
    • **subtle** (“clever, mysterious, hard to understand”)
      – originally, “made of finely woven, thin cloth”
      – from Latin *sub-* + *tela* (“web”)
    • **on tenterhooks** (“in suspense, anxious”)
      – originally, “attached to the pegs of a frame used for stretching cloth”
      – cf. Latin *TENT-* (“stretch”)
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 19: Terms from Various Occupations

• know these examples from Ayers, pp. 253-254
  – from commerce and trading
    • **dicker** (“trade by bargaining, haggle”)
      – originally, “sell furs by the tens”; cf. Latin *decuriae* (“groups of ten”)
    • **shambles** (“disarray, confusion”)
      – originally, “a bench in a butcher’s shop”
    • **broker** (“middleman, seller”)
      – originally, “one who broached a cask of wine”
  – from hunting
    • **untrammeled** (“freed of restraint”)
      – a trammel is a kind of net: “*tri-* (“triple”) + *macula* (“mesh”)
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 19: Terms from Various Occupations

- know these examples from Ayers, pp. 253-254
  - from shepherding
    - **pester** (“annoy constantly”)
      - originally, “hobble”; i.e. tie a horse’s feet so it can’t escape its pasture (Latin *pastorium*)
    - **ruminate** (“think over, ponder”)
      - originally, “chew cud”; cf. ruminant (animals which chew cud)
    - **greenhorn** (“young, inexperienced person”)
      - originally, a reference to young animals whose horns are new (“green”)
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lessons 20-25: Scientific and Medical Terminology

• you are required to know the bases and affixes listed in the last six lessons in Ayers (Lessons 20-25, pp. 257-280) on a “matching” basis only
  – for Lessons 20-25, please do the following:
    • review the affixes listed in each lesson
    • then review the BASES listed in each lesson
      – memorize these affixes/BASES only as potential elements in “matching” exercises
    • to practice this, do the matching exercise at the end of each lesson
      – you’ll see the same sort of matching exercise on the Final
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lessons 20-25: Scientific and Medical Terminology

• for the next class, do Lessons 20-22 and we’ll review the matching exercises at the end of these lessons in class (pp. 262, 265, 268)

• for the class following that, do Lessons 23-25 and the matching exercises in those lessons (pp. 272, 276, 279)