

# LESSON 4

*Humani nihil a me alienum puto.*

I think nothing human is alien to me. – TERENCE

## Base Words

annihilate	incipient	overt	vanity
aperture	negate	renegade	vaunt
inception	nihilism	vacuous	

## INCIPIO, INCIPIERE, INCEPI, INCEPTUM <Latin> “to begin”

### 1. inception

n. The beginning of something.

Since the **inception** of a vaccine for polio, that disease has almost disappeared from the earth.

### 2. incipient

adj. In its early stages; beginning.

A sore throat and runny nose are the symptoms of an **incipient** cold.

## NIHIL <Latin> “nothing”

### 3. annihilate [*an =ad <Latin> “to” + nihil*]

v. To destroy completely.

During the radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*, thousands of listeners thought Martians were about to **annihilate** New Jersey.

*Other Forms:* **annihilation**, n.; **annihilator**, n.

*Synonym:* decimate

### 4. nihilism

n. The total rejection of religious or moral beliefs.

From the point of view of nihilism, any behavior is acceptable since no rules of ethics exist.

*Other Forms:* **nihilist**, n.; **nihilistic**, adj.

## NEGO, NEGARE, NEGAVI, NEGATUM <Latin> “to deny”

### 5. negate

v. 1. To disprove; to nullify.

Columbus’s voyage to the New World **negated** the theory that the earth was flat.

2. To rule out; to cancel; to repeal.

The legislation allowing eighteen year olds to vote **negated** previous laws that had set the voting age at twenty-one or older.

*Other Forms:* **negation**, n.

### 6. renegade [*re <Latin> intensifier + neg*]

n. One who deserts a group, cause, faith, etc.; an outlaw.

When Democrats lost the election, many former supporters turned **renegade** and joined the Republicans.

adj. Like a renegade; traitorous.

Loyal troops crushed the revolt and imprisoned **renegade** officers.

## VANUS <Latin> “empty” VACUUS <Latin> “empty”

### 7. vacuous

adj. Empty, especially of meaning or purpose.

Educators often criticize television cartoons for kids as **vacuous** entertainment.

*Other Forms:* **vacuity**, n.

8. **vanity**

- n. 1. Conceit, especially about one's appearance.  
Despite the **vanity** of the Spanish royal family, Francisco Goya painted their portraits showing all their physical and moral shortcomings.
- 2. Something worthless or useless.  
Buddhism teaches that human ambitions are **vanity**.
- 3. A dressing table.  
A **vanity** usually has an attached mirror and many drawers.

9. **vaunt**

- v. To boast; to brag about.  
Gracious winners do not **vaunt** their victories.
- n. A boast.  
Parents' **vaunts** about their possessions often embarrass their children.  
*Other Forms: vaunted, adj.*

**APERIO, APERIRE, APERUI, APERTUM <Latin> "to open"**

10. **aperture**

- n. An opening, especially one that admits light.  
The photographer adjusted the **aperture** of the lens to let in more light.

11. **overt**

- adj. Done or shown openly.  
Their **overt** hostility gave us little hope for a reconciliation.  
*Other Forms: overtly, adv.*

**Familiar Words**

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evacuate	nil	vain
negative	overture	void

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**Challenge Words**

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abnegate	devoid	renege
aperitif	incipit	vacate

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