

7-What's IN? Who's Out?

Describing Inside and Outside: Is she popular? Is it trendy? Are you here? Do you want to participate in the office Super Bowl pool? Did he make the throw in time? The concepts of "in" and "out" have manifold uses in English. The ten words below give the flavor of some of the possibilities.

1. **indigenous:** (in DIJ en us) This adjective describes people or things that are native to a region. Immigrants and transplants don't qualify.
 - When Barbara completes her research on plants that are **indigenous** to the Smoky Mountain region, she will publish a monograph on the topic.
 - The island that is the setting for Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* is populated by a father and daughter who came there in a small boat, and by a spirit named Ariel and the ill-tempered Caliban, both **indigenous**.

2. **interloper:** (IN ter La per) Interlopers intrude where they aren't wanted, whether they are meddlers in the affairs of others or merely non-indigenous species of plants (see #1). The word came into English from the Dutch in the late sixteenth century, a period when England and the Netherlands were great commercial rivals. The term originally applied to a trading company attempting business in an area where another company had a monopoly.
 - Although the Collinses had lived in Fancy Gap for over twenty years, the community was so tight-knit that they sometimes still felt like **interlopers**.
 - "I don't need some **interloper** telling me how to raise my children," said Mrs. Grundy when her neighbor suggested that Rupert and Rosie shouldn't be tossing around a jar of kerosene.

3. **extraneous:** (ek STRAIN e us) This adjective can mean simply "coming from the outside;" but it is more likely to have the strong sense of irrelevant or unimportant.
 - The studio was soundproofed because **extraneous** noises would interfere with the quality of the recordings made there.
 - Learning how to eliminate **extraneous** details from their intra-office memos and their letters to clients made the Rock Creek Public Relations employees much better at communication.

4. **inherent:** (in HERR ent) If it's inherent it's literally "stuck into" the nature of the thing (or the person), integral to its being. While "inherit" isn't a root word, it might serve as a memory device, since something "inherent" is a part of the figurative DNA.
 - A little investigation showed Carl he had an inherent flaw in the design of the computer program; he had to scrap it and start over.
 - When Molly admired Enoch's orderly office space, he commented, "Neatness isn't an inherent virtue for me; I have to work hard at it."

5. gemane: (jer MAIN) Nothing to do with Germany, this adjective means "relevant" or "suitable" or "closely connected." Literally, the root word means "having the same parents;" so if you know Spanish, think "hermano" (brother).

- While that detail about how little Thomas A. Edison slept may be interesting, it's hardly **germane** to your study of elementary electronics.
- "I try to consider your feelings," said Sandra to J .B., "but it's equally **germane** that you try to consider mine."

6. pariah: (puh RYE uh) This noun refers to a social outcast, someone not accepted in his or her society. The word comes into English from Tamil, a language of southern India, where it refers more specifically to an "Untouchable;" a member of the lowest caste.

- Mark Twain calls Huckleberry Finn the "juvenile pariah of the village."
- After Aaron reported Matt's misdoings to a teacher, he was treated like a **pariah** by classmates who felt "ratting someone out" was the worst possible offense.

7. endemic: (en DEM ik) From the Greek words for "in" and "people;" this adjective means native or common to or peculiar to a specific region or abstract area. Perhaps because of the fact it sounds similar to "epidemic;" it's often (though not always) used for negative phenomena.

- When the first year teacher felt overwhelmed with work, she consulted her experienced colleague who said consolingly, "Feeling absolutely swamped is **endemic** to being a new teacher. You'll never have the time you need, but you'll learn to accept that and live with the feeling."
- "If you're planning to travel in an equatorial region," said Dr. Abernethy, "you must get shots for diseases that are **endemic** to that region."

8. intrinsic: (in TRINZ ik) From the Latin word for "inward;" this adjective is a rough synonym for "inherent" (#4), though careful stylists will find shades of difference. "Innate" (literally, "in-born") is another synonym.

- Gold, a metal like many others, has no **intrinsic** value, but its comparative rarity and its attractive gleam have bestowed value on it in virtually every society.
- **Intrinsic** in every major religion is the concept of valuing others and treating them well.

9. ostracize: (aS truh size) If you ostracize someone, you make him or her a pariah (see #6). This verb has the meaning of expelling a person from a community either literally or figuratively. Like many words and practices, this one came from ancient Greece where a citizen could be forced to leave a city by vote of his peers. Not yet having paper, the citizens voted with shards of *pottery-ostraka*, forerunners of the modern "blackball"

- Although the charges of sexual harassment against Mr. Larrabee have been dropped, he continues to be **ostracized** by a number of people in his workplace.
- To help her psychology students understand the power of social **ostracism**, Ms. Ewalt had her class participate in an experiment: on a regularly scheduled basis, each member of the class spent two days being shunned by others-no communication, no sharing of a lunchroom table. i ,

10. tangential: (tan JEN chul) This adjective describes neither "in" nor "out," but something "slightly touching" or "barely connected." This adjective derives from the world of geometry, where a "tangent" is a line or curve touching another at a single point. So if a person "goes off on a tangent," he or she is getting away from the main concern.

- The leader instructed the teachers scoring the essay that would determine a student's placement in a composition class that a **tangential** approach to the given topic was fine: "Think of the topic as merely an 'invitation to write,'"he said.
- Mr. Holland asked all his group leaders to focus on the major points of the task that confronted them on this day, to save all **tangential** considerations

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