

Perpetua Language Tools



PERPETUA LANGUAGE TOOLS ^[TM] USER MANUAL

Version 4.2

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Overview

Perpetua Language Tools (abbreviated PLT) is a flashcard package for learning Biblical language vocabulary. The Greek database currently contains over 1200 words, containing every word that occurs 16 times or more in the Greek New Testament and many other important words that occur less frequently. The Biblical Hebrew database contains over 1600 cards with all words appearing 18 times or more in the Hebrew Old Testament. Plus, in addition to Biblical languages, there is a database with 800 words in Middle Egyptian.

What makes PLT distinct from other flashcard programs is our automated flashcard management. Probably the greatest impediment to learning vocabulary is card management. Even with a small number of cards, the card management proves to be an arduous task, especially given the fact that it takes 20 to 40 card set repetitions to learn a set of forty cards. And if one does not have card management of some kind, one has to flip the cards between 800 and 1600 times. So, if one could automatically (but gradually) withdraw the cards that are well-learned and leaving the ones that one does not know well, the student can focus on the words that they are less familiar with.

In addition, there are other advantages of using PLT over other electronic flashcards. (1) PLT currently includes three languages and, as of the time this release, costs less than purchasing two sets of cards. (2) It's inexpensive. Many exhaustive flashcard programs cost hundreds of dollars. (3) PLT has a large vocabulary set; words that appear in the New Testament 16 times or more, and words that appear in the Old Testament 18 times or more. Typical commercial flashcards sets have word sets that 20 to 30 times. (4) PLT has both forward and reverse flashcards mode for Greek and Hebrew. (5) PLT won't consume huge amounts of precious display geography, so it can be used discretely. (6) PLT remembers the words you get consistently correct and gradually retracts them from your list, inserting them back in on occasion so you won't completely forget a word.

There are also advantages over traditional paper cards. (1) You are getting two language flashcard sets for little more than the price of one set of paper cards. Paper card sets average around \$18 per language. If you buy both Hebrew and Greek, you are spending \$32. (2) If you make your own paper cards, you are still not saving a lot of money. 3x5" recipe cards are \$1/100. With a minimal set being nearly 2000 words for both languages, you are paying as much to make your own as buying PLT. Not to mention all the time you spent making the cards. (3) Managing a stack of cards also takes effort. You have to go through your old cards to see if you forgot any words. PLT can manage this automatically by occasionally re-inserting old card into the deck. The more you get a word right the less it is re-inserted. (4) We have textbook lesson profiles for several popular textbooks. With paper cards you have to sort these cards by hand. (5) Cards can be edited and supplemented with additional user information. And new words can be added that look exactly like the other cards. Hand-written card do not integrate well with pre-printed paper cards. (6) Ever spilled a stack of cards on the bus? It is not pretty.

Installation

1. Insert CD into drive. Perpetua Language Tools must be installed from a CD drive. If you have autorun enabled, you will either see the Perpetua Installer or be asked to install the Microsoft .NET Framework 2.0 distributed package. If you are asked to install .NET, follow the package instructions.

2. If you have autorun enabled, the install screen should appear. If it does not appear, use explorer to open the CD and Double-click on the setup.bat program.

3. The program installer has four options: Install Software, Un-Install Software, Read License, and Exit. If you select the "Install Software" button, you will need to accept the terms of the License Agreement before being allowed to install the software.



4. If you wish to install the software, agree to the License Agreement or exit at this time without completing the installation. If you accept this, the Installer will probe the operating system for install information.



5. You will be given one more opportunity to confirm the installation.

To complete Installation press "Install Now". **Warning: the Windows Registry is modified during this process.** Interrupting the installation prior to its completion could have an adverse impact upon your system. If in doubt, consult a qualified computer professional.



6. When you get the following screen the software installation is complete.

It is recommended that you restart your computer at this time. Rebooting your system will fully activate the installation, completing the Perpetua installation process.

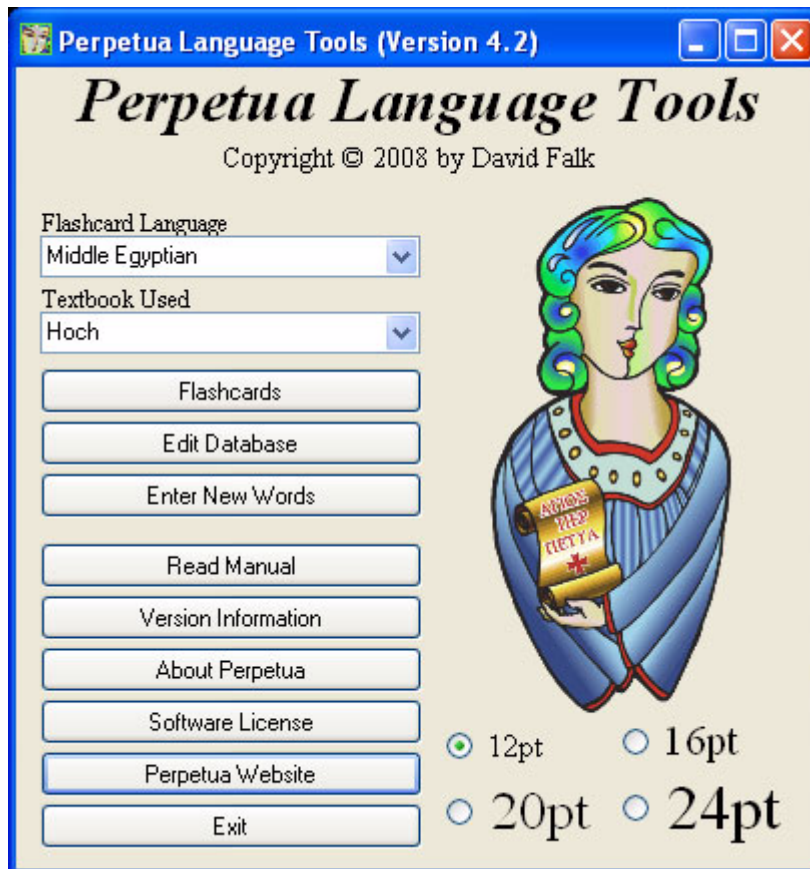


When the process is complete you should be able to go into Start->All Programs->Perpetua folder to find the shortcuts to the new programs. Be sure to keep the CD in a safe place, since it will be needed install or re-install the software.

Special instruction for Vista users: In addition to the above, you will need to change the permissions for the C:\Program Files\Perpetua directory to allow all users to modify this directory. For a step by step procedure on how to do this, consult the Appendix: Modifying Windows Vista Permissions.

Opening Screen

The following is a brief explanation of the features of this program. Perpetua Language Tools (abbreviated PLT) is a sophisticated program with many options. This overview features the most important features and how to use them.



After you accept the Software License, PLT will bring up an opening screen. The opening screen shows the major or top functions of PLT. In order to prevent possible database corruption, only one Opening Screen is allowed to be running at any one time.

The two pull-down menus are for selecting the language and a textbook profile. Note: only certain textbook profiles are available, but the default profile may be modified for textbooks that are not available. Changing the Flashcard Language will automatically change the selection of textbook profiles.

Flashcards

This is the button to the flashcard program itself. Beside it is a radio-button that selects the font size of those language data sets that can support a variable size font packages (e.g. Koine Greek and Biblical Hebrew) the options are 12, 16, 20, and 24 pt. Some PLT language sets do not support this option (e.g. Middle Egyptian); in this is case, checking the radio-buttons will have little effect.

Edit Database

This opens the editor for examining and changing the contents of the PLT database. See “Adding Your Own Words” section for further details for using this function.

Enter New Words

This is the data entry program that allows user to add new words to the PLT database. Please note the license restrictions regarding the distribution of augmented or altered databases.

Read Manual

Opens this manual with Adobe Acrobat Reader or similar PDF format reader. Adobe Acrobat Reader (or similar PDF format reader) is not included with PLT and must be installed in addition to this software for this feature to function correctly. Adobe Acrobat Reader is available as a free install from <<http://www.adobe.com>> and is a registered trademark of Adobe Corporation.

Version Information

Prints the latest PLT version information and credits.

About Perpetua

Information about the PLT developers, a mini-biography of Saint Perpetua, and a brief gospel message.

Software License

Displays the software license for the PLT product.

Perpetua Website

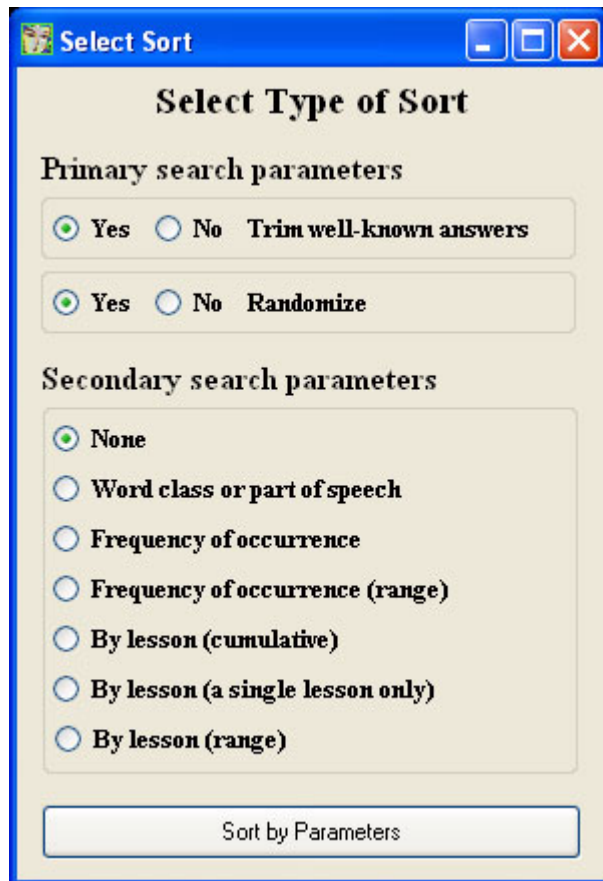
Opens a browser with a URL taking you to the Perpetua web site currently hosted at <<http://www.lagomorph-rampant.com/perpetua/index.html>>. At the web site, you will find answers to frequently asked questions, news of upcoming releases, and maintenance updates. Sales inquiries and bug reports can be sent to zdfalk@tiu.edu. When sending a bug report, please include your name, email address, and a complete description of the issue with details as to how to replicate the problem. If you have found this program to be helpful, we would love to hear how it has benefited you.

Exit

Exits the PLT program.

Flashcards

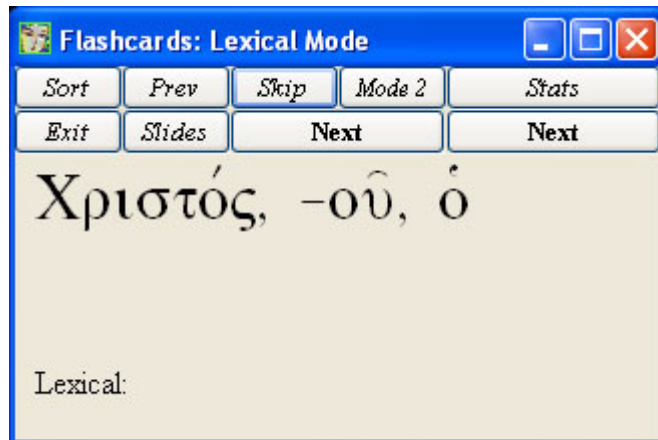
If the “Flashcard” button on the Opening Screen is pressed, the “sort” window will be opened before proceeding to the main flashcard window. From the sort window, one can access the over a thousand words contained in the database in flashcard form all at once or winnow them down into more manageable sums.



The “Primary search parameters” have two parameters that can be applied to every search. The first parameter implement (default) the trimming algorithm, which is used in the automated card management. PLT keeps track of how well you do, and if you get a word more than five times correct in a row, trimming goes into effect. Cards are only automatically managed when trimming is activated. After five times, the word is subject to random process where the probability of the word being added to the flashcard listing comes increasingly smaller as one improves. For example, after six times the chance of word showing up is 50%; after 7 times, 33%; after 8 times, 25%; and so on. But if a word is missed, the word is reduced to being 3 times correct with value being subtracted every time the word is missed. However zero is the lowest that a card will be decremented. The other parameter randomly mixes up the word list if set to “yes” (default). If you turn off the randomize function, then the flash cards will be shown in alphabetical order.

The “Secondary search parameters” are optional sorting parameters. “Frequency of occurrence” selects words according to incidence of occurrence (only available for Greek and Hebrew). This selection will include those words that occur a number of times or more (e.g. 50 times or more). The “Frequency of occurrence (range)” allows you to select a range of frequencies (e.g. 50 to 100 times). “Word class or parts of speech” can be used to select a category of word, (e.g. verbs). The three lesson sorts can be used with lesson profiles to select cumulative lessons (e.g. up to lesson 9), a range of lessons (e.g. lesson 9 through 12), or to focus on the vocabulary for a single lesson. “None” (default) will sort from the entire vocabulary list.

Once a sort selection is made, you may be asked to enter addition input, e.g. chapter or frequency ranges. After this, the Flashcard window should appear and be ready for flashcard use. The button most typically hit next is highlighted in a bold font. Options that are not available will be grayed out. The following are the options available on the flashcard window:



Sort

Ends the current flashcard set and returns to the sort window.

Skip

Skip the current selection without an answer or penalty. Note that using this feature could skew the statistical values.

Prev

Go back a question. Note that using this feature could skew the statistical values.

Exit

Exit the flashcard program.

Reset

Reset the cumulative counts for either Forward or Reverse settings.

Slides

Present a slide show (1 sec count) for everything remaining in the current card set list. Can only be stopped by exiting the program.

Next

The two buttons labeled “Next” do the same thing, which is to show you the correct answer. The buttons will then change to “Right” and “Wrong”, then you must select whichever one is appropriate. The left button can also be activated with the “,”-key (comma) and the right button can be activated with the “.”-key (period).

Mode 2 (Greek and Hebrew Only)

The flashcard program is also capable of being used in the reverse order. The display will change to accommodate a text box.

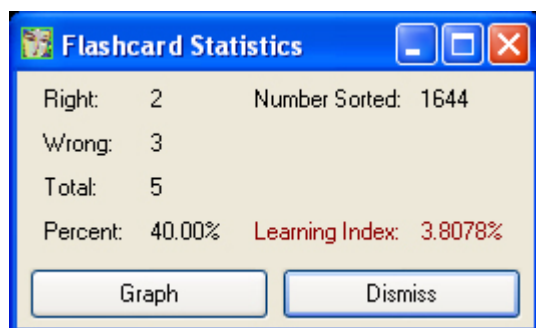
In this case, one is supplied with the English, and the user must fill in the foreign language. PLT uses the free TekniaGreek and Teknia-Hebrew (included on the CD distribution) from <http://www.teknia.com>; if you need help with the proper keyboard mappings, help is available there.



With reverse mode as opposed to forward mode, the program does check to see if you got the spelling correct. Both “Next” buttons will change into “Wrong” or “Right” depending on if you got it wrong or right. If the bottoms say “Right”, clicking on either will send you to the next word. If the button says “Wrong”, clicking on the button again will clear the field and change the buttons to “Give-up” or “Next”. “Next” will allow you to try again. “Give-up” shows you the answer and then proceeds to the next word. There is no penalty for repeatedly getting an answer wrong multiple times, so it is to your advantage to keep trying a Mode 2 card if you get it wrong. Pressing “Mode 1” will return you to the normal flashcard mode.

Stats

This feature (new to version 4.2) displays the statistics for this session. There are six sets of values that are displayed. The *Number Sorted* shows how many cards are included in this set of flashcards. The *Right* and *Wrong* values show how many cards that you marked as correct and incorrect respectively. The *Total* is the addition of correct and incorrect cards answered so far in this session. The *Percent* value is the percent correct of cards attempted within the current set of flashcards. Probably the most significant statistic in this set is *Learning Index*, which has been marked in red. The *Learning Index* takes the number of cards trimmed and adds that value to the number of correct answers then divides this



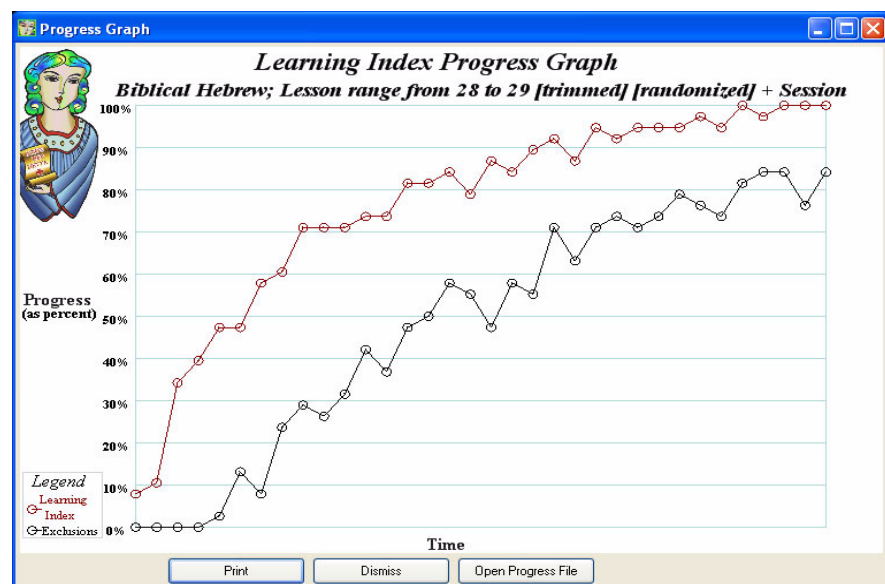
over the *Number Sorted* added to the number trimmed. The *Learning Index* is the best statistical indication of actual learning.

These statistical values are not saved until one exits the Flashcard window. The “Graph” button is an additional feature to the statistics window, which will allow the user to chart his progress over more than one card set. Note that each set of statistics is kept in separate files according to the particular kind of sort. If you change the sort parameters, the system will create a separate statistics file to record the new values.

Graph

The graphing function displays two sets of values. The black line records the percentage of cards that are being trimmed. The red line is the user’s learning index.

There are two additional functions. The “Print” option will allow you to send a printout of the graph to a printer. The “Open Progress File” will open a file dialogue where you can choose a file to graph.

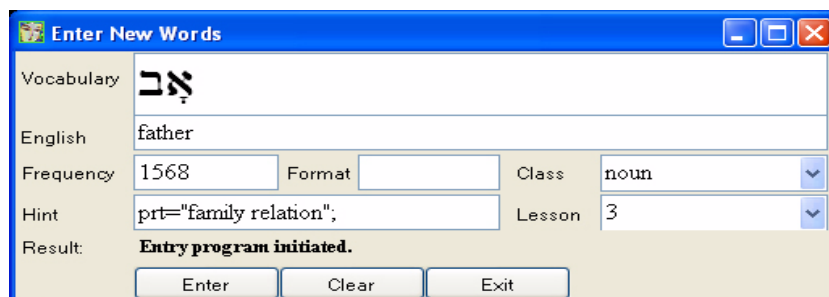


Adding Your Own Words

This section outlines the basic process of adding words to the database. This can be done through both the “Enter New Words” window from the Opening Screen or in the Edit Database window.

Enter New Words.

This form is used to enter new words into the database. Each language has its own private database. So, the proper language must be set in the Opening Screen to access the proper database.



"Vocabulary", this is either (1) your foreign language word typed in a TrueType font, or (2) if the language uses image files (e.g. Middle Egyptian), then it is the name of the file to load. The "vocabulary" is the word you want to create into a flashcard.

"English", this is the translation of the vocabulary into English.

"Frequency", this how often the word appears. For example, for Koine Greek, this is how often the word appears in the Bible.

"Format", this field is used for internal processing and is reserved for future use by the PLT programmer.

"Class", this is pull-down menu for common parts of speech.

"Hint", this is a field used for post/pre-processing directives. It is currently being used with cards to give the viewer a hint in the case when two words look identical. Currently the only available function is the “prt=” function. This command prints a hint in addition to the test question. Also, any command in the hint field **must by terminated by a semi-colon**. This field is also reserved by the PLT programmer.

"Lesson", this is the lesson numbers used by the lesson profiles.

Please note, that the total sum of all fields for an entry in the vocabulary database must be less than 1024 bytes. The user should also be aware that the system has some reserved fields that cannot be edited by the user. These reserved fields can add an additional 10% to the size of an entry. Any entry in excess of 1024 bytes will return an error.

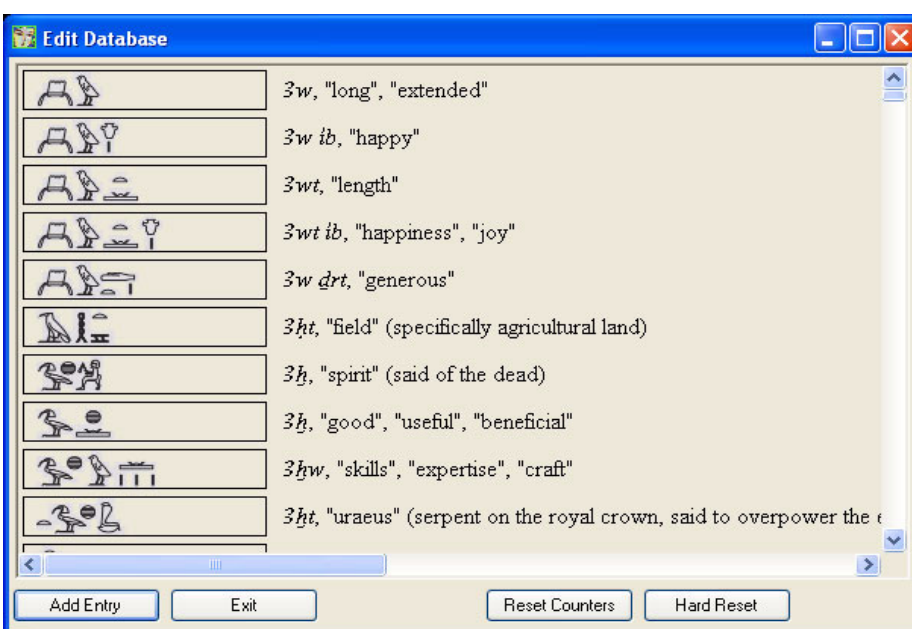
Also, each database is presently limited to maximum 3200 entries. This is actually a Windows .NET restriction caused by the number of graphic widget handles, which may be circumvented in future software releases.

If you enter a vocabulary word that already exists in the database, the system will give you the option to either (a) overwrite the existing entry, (b) create as a new entry, or (c) cancel. More than one card can exist with the same foreign word, because the cards are actually indexed by a non-editable serial numbers. Nevertheless, the system will only ask to overwrite the first duplicate entry it comes across, i.e., it will not ask if you want to overwrite any subsequent entries. You may need to use the “Edit Database” window to check if other duplicate entries exist.

Edit Database

You may at times have to go into the database to modify a card. For this purpose there is the “Edit Database” window.

There are four control buttons. The only two not explained so far is (1) “Reset Counters,” which zeroes out the system counters for the flashcards, and (2) “Hard Reset,” will reset the database to factory settings. By using the “Hard Reset,” any changes made to the database (including user added cards) will be lost.

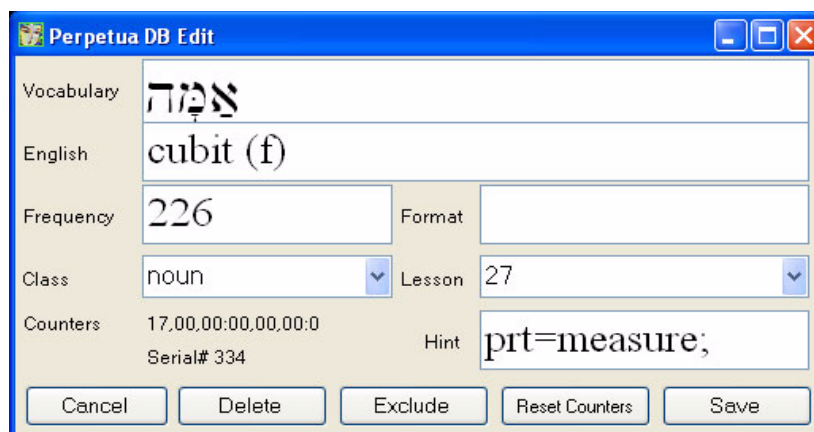


To edit an entry click on the foreign language button for the particular card. This will bring up the “DB Edit” window.

DB Edit

This window is very similar to the “Add New Entry” window with a few notable exceptions.

In this window, non-editable data is visible including the serial number of the card and the system counters that keep the statistical data.



There is also an “Exclude/Include” button that takes a card ***completely*** out of the set. It will not show up in any trimmed card sets. Excluded cards are grayed-out in the Edit Database window. We recommend that you do not use this function, rather relying upon the automatic trimming done by the system. “Reset Counters” button will zero out the statistical counters for this card, which means it will be as if you never got this card correct. Finally, “Delete” will delete the card from both the database and all the textbook profiles--this action cannot be reversed other than performing a “Hard Reset”--use this function with caution.

Tips For Learning Languages

Learning any language is hard work. Yes, your professors who know six languages may look like a polyglot with a knack for languages, when you are struggling with your first language (and were never too sure of English in the first place). But, we can assure you people who are naturally gifted at languages are few and far between. The author of this software finds learning new languages to be hard work; he does not have a gifting for languages, but recognizes that they are important to serious scholarly study. Years of struggling with languages has been rewarded him with a working knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, French, Middle Egyptian, and Japanese. With this in mind, here are some tips that can help you learn languages faster.

1. Know your vocabulary well. This may seem obvious, but the reason why a lot of students suffer in learning languages is because they do not have a command of the vocabulary. Knowing the vocabulary can even cover some deficiencies in syntax and conjugation.
2. Say the word aloud as you review each word. Learn how to pronounce the word correctly and say it the same way every time. Some words are easier to learn with a audio recognition.
3. Master early lessons before going onto more advanced lessons. Most textbooks will present most common vocabulary first. What you do not learn early on can hurt you later.
4. Learn the vocabulary in manageable “chunks.” Twenty to forty words at a session is a good way to break down the vocabulary. Trying to learn a semester of vocabulary all at once is like trying to drink out of a fire hose.
5. Practice every day. This is one of those “best intention” tips. But, this can often make the difference between sufficiency and mastery.
6. We have learned from the beta testing, that it takes between twenty-five and forty repetitions to master a “chunk” of previously unknown vocabulary cards. We have also learned that 50% of your effort will go into learning the first 80% of the vocabulary. The final 20% of the vocabulary requires an equal amount of effort as the first 80%. But it is possible to learn 40 vocabulary words with 100% accuracy in as little as two hours per day.
7. Use the progress graphing function after every repetition of a card set. Seeing an improvement with virtually every repetition can provide excellent positive reinforcement of the learning process. It will surprise you how quickly you can learn this stuff.
8. After “mastering” a card set, which we would define as getting an entire card set 100% correct three times or more, it can be helpful to review the set again with the trimming turned off to see if any words have been forgotten in longer-term memory. The brain has an incredible capacity to discard data, it does not think it needs. Constant review is essential.

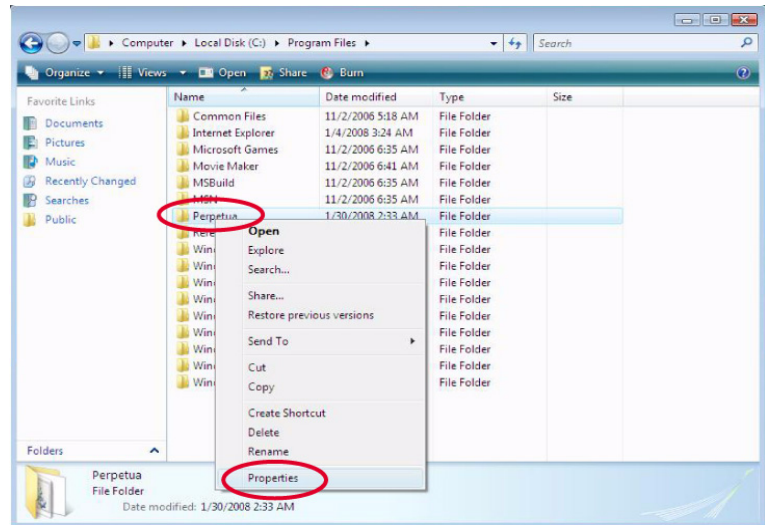
9. As you approach test time, change the font size in the opening screen to 12 point. Most written paper tests are done in 12 or 14 point and seeing the text in that size as it appears on the paper test will help visual recognition.
10. Try to make a game out of learning vocabulary. This may sound odd, but having fun really does make it easier to learn.

Appendix: Modifying Windows Vista Permissions

For users running Vista, after installing Perpetua and rebooting your system, you should modify the permissions on the C:/Program Files/Perpetua directory to allow users to modify this directory. Below is a three instruction process for completing this part of the installation. Note that this section is not applicable to a Windows XP install.

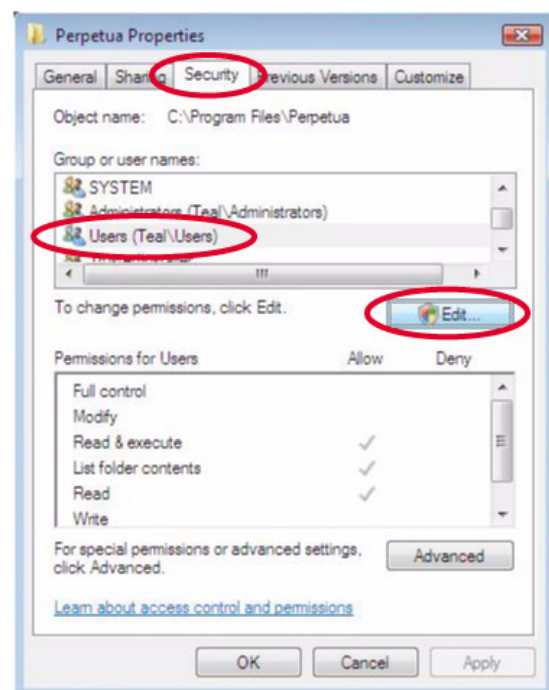
Step 1

Use an explorer window to navigate in the C:/Program Files directory. With your mouse, right click on the Perpetua directory and navigate to the bottom of the menu. Right click on “properties.”



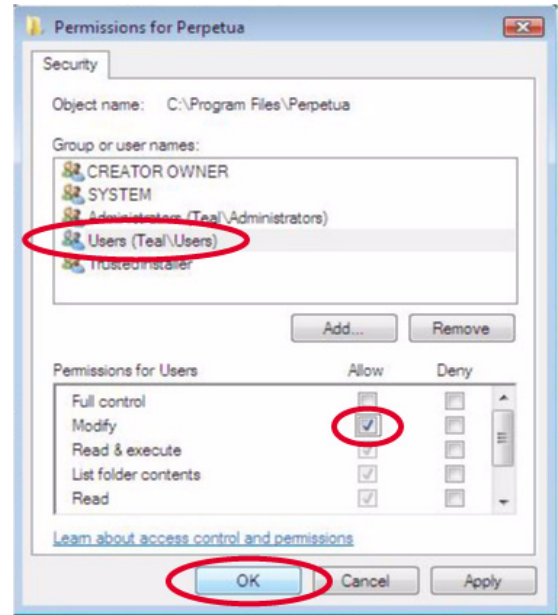
Step 2

When the properties window appears, click on the “Security” tab. Click on the “Users” group. Then, click on the “Edit” button.



Step 3

After clicking on the button in step 2, a permissions window should appear. Make sure that the “Users” group is still highlighted. Click on the “Modify” button under the Allow column so that a check mark appears in the box. Finally, click on “OK” to complete the permissions change. If you are unable to change the modify button, it is probably either because (a) the Users group was not highlighted or (b) you do not have permission to change this directory. If the latter is the case, seek help from your local systems administrator or computer technician to complete the installation.



END OF DOCUMENT