

Help and Improvement

WORD LIST

amelioration assuage compensate conserve constructive
 enhance enrichment neutralize preservation redeem

We humans are constantly trying to improve ourselves and the world around us. We work to *preserve* values of freedom and equality. We *enrich* our personal lives with learning, entertainment, and friendships. We aim to *assuage* the suffering of others through charities or volunteer work. Everywhere we look, we can find opportunities to make a difference. The words in this lesson give you additional ways to express the concepts of help and improvement.

1. **amelioration** (ə-mēl'yə-rā'shən) *noun* from Latin *melior*, "better"
 The act of making better or improving
- The new apartment complex was the first step in the **amelioration** of the housing shortage in the area.

ameliorate *verb* The Clean-Up Volunteer Group **ameliorated** the lakeshore by clearing it of trash and debris.

2. **assuage** (ə-swāj') *verb* from Latin *ad-*, "toward" + *suavis*, "sweet"
 To relieve or to make less difficult
- Medicine can **assuage** the discomfort of allergies.

3. **compensate** (kəm'pən-sāt') *verb* from Latin *com-*, "together" + *pensare*, "to weigh"

a. To pay

- Mr. Chavez **compensated** the boys for washing his car.

b. To make up for

- What Shelley lacked in acting skill, she **compensated** for in enthusiasm.

compensation *noun* Bella said her fast pitching arm was **compensation** for being a slow runner.



compensate

4. **conserve** (kən-sûrv') *verb* from Latin *conservare*, "to preserve"
 To protect from wasteful loss
- Many people work hard to **conserve** our forests.

conservation *noun* Conservation efforts have saved the Bengal tiger from extinction.

5. **constructive** (kən-strūk'tiv) *adjective* from Latin *con-*, "together" + *struere*, "to pile up"
 Serving a useful and positive purpose
- Rather than criticizing her brother's poor spelling, Tracy tried to be **constructive** by tutoring him.

construct *verb* Kendra wanted to **construct** a better relationship with her difficult neighbor.

Construct can also mean "to build," as in *construct* a building.

6. **enhance** (ĕn-hāns´) *verb* from Vulgar Latin *inaltare*, “to raise high”
To make better or more valuable

- A new porch will **enhance** the value of the house.

enhancement *noun* Those earrings are an **enhancement** to your outfit.

7. **enrichment** (ĕn-rĭch´mānt) *noun* from Old French *enrichier*, “to become rich”

The act of making something richer or better; improvement

- The fascinating personal letters provided **enrichment** to the historical account.

enrich *verb* The new theater will **enrich** the culture of our community.

8. **neutralize** (nōō´trə-līz´) *verb* from French *neutraliser*, “to counterbalance”

To cancel an effect or render it harmless

- This brand of cat litter promises to **neutralize** unpleasant odors.

neutralization *noun* The scientist created a **neutralization** process to eliminate the harmful effects of the chemicals.

9. **preservation** (prĕz´ər-vā´shən) *noun* from Late Latin *pre-*, “before” + *servare*, “to guard”

The act of keeping something in good health or condition

- Recycling helps with the **preservation** of natural resources.

preserve *verb* We can **preserve** meat in the freezer for months.

10. **redeem** (rĭ-dĕm´) *verb* from Latin *re-*, “back” + *emere*, “to buy”

a. To recover or buy back

- Ben planned to **redeem** the model cars he had traded to Jack.

b. To restore honor, worth, or value

- Although Wendi forgot her lines in the first scene of the play, she **redeemed** herself with her wonderful performance in the second scene.

redeemable *adjective* This coupon is **redeemable** for one free admission.

redemption *noun* At the end of *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge achieves **redemption** when he realizes the harm that selfishness can cause.

To *neutralize* an enemy can mean “to kill” or “to destroy” it.

WORD ENRICHMENT

Not either

When we *neutralize* something, we make it harmless, or cancel its effect. The word *neutralize* is based on the Latin roots *ne*, “not,” and *uter*, “either.” *Neutral* things are in the middle, being neither good nor bad. In the same way, somebody who is *neutral* takes neither side in an argument. In grammar, a *neuter* gender means that the word is neither masculine nor feminine. Similarly, the *neutron* in an atom has neither a positive nor a negative charge.