

demos

[DAY moss] the people, the citizens

democracy - (kratos - power) - people power

demotic - pertaining to the people; popular

demography - (graph - write, draw) - draw charts of information about the people - where they live, etc.

demophile - (philia - love) - friend of the people

demophobe (phobos - fear) - one who fears the people

epidemic - (epi - upon) - a plague on the people; disease spread among citizens

Teaching Notes:

The word demos meant a great deal to the Greeks. More than any people in the history of the world before them, they thought that the people were important. The Greeks who lived in the city/state of Athens were very special. They discussed ideas and learned to write them down and argue about them. They decided that the demos - people should have a say in choosing their leaders and their laws. They voted and elected their leaders. For a short time, which we now call the Golden Age of Greece, they enjoyed living in a democracy - where the citizens were free and governed themselves. They honored the ideas of people who were not kings or nobles, but ordinary citizens. They were philosophers, poets, playwrights, politicians and teachers, sculptors, painters, architects, and musicians, actors and dancers, merchants and traders. Unfortunately, the democracy lasted less than 50 years. A strong neighboring state, Sparta, which was not a democracy but hard and warlike, attacked Athens and conquered it. But the idea of democracy never died. It lived in the thoughts of people through 2000 years and finally in our United States of America, it came to life again. We have been able to keep our democracy for more than 200 years.

populus

[POH poo loos] people

people - a collection of persons

public - general body of people in a community

republic - (res - thing) - public thing or entity

publish - make known to people in general

populace - the common people

popular - pleasing to people in general

population - whole number of people in an area

pueblo - (Spanish) people of a village or town

SPQR Senatus Populusque Romanus - The Senate and
people of Rome

Teaching Notes:

All the Romance languages (French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian – which were originally Latin or “Roman’s languages”) have derivatives from populus which are easy to recognize. The rather odd spelling of the English word, people (which is often difficult for children to learn) is a relic of Middle English, which took it from the Old French spelling, poep sometime following the Norman Conquest of England.

Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary explains how our marvelous modern English language developed. The Norman French conquered England in 1066 and old Anglo-Saxon English mingled with French after that time. (Do find a library book on the Bayeux Tapestry – a 230-foot-long embroidered picture of the whole Norman Conquest – and show it to the children. They may enjoy making a long scroll picture on shelf paper themselves as a class project!)

The Spanish word, pueblo, means a town or village in Spain, Spanish America or the Philippine Islands. In the United States we use it to refer to the ingenious Indian dwellings of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. The Indians whose ancestors built them, starting around 500 A.D., are called Pueblo Indians.

S.P.Q.R. were the letters on standards carried by Roman soldiers and other dignitaries to show that they represented the Senate and People of Rome and to proclaim the sovereign power of Rome. These standards show up frequently in movies about the Roman Empire usually with the sound of marching feet and martial music in the background. In present day Rome, the letters can occasionally be seen on such public works fixtures as manhole covers!

polis

[POH lis] city

metropolis - (meter - mother) - mother city - or main city
with smaller suburbs around it

political - concerning management of a city

police - those who keep order in the city

polite - having city (civilized) manners

policy - course of action adopted in the management of the
city

Teaching Notes:

Since ancient Greek cities (polis) were really city-states, the idea of polis to us can mean government, not just of a city, but of a state (like Washington) or nation (like the U.S.A.). This, along with demos - people, is a particularly valuable root word for children to acquire. The Greeks invented democracy (demos - people and kratos - power) and gave a great deal of thought and discussion to what kind of government is best for all the people. (See page 81.) The Greeks borrowed the newly invented phonetic alphabet from the Phoenicians, with whom they traded. It was easy to learn, so many Greeks could read and write. They wrote down their ideas about politics and government. The Athenians (Greek people in Athens) decided to govern themselves.

Extra Words:

Politics - the art and science of government. It's important to remember the real meaning of politics since it is so often used in a negative way to describe the actions of someone who is trying to grab power and influence for himself. There may be some people of that kind, but the real meaning of the word implies good politicians who work for good government for the benefit of all.

urbs
urbis

[OORPS, OOR bis] city

urban - pertaining to the city

suburb - (sub - under, below, near) - outlying part of a city; smaller town near a city

suburbanite - one who lives in a suburb

interurban - (inter - between) - between cities

urbane - polite; having city manners

urbanity - civility; courtesy, politeness

urbanites - those who live in a city

Teaching Notes:

The origin of this word, urbs, urbis, is rather obscure, but *Webster's International Dictionary*, Second Edition, comes up with an interesting bit in its definition of urban. After telling us that it is from urbs, urbis, it offers this: "perhaps originally a palisade of hurdles, hence enclosure, town, and akin to L. verber - rod." (Remember that "v" in Latin is pronounced like "w". It begins to sound a bit like urbis, doesn't it?) *Cassell's Latin Dictionary* tells us that verber is a "lash or whip". Thin flexible branches or rods can be used not only for whipping, also for weaving a fence or wall. A widely used primitive construction method for building houses was called "wattle and daub" or "stud and mud". The Pilgrims who came to America in 1620 built houses in Plymouth Colony of wattle and daub. You can see replicas of them there today.

David Macaulay's book, *City*, shows how a Roman town was built. The pictures show how they laid out a square camp site and surrounded it with a stockade fence made of thin poles to keep out wild animals and intruders. The word verber may have referred to rods as thick as the poles in a stockade fence as well as to the wattle and daub "whips". So the whole primitively enclosed settlement area, which later progressed to a bustling town with the palisade fence replaced by a sturdy stone wall, became urbs, urbis. 2000 years later, wherever English is spoken, we refer to our cities as urban areas. Smaller towns near our cities are suburban communities and we commute on interurban rapid transit. We, the citizens, are urbane and polite!

pathos

[PAH toss] (PAH thoss) feeling, suffering
 pathos - dramatic device to cause pity, sympathy or sorrow
 pathetic - marked by suffering or sorrow
 pathology - (logos - word, study) - study of suffering or disease
 pathometer - (metron - measure) - measures feeling; a lie detector
 apathy - (a - not) - not feeling; lack of feeling
 antipathy - (anti - against) - feeling against
 sympathy - (syn - together) - to feel what another feels
 telepathy - (tele - far away) - knowing how someone far away feels

Teaching Notes:

Sympathy - Remember that the actual Greek word which means "with, together" is syn. When it is used as a prefix, it assimilates to the word with which it is combined. Since "m" is easier to say than "n" when followed by "p", syn obligingly becomes sym. It becomes syl when the next letter is "l", as in syllable. The two symbolic masks of Comedy and Tragedy, which have been used so much by drama clubs and theatres, were meant to represent the mask worn by actors in the comic and tragic dramas of ancient Greece. The mask of Tragedy expresses pathos and was designed to help the actor inspire feelings of pity and sadness at the pathetic plight of the tragic hero or heroine. Pathos is used both as a prefix (patho-) and as a suffix (-pathy). In both uses, it adds the idea of feeling or suffering to the word to which it is attached. Pathology is the branch of medical science which deals with diseases and their treatment.

Extra Words:

Pathogenic (genos - origin, cause) - causing disease or suffering.
Pathophobia (phobos - fear) - fear of disease or suffering. Pathomania (mania - craze, mental disorder) - a medical term for moral insanity. Empathy (en - in) - imaginative projection of one's own consciousness into another being.