



Less

EVERYDAY EVENT:

This week's Exceptional Expression for Everyday Events (or E-4) explores the word *less*. The word *less* is often used by students to express a desire for fewer homework assignments. The word *less* may also be used during a mathematics lesson to express a relationship between two unlike terms, such as the axiom that the number two is less than the number three. In either instance the word *less* is often used in a classroom.

EXCEPTIONAL EXPRESSION:

The definition of the word *less* is fewer in amount or quality. The word *less* signifies a relationship between unlike terms such as in the statement, "The classroom holds *less* students than the cafeteria." A term such as *fewer* could also be used in this instance in place of *less* signifying that the classroom holds fewer students than the cafeteria. This concept is used in basic arithmetic to compare two unlike terms.

The word *less* can also denote the qualitative importance of two things. For instance, the statement Billy is *less* of a reader than Sarah implies that Sarah consistently does better when it comes to reading than Billy and therefore is better at it. The statement Sarah is *less* social than Billy illustrates the concept that Billy has greater social skills than does Sarah.

The word *less* can also be added as a suffix in order to create a new compound word. For instance, a situation that is *less hopeful* can easily become *hopeless*. Word changes with the suffix *-less* can be difficult for English Language Learners (ELLs) to master.

FOLLOW-UPS

- If Billy has 9 apples, and Sarah has 5 apples less than Billy, how many apples does Sarah have?
- What does it mean to be *less* than perfect?
- How is *less hope* different than *hopeless*?
- What does it mean to turn in a *second-rate* report?

THE SPANISH CONNECTION:

Less comes from an Old English word that was used to describe anything that was small. It is not clear if *less* was used to compare different object, as it is mostly used today. The Spanish word for *less* is *menos*. *Less* and *menos* are not cognates. However some of the synonyms for *less* do have Spanish cognates.

WORD CHANGES:

1) IDIOMS

- Less is more
- More or less

2) COMMON PHRASES

- I could care less

- Less than pleased

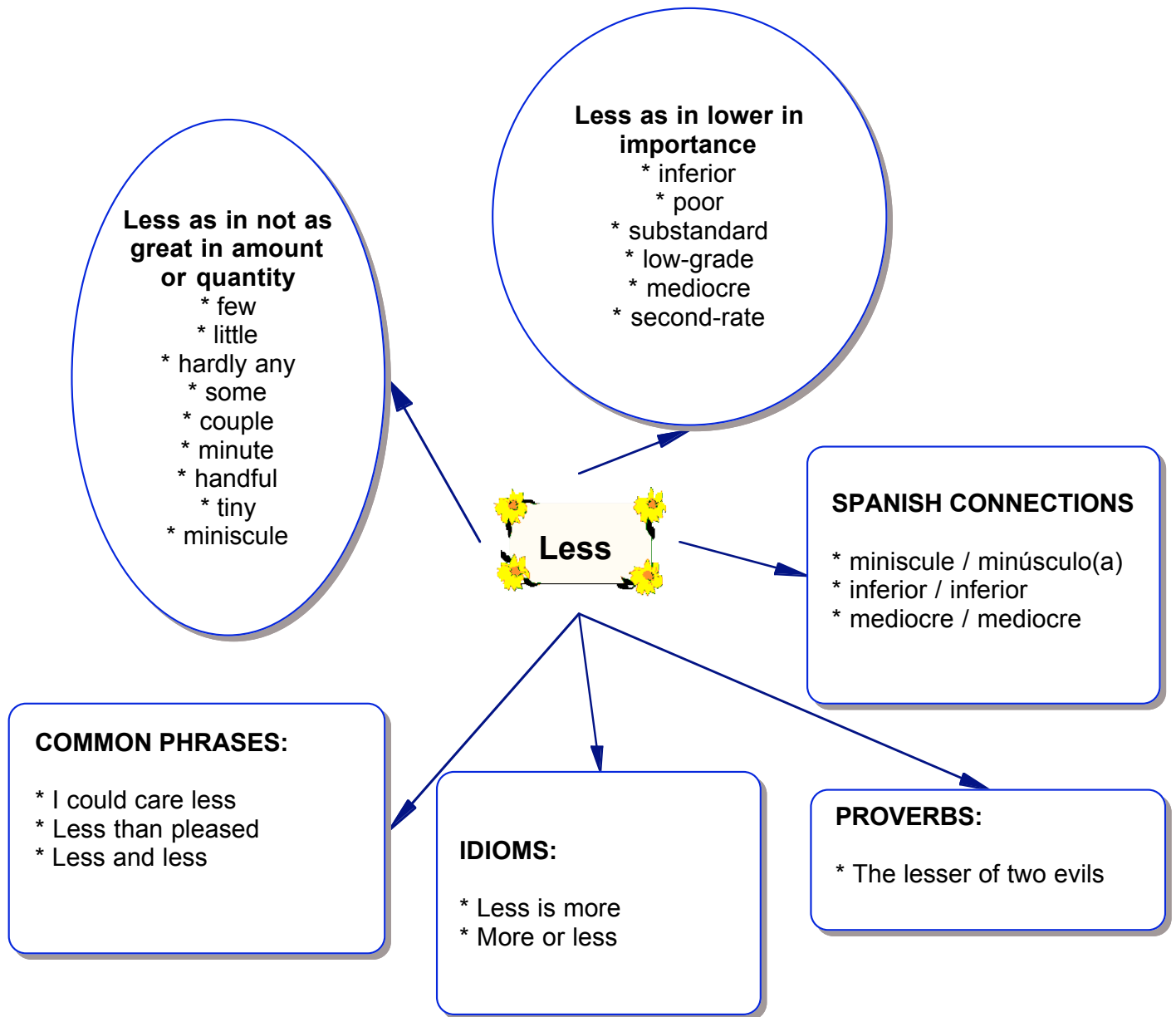
- Less and less

3) PROVERBS

- The lesser of two evils



Less





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