WORD SMART

BUILDING AN EDUCATED VOCABULARY

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INTRODUCTION

YOUR VOCABULARY HAS BEEN TALKING ABOUT YOU BEHIND YOUR BACK

The words you use say a lot about you. Some words say that you are smart, persuasive, and informed. Others say that you don’t know what you are talking about. Knowing which words to use and understanding how to use them are keys to getting the most out of your mind.

People, often in frustration, “I know what I mean but I don’t know how to say it.” They are almost always incorrect. If they don’t know how to say it, they usually don’t know what they mean. We use words not just to speak but also to think. If the right words aren’t there, the right ideas can’t get through.

Your vocabulary is the foundation of your ability to think and your ability to share your thoughts with other people. When you improve your vocabulary, you improve your ability to bring your intelligence to bear on the world around you.

BIGGER ISN’T NECESSARILY BETTER

When people say that someone has a “good” vocabulary, they usually mean that he or she uses a lot of big, impressive-sounding words—words like joculation, demulcent, and sauciloquous. But a vocabulary consisting of words like this isn’t necessarily a “good” vocabulary at all.

Why?

Because almost no one knows what joculation, demulcent, and sauciloquous mean. If you used these words in conversation, the chances are that no one listening to you would know what you were talking about. Big, difficult words have very important uses, but improving a vocabulary involves much more than merely decorating your speech or your writing with a few polysyllabic singers.

The goal of communication is clarity. We write and speak in order to make ourselves understood. A good vocabulary is one that makes communication easy and efficient. One mark of an effective speaker or writer is the ability to express complex ideas with relatively simple words.

Most discourse among educated people is built on words that are fairly ordinary—words you’ve heard before, even if you aren’t exactly certain what they mean. The best way to improve your vocabulary isn’t to comb the dictionary for a handful of tongue-twisters to throw at unsuspecting strangers. Instead, you need to hone your understanding of words that turn up again and again in intelligent
communication. A person who had a clear understanding of every word in an issue of The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, or The Atlantic would have a very powerful vocabulary—vocabulary sophisticated enough to impress almost any teacher, admissions officer, colleague, or employer.

**AN EDUCATED VOCABULARY**

An educated vocabulary is one that enables you to convey ideas easily. Do you know what *investigate* means? Do you know the difference between *fluent* and *flow*? Do you know why an artist might be insulted if you called his or her work *artful*?

Note: first is particularly difficult. But each has its own meaning or meanings. If you misuse these words, you tell an educated person that you are in over your head. Using them correctly can identify you as a member of that most elite of cities: people who know what they're talking about.

**WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?**

When people get into trouble with words, it usually isn't because they don't know the meaning of a seldom-used word like *tergiversate* but because they are confused about the meaning of a much more common word—a word they hear, read, and use with regularity.

*Person*, for example. Many people think that it means "skim" or "glance over." But it doesn't. In fact, it means very nearly the opposite. To peruse a document is to read it carefully.

Confusion about the meaning of this useful word is one of the most common vocabulary errors we encounter in our SAT-preparation students. A great many high school students could probably improve their SAT scores simply by learning the meaning of this word.

The number of words you know is less important than the care you have taken in learning the ones you really use. Speaking or writing well doesn't require an enormous vocabulary—but it does require a confidence in your vocabulary to buck up and learn the words you need to make yourself clearly understood.

**WHY YOU NEED THIS BOOK**

There are a lot of vocabulary books out there. Most of them, we believe, aren't very useful. Some contain too many words. Others contain too many absurdly difficult words. Some claim to be based on surefire tricks or "painless" learning methods. Most aren't very good at helping people learn new words of any kind.

This book is different.

**THE PRINCETON REVIEW APPROACH**

The Princeton Review is the largest SAT-preparation course in the country. We've been in the business for just seven years, but we already have branches in more than thirty cities. We've grown as rapidly as we have because we are good at what we do. At the end of our six-week course, our students improve their SAT scores an average of 150 points. Many of our students raise their scores more than 200 points. We're proud to compare our results with those of any preparation course in the nation.

In preparing students for the SAT and other standardized tests, we spend much of our time working on vocabulary. Despite what many people think, most "intelligence" or "aptitude" tests are largely tests of vocabulary. In fact, most of the questions on such tests are vocabulary questions, such as the analogy and sentence-completion items that make up the bulk of the verbal SAT.

The students who earn high scores on such tests are the students who know the right words. The success of our school is in part a result of our success in teaching vocabulary.

**NEW WORDS IN A HURRY**

Because our course lasts only a few weeks, we don't have much time to teach our students the words they need to know in order to do well on the SAT. As a result, we've put a lot of thought into how people learn—and retain—new words.

The methods we have developed are easy to use and, we believe, extremely effective. There's nothing particularly startling about them. They rely mostly on common sense. But they do work. And although they were developed primarily for high school students, they can be used profitably by anyone who wants to build a stronger, smarter vocabulary.

**HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED**

In the next section, we'll describe our basic principles of vocabulary building. We'll also explain our general techniques for learning new words. You should apply these techniques as you work through the rest of the book. The more carefully you work, the more rapidly you'll enhance your ability to use words effectively.

The heart of Word Smart is the large central column containing the thousand or so words we think an intelligent person ought to know. Each word is accompanied by a definition, and one or more examples intended to help you understand how to use the word properly.

Many entries also include discussions of related words or certain shades of meaning. Scattered throughout the book are drills that should help you strengthen
your new vocabulary and make it possible for you to assess your progress as you work along.

At the end of the book are several specialized lists of words, including our famous Hit Parade. This is the vocabulary list we use to help our students boost their verbal scores on the SAT. It contains the words most frequently tested on the SAT, in the order of their importance on the test.

Our SAT preparation students use the Hit Parade to boost their scores on the verbal SAT. Sometimes simply knowing that a particular word is included on the Hit Parade is enough to lead our students to a correct answer on the SAT, since it emphasizes words appearing in correct answer choices.

Other specialized lists include frequently missed words, useful foreign words and phrases, common abbreviations, and words associated with computers, finance, the arts, and science. If you learn the words on these lists, you'll be able to follow important articles in the nation's best-written newspapers and magazines and to keep up your end of conversations with your (undoubtedly) well-educated friends.

Toward the end of this book is a Final Exam covering all the words in the main section. You can use this test to help you firm up your new vocabulary knowledge and to help ensure that you'll retain all the new words you've learned.

You can also use the test as a diagnostic tool. By trying your hand at the questions before working your way through the book, you'll give yourself a good idea of which words are causing you the most trouble. And if you're preparing for a major standardized test, such as the SAT, you and one or more friends can use the Final Exam as a handy review device.

**HOW WE CHOSE THESE WORDS**

We assemble our Hit Parade by entering into a computer all the words from released editions of the SAT, sorting them by frequency, weighting them, as mentioned earlier, to give more emphasis to words appearing in correct answer choices, and eliminating words that are too simple to cause problems for most students. The result is a list of the most important words tested on the SAT, in order of their importance.

We have assembled our other Word Smart lists in much the same way. We have monitored a broad sampling of literature publications, looking for challenging words that appear regularly. For the primary Word Smart list, we selected the 823 difficult words that appeared most frequently.

We have also sought the advice of teachers, writers, and others. In brief, we have assessed all available sources in an effort to compile a powerful working vocabulary that will help you communicate.

**INTRODUCTION**

**How to Use This Book**

Don't try to read this book in a single sitting. You'll learn much more if you tackle it a little at a time. You may feel comfortable with a number of the words already. You don't need to spend much time on these, but be certain you really do know a word as well as you think you do before you skip ahead. Some of the most embarrassing vocabulary blunders occur when we boldly misuse words we felt certain we understood.

The words in Word Smart are arranged alphabetically. You'll find a Quick Quiz every ten words or so. You may find it convenient to tackle words in the main list in ten-word chunks, passing at each Quick Quiz to make certain you have retained what you just learned. Don't forget to check your answers.

If you're trying to build your vocabulary in preparation for a test, you should set a schedule for yourself and work methodically from beginning to end. If you're simply trying to improve your vocabulary, you may find it more interesting to dip into the text at random. You can also use the book as a companion to your dictionary, to help you zero in on the meanings of new words you've encountered in your reading or in conversation.

**About Word Smart II**

If you're like most people, you'll want to learn words as efficiently and as rapidly as possible. The list of words that forms the main portion of this book will provide a foundation on which you can build your own educated vocabulary.

Word Smart II picks up where this book leaves off. So many of you finished this book and looked up from your plate demanding "More words!" that we compiled a second list.

In Word Smart II we place more emphasis on pronunciation, and we also extend our SAT and GRE Hit Parades. The words in Word Smart II are somewhat more difficult, and don't appear quite so frequently, but otherwise they are just as important for you to know.

When you finish this book, and certainly when you finish Word Smart II, you will have a working vocabulary better than that of most college graduates. But don't stop there. Continue to expand your vocabulary by mastering the new words you encounter.

Start reading!
LEARNING NEW WORDS
Learning New Words

Building a Vocabulary Is Child's Play

Young children learn new words by imitating the speakers around them. When a three-year-old hears a new word that catches her interest, she may use it repeatedly for a day or two until she feels comfortable with it. She establishes its meaning from context, often by trial and error. She adds new words to her vocabulary because she needs them to make herself understood.

Children have an easier time learning new words than most adults do. As we grow beyond childhood, our brains seem to lose their magical ability to soak up language from the environment. But adults can still learn a great deal from the way children learn new words.

How Children Do It

Young children don't learn the meanings of new words by looking them up. Sometimes they ask grown-ups directly, but more often they simply infer meanings from context. They figure out what a new word means by paying attention to how it is used.

You need to do the same. You need to make your mind receptive to new words by actively seeking to understand them. When you encounter an unfamiliar word in the newspaper, don't skip over it. Stop and try to figure out what it means. The words that surround it should provide a few clues.

Put your mind to work on it.

A Word Is Useful Only If You Use It

Children learn words by using them. Adults who want to build their vocabularies must do the same. You can't incorporate a new word into your vocabulary unless you give it a thorough workout, and then keep it in shape through regular exercise.

We tell our students to use new words over and over—at the dinner table, at school, among their friends—even at the risk of making themselves annoying. Even at the risk of making mistakes and appearing foolish.

If a word isn't useful to you, you'll never remember it. Our students have a powerful incentive for learning the words we teach them: if they learn them carefully, they'll do better on the SAT or GRE and improve their chances of being admitted to the schools they want to attend. An added bonus is that their writing and speaking skills improve along with their vocabulary, often leading to better grades. Adults and other know-it-alls may have other vocabulary needs, but the same general rule applies.

With vocabulary, as with many other things in life, you have to use it if you don't want to lose it. Remember that the size and quality of a person's vocabulary correlate powerfully with his or her success in school, at work, and beyond.

Learning New Words Can Be Fun

We also try to make learning fun. We give our students decks of playing cards with Hit Parade words and definitions printed on them, so that they can learn even while they're playing. (We call these decks of cards Hit Pads.)

We think this book makes learning new words fun, too. You'll have to work, but if you approach the task in the proper frame of mind, you'll find that learning new words can be a pleasure. For one thing, you'll get to read a lot of good books.

Read, Read, Read!

The best way to build a solid, sophisticated vocabulary is to read voraciously. Careful reading not only brings you into contact with new words, it also forces you to use your head to figure out what those new words mean. If you read widely enough, you will find that your vocabulary will build itself. New words are contagious if you give yourself enough exposure to them. Reading good book is better for your vocabulary than is watching television. Reading well-written magazines and newspapers can help, too.


Reading Isn't Enough, Though

We aren't the only people who think that avid reading is the key to building an educated vocabulary. You've probably heard the same thing from your parents and teachers, and with good reason. But reading isn't enough.

Reading the writings of respected authors will expose you to a large stock of words and a variety of writing styles. But honestly now, when you encounter a word you don't know, what do you do?

You probably don't labor over the word, trying to determine its meaning from context. You skip over the word, you don't know, and somehow you muddle through with more or less vague comprehension. If you're serious about understanding what you read, as well as improving your
THE DANGERS OF RELYING ON CONTEXT ALONE

The natural way to learn words, as we observed earlier, is to see how other people use them—that is, to see or hear the word in context. While context may tell you how to use the word, relying on context is not without pitfalls.

First, when you encounter a new word, you can’t be certain how to pronounce it unless you hear it spoken by someone whose pronunciation is authoritative. You also can’t be certain the word is being used correctly. Even skillful writers and speakers occasionally misuse language. A writer or speaker may even misuse a word intentionally, perhaps for dramatic or comic effect.

Even more important, most words have many different meanings or shades of meanings. Sometimes the difference between one meaning and another can be tiny; sometimes it can be enormous. Even if you deduce the meaning from the context, you have no way of knowing whether the meaning you’ve deduced will apply in other cases.

Finally, context can be misleading. Here is an example of what we mean. It’s a dialogue we find ourselves having over and over again with our students. The dialogue concerns the meaning of the word formidable, although you can substitute just about any medium-difficult word.

Us: Do you know what formidable means?

Student: Sure, of course.

Us: Good. Define it.

Student: Okay. A formidable opponent to someone...

Us: Sorry to cut you off. We want the definition of formidable, not an example of how to use it in a sentence. Can you please define the word formidable for us?

Student: Sure. Umm, let’s see... (The student is still thinking of the phrase formidable opponent.) Formidable means good or skillful. May be big, aggressive. What about tremendous?

Us: Nice try, but it means frightening.

Student: Really? I didn’t know that. I thought it meant something else.

Us: Well, it also means awe-inspiring.

WHAT’S THE POINT?

The point is that context can be misleading. Have you ever played the game Mad Libs? In it, one player is given a text from which a number of words are missing, and the other player is asked to supply those missing words without looking at the text. The result is often very funny. But something similar—and much less funny—can happen when you rely exclusively on context to supply you with the meanings of new words. You may hit upon a meaning that fits the context, only to discover later that your guess was far wide of the mark.

To keep this from happening, you need to use a dictionary.
**WORD SMART**

- **shorten.** See -; **abridge.**
  
  **abridg**'e·ble, e·d. — **abridg**'er, n. — **abridg**'ment, n. — **abridg**'ment, adj. See **shorten.** 2. contract.

Some of us may have developed a fear of dictionaries at about the age when we formed a fear of demons. "Dad, what does abridge mean?" "Look it up!" So you dutifully open the dictionary and scan the entries until you find the one above. And this entry is supposed to help you understand what the word means? No wonder we skip the dictionary so ineptently.

**A DICTIONARY REALLY CAN HELP**

If you know how to decipher the entry, let's examine the above entry piece by piece:

**abridge**

- The main entry. The dot separates the words into syllables. Sometimes the main entry includes stress marks to tell you which syllables to stress when pronouncing the word.

- The pronunciation. Every dictionary includes a pronunciation key up front to explain symbols like ɗ (upside-down e). (Known as a schwa, and pronounced "uh." Finally, we wish all dictionaries would drop symbols like the schwa and substitute phonetic spellings using the regular alphabet.) If a word has more than one acceptable pronunciation, the entry will list them.

- Always observe the pronunciation of a word when you look it up. If you don't know how to pronounce a word, you're more likely to use V. (If you don't know how to pronounce a word, you're more likely to embarrass yourself at cocktail parties and the like.) And the more you use a word, the more you'll be able to remember it.

**v.**

- Part of speech. This abbreviation means that abridge is a verb, specifically, a transitive verb.

- A transitive verb is one that carries action from a subject to a direct object. For example, in the sentence The dog ate the book, the verb ate carries action from the dog to the book. Similarly, in The editor abridged the book, the verb abridged carries action from the editor to the book.

- An example of an intransitive verb is to sleep. In The dog sleeps, the verb does not carry any action from the subject (dog) to anything.

**abridged, abridging**

These entries let us know that we should note the spellings of different forms of the word abridge. Notice, for example, that we drop the e before adding ing.

1. To shorten by condensation or omission while retaining the basic content: to abridge a long work.

The most common definition of the word, The Random House College Dictionary, is one of the few that include helpful phrases or sentences to show you how to use the word in context.

- This feature is quite useful. The example tells us that we would not use abridge this way: The tailor abridged Susan's long skirt to make it a mini.

2. To reduce in intensity, scope, etc.; diminish, curtail: A to deprive; cut off.

Other definitions, generally in order of importance. Sometimes a definition will include close synonyms.

(*ME abrecge, abrige < MF abréger < L. abbreviare to shorten. See **abreviate**.)

We will discuss etymology in more detail later, since it is a powerful mnemonic. (Look it up!)

**ABBREVIATE**

- **abridg**'e·ble, e·d. — **abridg**'er, n. — **abridg**'ment, adj. — **abridg**'ment, n. — **abridg**'ment, adj. See **shorten.** 2. contract.

**Abbreviated** (1) list of synonyms. The numbers refer to the preceding order of definitions. The entry suggests that we look up shorten.

Again, this is a feature of The Random House College Dictionary. Not all dictionaries include it.
DON'T STOP WITH THE DEFINITION

The editors of the dictionary advise us to look up shorten if we want a better understanding of abbreviate, so let's do just that:

shorten (sho'rt-en), v.t., 1. to make short or shorter. 2. to reduce, decrease, take in, etc.: shorten sail. 3. to make (pastry, bread, etc.) short, as with butter or other fat.—v.i. 4. to become short or shorter. 5. (of odds) to decrease. —short'en, n. —SYN. 1. condense, lessen, limit, restrict. abbreviate, abbrevio, curtail mean to make shorter or briefer. Shorten is a general word meaning to make less in extent or division; to shorten a dress, a prisoner's sentence. The other three words suggest methods of shortening. To abridge is to make shorter by omission or contraction: to abbreviate a word. To extract is to reduce in length or size by condensing, summarizing, etc. like: to abridge a document. Curtail suggests deprivation and lack of completeness because of cutting off past: to curtail an explanation. 2. lessen.

This entry distinguishes shorten from a number of synonyms, including abridge. The digression took another minute or so, but we've come away with a better understanding of the meanings and their nuances (L.U.I.). We will consider synonyms in detail when we discuss how to use a thesaurus.

WHY AREN'T ENTRIES IN WORD SMART LIKE DICTIONARY ENTRIES?

If the first place because this isn't a dictionary, we're trying to make Word Smart easier to read and understand than a big dictionary. Don't get us wrong. We use dictionaries, we rely on dictionaries, but sometimes we wish that lexicographers (those fun loving people who write dictionaries) would communicate in basic English.

We aren't as sophisticated as lexicographers. So for each word in Word Smart, we give you a basic definition. Sometimes a close synonym is enough. Then we give you—and this is important—a sentence or two so that you can see how to use the word. Our entry for abridge reads:

ABRIDGE (ab BRID) v. to shorten; to condense. The thoughtful editor had abridged the massive book by removing the boring parts. An abridged dictionary one that has been shortened to keep it from crushing desks and people's laps.

The problem with most dictionaries is that they don't tell you how to use the word. You can always spot someone who has learned new words almost exclusively through the dictionary rather than through general read-

LEARNING NEW WORDS

ing supplemented with a dictionary. When you ask such people the definition of a word, it's almost as if they fall into a trance—their eyes glaze over as they recite off the definition almost word for word from a dictionary. Use a dictionary, but don't become a slave to it.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND A MEANING UNLESS YOU CAN DEFINE IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS

To understand a word completely, to make a word yours, you should try to define it in your own words. Don't settle for the dictionary definition. For that matter, don't settle for our definition. Make up your own definition, you'll understand the meaning better. What's more, you'll be more likely to remember it.

DON'T CLOSE THAT DICTIONARY UNTIL YOU'VE MEMORIZED THE DEFINITION!

How many times have you looked up the definition of a certain word? Ideally, you shouldn't have to look up the definition of a word more than once—that is, if you memorize the definition. Many students look up words only to forget them a week later. We try to get our students to form the habit of never shutting the dictionary until they have satisfied themselves that they have permanently memorized the definition of a word.

How can you memorize words? We'll show you how shortly. First we need to discuss a companion to the dictionary: the thesaurus.

THESAURUSES: DON'T MISUSE, ABUSE, EXPLOIT, CORRUPT, MISAPPLY, OR MISEMPLOY THEM

A thesaurus is a dictionary-like reference book that lists synonyms for many words. A thesaurus can be another useful tool in your word-building campaign, but only if you use it properly. Many people don't. Thesaurus abuse is very common. Students very often try to make their vocabulary seem bigger than they actually are by using a thesaurus to beef up the papers they write. (Academics chronically endeavor to increase their parlance to portend more majestically by employing a lexicon of synonyms to amplify the theses they inscribe.) They write their papers in their own words, then plug in big words from a thesaurus. That's what we did with the silly-sounding sentence in the parentheses above. You'd be surprised how many students actually copy their papers that way.

Good teachers are never fooled by this. The big words culled from the thesaurus usually lead to the wrong words—words that have lots of syllables but that don't mean quite what the student thinks they do. A "thesaurused" sentence is very often incomprehensible—or unintentionally silly.
STILL, A THESAURUS DOES HAVE USES, FUNCTIONS, PURPOSES, AND APPLICATIONS.

Despite these cautions, we do believe that a thesaurus can be very helpful—if you use it properly.

The best way to use a thesaurus is as a supplement to your dictionary, as a reference work that can help you find the word that expresses precisely what you are trying to say. A good thesaurus is intended to help a speaker or writer distinguish the shades of difference between words of similar meaning.

HOW TO USE THE THESAURUS: AN EXAMPLE.

Let’s say you’re trying to describe Randolph, someone who never lends money to anyone. Randolph examinines his monthly bank statement with a calculator to make sure that his interest has been properly computed to the penny. Randolph is someone who, like Jack Benny, would have to think long and hard if a mugger presented him with the dilemma “Your money or your life.” Let’s say that the first word that comes to mind in describing Randolph is cheap. Now, bring the careful writer you are, you decide to see if cheap is the most precise word you can come up with. After all, cheap can describe Randolph or the clothes he wears.

Looking up cheap in The Random House Thesaurus (College Edition), you find the following entry:

**cheap adj. 1. Chicken is not as cheap as it was: inexpensive, low-priced, economical, reasonable. 2. Talk is cheap: effortless, costless, easy. 3. The coat may be expensive but it looks cheap: shoddy, shabby, inferior, worthless, poor, second-rate, trashy, meager, paltry, gimmick, flashy, gaudy, in bad taste, gawdy, tacky, common, insipid. 4. Spreading gossip is a cheap thing to do: contemptible, petty, despicable, sordid, ignoble, wretched, mean, base. Slang two-bit, vulgar, immoral, indecent. 5. He’s too cheap to pick up the check: tight, stingy, miserly, parsimonious, tightfisted, close. Anti: expensive, costly, highly priced, high, overpriced. 2. worthwhile, valuable, difficult, troublesome. 3. superior, good, fine, first-rate, worthy; in good taste, tasteful, high-class, civic, elegant, chic, smart. 4. admirable, commendable, moral, decent. 5. generous, charitable, openhanded.**

The entry cheap lists five primary meanings, each preceded by an illustrative sentence. You can get the sense until you find the one you want: the last one. Now, we’ll examine the synonyms:

right: Okay, but perhaps too informal or colloquial. Might be confused with other definitions of the word right. Forget this one.

stingy: A possibility.

miserly: Let’s say you’re not exactly sure what this one means. You decide to look this one up in the regular dictionary.

parsimonious: Better look this one up, too.

tightfisted: A little better, since tight, though perhaps still too slangy. You’ll think about it.

cheap: Nope. Too many other definitions.

Before leaving the thesaurus, however, you decide to check out the listing for miserly and come up with the following additional words:

parsimonious: Look it up.

Avaricious: Look it up.

mean: Too many other definitions.

greedy: More a synonym of greedy. Randolph isn’t precisely greedy. He doesn’t want to accumulate a lot; he just wants to hold on to what he has. Forget this one.

scrimping: Doesn’t sound right. Forget this one.

pinching: Nope.

penny-pinching: Better than pinching alone, but colloquial. Maybe.

frugal: Look it up.

l Ukir: Too vague.

closefisted: Nah.

disenfrased: Similar to tightfisted and penny-pinching, but not as good. Drop.

selfish: Too general. Randolph is selfish only with money.

ungenerous: Nope. Randolph isn’t generous, but you want to say what he is rather than what he is not.

greedy: You ruled this one earlier.

Aligent: Look it up.

near: Nope.
meager: Look it up.

grudging: Not precisely what you mean.

You decide you have enough synonyms to work with. Now you have to look up and verify definitions.

**Next, the Dictionary**

You are left with three synonyms you know (stingy, tightfisted, and penny-pinching) and seven you don’t know. Just to be orderly, you look up the seven words alphabetically in *The Random House College Dictionary*:

avaricious characterized by avarice (insatiable greed for riches; inordinate desire to gain and hoard wealth); covetous

Nope, you don’t mean greedy. *Avaricious* is out.

frugal 1. economical in use or expenditure; prudently saving or sparing. 2. entailing little expense; requiring few resources; meager, scanty.

The first definition means careful with money. *Economical and prudent* both have positive connotations, but Randolph’s obsession with money is not something good. The second definition is not the one we want. Out.

meager 1. deficient in quantity or quality; lacking fulness or richness; poor; scanty. 2. having little flesh; lean; thin. 3. meagre.

Nope. None of these seems to convey the meaning you want.

miserly of, like, or denoting a miser (one who lives in wretched circumstances in order to save and hoard money); penurious; niggardly.

Well, this might be right. You have to think about Randolph a little more. What are his circumstances like? Is he willing to live in wretched circumstances?

niggardly reluctant to give or spend; stingy. —Syn. 1. penurious, miserly.

Possible. Let’s take a look at the last few before you decide.

parsimonious characterized by or showing parsimony; sparing or frugal, esp. to excess.

Now you have established that *parsimonious* means stingier than frugal. This seems to hit the mark.

penurious 1. extremely stingy. 2. extremely poor; indigent. 3. poorly or inadequately supplied.

The first definition works, but the second definition seems to imply a stinginess perhaps resulting from poverty. The third definition does not apply. Now you have to think again about Randolph. Is he poor as well as cheap? If so this is the right word.

**So Which is the Right Word?**

You’re still left with stingy, tightfisted, penny-pinching, miserly, niggardly, parsimonious, and penurious. Oh, and there’s still the blunt, if unassuming, cheap, which you started with. Which word is the right word?

*Stingy* is the right word if you want to use a simple, no-nonsense word. *Tightfisted* is the right word if you want something a little more slang and graphic.

*Penny-pinching* is the right phrase if you want the image to be a little more literal than tightfisted.

*Miserly* is the right word, depending on Randolph’s living circumstances.

*Niggardly* is the right word if Randolph is merely reluctant to spend money. If he’s more than reluctant, this isn’t the right word.

*Parsimonious* is the right word if you want a multisyllabic synonym for *cheap* or *stingy*. From the definitions, *parsimonious* seems more extreme than *stingy*.

*Penurious* is the right word if Randolph is poor as well as stingy.

To decide which word is the right word, you must give more thought to precisely what aspect of Randolph you’re trying to capture and convey.

**The Right Word Is Not Merely the Accurate Word with the Proper Connotations**

We don’t want to get into writing style, but other considerations to keep in mind when choosing the right word are:

rhythm, or Cadence

Which word best fits in with the overall flow of the sentence and paragraph? Perhaps you want to achieve alliteration (Randolph is a pretentious, penny-pinching poe) or a certain rhyme (Ailanthus drove Randolph to parsimony).

Part of Speech

*Miserly* seems okay as an adjective, but *miserliness* seems a little awkward as a noun.

Vocabulary Level

Who will be reading your description of Randolph? Your word choice may be limited by your potential reader or audience. Other things being equal, the simple word is invariably the better word.

Variety

If you’ve used *cheap* several times already in the same piece of writing, you may want to use a different word for spice.
Repetition
On the other hand, repeating the same word may have a powerful effect.

Dramatic Effect
A simple word in an academic setting, or an academic word in a simple setting, can have a dramatic effect. Comic effects can also be achieved by using a word in an inappropriate or incongruous context.

All That for One Little Word?
After our jibe excursions in the thesaurus and dictionary, you are probably wondering why we went to so much trouble about one little word—shrew.

First, your journey through the thesaurus and dictionary taught you the definitions of several new words. Perhaps more important, you were forced to think.

To think? Sure. You had to think more about what precisely you wanted to say about Randolph and whom you were addressing it.

Editing Is More Than Choosing the Right Word
Word Smart is a book on words rather than a writing. Still, we want to note in passing that good editing is more than simply reviewing the words you use.

Editing means refining your ideas. Editing means deciding on the ordering and presentation of your ideas. Editing means deciding which ideas you’re going to present at all.

Which Thesaurus Should I Use?
There are a lot of thesauruses out there. The grandaddy thesaurus is Roger’s International Thesaurus. It’s the oldest and perhaps the best known. In our opinion it is also the most difficult to use. Roger’s bills itself as a dictionary of ideas. Words are not listed alphabetically, but by some unwieldy Dewey decimal-type classification system that we’ve never been able to understand.

We recommend that you use one that lists words alphabetically in the text itself. Ideally, the thesaurus should include sample sentences that distinguish at least some of the different shades of meaning.

We like The Random House Thesaurus (College Edition). Another good book is Webster’s Elementary Dictionary of Synonyms.

Reading This Book
Reading widely—with the help of a dictionary and perhaps also a thesaurus—is a great way to build a vocabulary. But it’s also a very slow way. Which words you encounter in your reading depends on which words the writers happen to use.

That’s where we come in. The main section of Word Smart is a concentration of the words you want to know—the words you need to help you build an educated vocabulary.
How Do Mnemonics Work?

All mnemonics work in the same way: by forcing you to associate what you’re trying to remember with something that you already know, or with something that is easier to memorize. Patterns and rhymes are easy to memorize, which explains why so many mnemonics involve one or the other.

Incidentally, it may also explain why rhyming became a part of poetry. The earliest poets and ballad-singers didn’t write down their compositions, because they didn’t know how to write. Instead, they kept them in their heads. Among other things, the rhymes at the ends of the lines made them easier to remember.

There’s a Science to Mnemonics

Even though we all use mnemonics every day, you may not be aware that some very clever systems of mnemonics have been developed to enable people to memorize just about anything.

The undisputed mnemonic champ is Harry Lorayne, who has a trick used to memorize telephone directories! We’re talking about names, phone numbers, and addresses!

Lorayne’s best book is The Piece-a-Minute Memory Book, which we recommend highly.

Basic Method No. 2: SEEING IS REMEMBERING

Letting a new word suggest a vivid mental image to you is a powerful and effective way to remember that word. Mental images are really mnemonics, too. They help you remember. The emphasis here is on suggestive mental pictures, rather than on tricky abbreviations or coincidences of spelling.

Let’s look at an example. We’ll start with a word we’ve already used in this chapter: abridge. As you know, to abridge is to shorten or condense.

What image pops into your mind when you think of the word abridge? That’s easy; a bridge. Now you need to picture something happening on or to that bridge that will help you remember the meaning of the word: abridge. You get this clue when you see abridge; you won’t be helping yourself remember what you want to remember.

What you need is an image that suggests shortening or condensing. A dinosaur taking a big bite out of the middle of a bridge? A bomb exploding on a bridge? The image you choose is up to you.

How About Another Example?

Another useful word on the Word Smart master list is gregarious, which means sociable; enjoying the company of others. What image springs to mind? Really think now.

Can’t think of an image? Be creative. A party animal is gregarious. How about imagining a party animal named Greg Arius. Don’t step with his name. You need a picture. So give Greg a funny hat, a noisemaker, and some polka-dor dancing shoes. Or put a lampshade on his head. Think of something that will make you think of sociability the next time you see Greg Arius’s name in a book or a magazine you’re reading. The more real you make Greg Arius seem in your imagination, the less trouble you’ll have remembering the meaning of gregarious.

The Craziest the Mental Image, the Better

When it comes to mental images, crazy is better than normal. Normal is bland. Normal is boring. If you could easily remember boring things, you wouldn’t have any trouble learning new words. Normal is harder to remember than crazy.

Crazy is dramatic. Crazy leaps out at you. You remember crazy. And remember this: anything goes when you’re learning new words.

Memory Aids Have to Be Personal

Sometimes we’ll give you a mnemonic for the listings in Word Smart, but we won’t do this very often. Memory aids work best when you have to struggle a little to come up with them.

If you come up with your own memory aid, if it really means something to you, it will become a permanent part of your memory.

The very effort you take in devising a mental image or mnemonic is a large part of what enables you to remember it. This is why we take issue with those vocabulary books that provide ready-made memory aids for every word. These ready-made memory aids may help the authors of these books remember the meanings of the words in them, but they probably won’t help you much.

What If You Can’t Come up with a Mnemonic?

One of our students once told us that he had tried and tried to come up with an image for the word scenery, but he hadn’t been able to think of one.

We asked him what the word meant. He said, “To try to convert someone to a religion or a point of view.” We just smiled and looked at him. Suddenly, he started laughing. He had tried so hard to devise a mnemonic that he had memorized the word without realizing it.

Harry Lorayne makes this same point in his book: The beauty of a mnemonic is that even if you can’t devise one, you may have memorized the word anyway.

Basic Method No. 3: ETYMONOLOGICAL CLUES

Although the English language contains hundreds of thousands of words, you will discover that many groups of words are related in meaning because they developed from a common root. When you recognize that a group of words shares a similar root, you will more easily remember the entire group.

For example, take the word mnemonic. You know now, if you hadn’t known it already, that a mnemonic is a device that helps you remember something. We’re going to show you two other words that are related to it.
mnemonic: device to help you remember something
amnesty: a general pardon for offenses against a government (an official "forgetting")
amnesia: loss of memory

Pretty neat, eh? How about words from another common root:
chronological: in order according to time
synchronize: to put on the same timetable
asynchronism: something out of place in time or history
chronic: continuing over a long time
chronometric: chronological record of events
chrono meter: device to measure time

Sometimes it is easier to learn a whole cluster of related words than to come up with mnemonics for them individually.

The Advantages of Etymology
The principal virtues of using etymology to remember a definition are that the etymology actually relates to the word’s meaning (as opposed to the usage approach) and that the same etymology may be shared by lots of words. Another advantage of etymology is that it may get you interested in words. Etymology gets you involved in a story—the story of a word through the centuries of history.

In Chapter Six you will find our list of the most important roots with numerous examples following each. We collected all the etymologically related words in the back of the book because we thought that was easier and more efficient than providing the etymology of each word with its entry.

The Demons of Etymology
Many vocabulary books claim that etymology helps you decipher the meanings of words. That’s true sometimes, but etymology can lead you astray.

The etymology of a word will tell you something about the word, but it will rarely give you the definition. And it’s easy to be mistaken about the etymology of a word.

For example, in a certain SAT, many clever students got a question wrong because they thought that the word verdant was etymologically related to words like verify, verdict, vermillion, and veritable. Verdant must have something to do with the concept of truth or reality, they reasoned.

Correct, but wrong. Verdant comes from a different family of words. It comes from the same old root as does the French word vert, which means green. If those same clever students had re-organized that connection, they might have realized that verdant means green with vegetation, as in a verdant forest.

Similarly, a lot of words that begin with ped have something to do with foot: pedestrian, pedal, pedestrian, pedometor, impede, expedite. A pediat-

ian, however, is not a foot doctor. A pediatrician is a doctor for children. A pediatrics is a foot doctor. (The word pediatrics is, however, related to the word meaning a strict teacher of children: pedagogue.)

Etymology is a powerful tool to remember words that you already know, but it is a dangerous tool to determine the meaning of words you don’t know.

Basic Method No. 4: WRITING ON YOUR BRAIN
Many people find that they can learn new information more readily if they write it down. The physical act of writing seems to plant an information more firmly in their minds. Perhaps the explanation is that by writing you are bringing another sense into play (you’ve seen the word, you’ve said and heard the word, and now you’re feeling the word).

You may find it useful to spend some time writing down phrases or sentences incorporating each new word. This is a good way to practice and strengthen your spelling as well.

You’ll probably have more luck if you don’t merely write down the word and its definition over and over again. If you’ve hit upon a good mnemonic or mental image to help you remember it, or you liked the etymology, write it down. You can even draw a picture or a diagram.

Basic Method No. 5: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER WITH FLASH CARDS AND A NOTEBOOK
A flash card is a simple piece of paper or cardboard with a word on one side and a definition on the other. You may have used flash cards when you were first learning to read, or when you were first tackling a foreign language. Used in the proper spirit, flash cards can turn learning into a game.

Most of our students find it useful to make flash cards out of three-by-five index cards. They write or type a Hit Parade word on one side and the definition on the other. (You should also indicate the pronunciation if you aren’t sure you’ll remember it.) Then they can quiz one another or practice by themselves during spare moments.

Here’s a basic flash card, front and back:

Front:

Oblique

Back:
LEARNING NEW WORDS

Practicing with flash cards can be a lot of fun. Parents and siblings sometimes lend a hand and discover that they are learning new words, too. And every time you look at the back of the card, you'll be reminded of the mnemonic, trick, or mental image you've devised to keep the word firmly in your memory.

Never an Idle Moment
Many of our students even took a few of their flash cards into a pocket when they head out the door in the morning. They can then work on them in spare moments—while riding on a bus or while listening to the radio. The more often you flash through your flash cards, the faster you'll build your vocabulary.

Ahem
Reading your flash cards isn't enough, of course. You also need to make an effort to use the words on them. Using the words, much more than reading the cards, makes the definitions stick in and take hold.

For many of our students, the most effective method is to make a few new flash cards each day, study them in spare moments throughout the day, and make an effort to use the new words in their conversations and in their writing.

A. Notebook, Too
We also encourage students to compile notebooks with the new words they learn. Every time they learn new words, they record them in their notebooks. If you devote an entire page to each new word, the notebook will give you room to practice "writing on your brain." It will also give you plenty of space to doodle or jot down images that come to mind.

Even better, you can use your notebook as a place to record actual use of new words that you discover in your own reading. If, while reading a magazine, you come across one of the words you're working on, you can copy the sentence into your notebook, giving you a brand-new example of the word in context.

Students who keep notebooks report a sense of accomplishment when they look back through their notebooks at the hundreds of new words they have learned. A notebook gives you tangible (a good word) evidence of the progress you're making.

Some People Don't Use Flash Cards and Vocabulary Notebooks
Some authorities do not believe in flash cards or vocabulary notebooks. They claim that if students flung themselves to use a mnemonic to memorize the word in the first place, they wouldn't have to use flash cards or notebooks.

There may be something to this position, but we're not going to quibble. If a student likes to use flash cards and notebooks, great. Why should we tell a student to throw away his flash cards and use only mnemonics if the student is learning lots of words?

Remember: anything goes when memorizing words. There are no rules.
OVERVIEW: A MEMORIZATION GAME PLAN

Here, pulling it all together, is our step-by-step approach to memorizing new words permanently:

Step 1: Try to deduce the word's meaning from context.
Step 2: Look it up!
Step 3: Note the spelling.
Step 4: Say the word out loud.
Step 5: Read the main definition. Scan the secondary definitions.
Step 6: (If you have time) Compare the definitions with the definitions and usages of its synonyms.
Step 7: Define the word using your own words.
Step 8: Use it in a sentence.
Step 9: Attach the word to a mnemonic mental image, or other memory aid.
Step 10: Fill out a flash card and make a new entry in your notebook.
Step 11: Use the new word every chance you get.

Let's take a look at each of these steps.

Step 1: TRY TO DEDUCE THE WORD'S MEANING FROM CONTEXT

Context will often lead you astray, but doing a bit of detective work is a good way to sharpen your mind and hone your reading comprehension skills. And who knows? You might even guess the right meaning.

Step 2: LOOK IT UP!

Most people try to skip this step. Don't you dare! You won't know whether you're correct about the meaning of a new word until you've made sure by looking it up.

No one can learn new words without a dictionary. If you don't have one, get one now. Even good dictionaries aren't terribly expensive.

LIU!

Step 3: NOTE THE SPELLING

Look at the spelling. Close your eyes and try to reconstruct the spelling. If you have trouble visualizing, test yourself by writing out the spelling on scrap paper and checking it against the dictionary.

Also, compare the spelling variations with other spelling variations you know. This is a nice trick that helps you recognize words that you think you don't know.

For example, sober is an adjective; the noun form is sobriety. Okay, with that as a clue, the noun propriety refers to what adjective? Proper. Propriety means what is socially proper or acceptable.

Here's another example: Do you know what inclusive means? Give up? Well, you know what decisive means, don't you? Decision relates to what word you know? Decide it, of course. Now, what noun do you think inclusive relates to? Incision. Inclusive means sharp or cutting, as in an incisive remark, or an incisive observation.

Step 4: SAY THE WORD OUT LOUD

Say the word. No, saying it to yourself is not good enough. Out loud. Hearing the word will bring another sense into play and help you remember the word. And as we noted earlier, you don't want to make a fool of yourself by mispronouncing words.

Our Pronunciation Key

We've never liked the pronunciation keys most dictionaries use. This may offend pedants and lexicographers, but we have instead to use a simplified pronunciation key. Our key is based on consistent phonetic sounds, so you don't have to memorize it. Still, it would be a good idea to take a few minutes now and familiarize yourself with it (especially the e and the ä):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The letter(s)</th>
<th>is (are) pronounced like the letter(s)</th>
<th>in the word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>bat, can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ah</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>con, on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aw</td>
<td>aw</td>
<td>paw, straw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ay</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>skate, rake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>steam, horn, err</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee</td>
<td>ea</td>
<td>steam, clean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>rim, chin, hint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ing</td>
<td>iing</td>
<td>sing, ring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>row, tow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo</td>
<td>oo</td>
<td>room, boom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ow</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>cow, braw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oy</td>
<td>oy</td>
<td>boy, ny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>run, bun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y (ye, eye)</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>rimb, time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ch</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>chair, chin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>f, ph</td>
<td>film, phony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>g, ng</td>
<td>go, gone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>join, jungle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>cool, cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>solid, whip</td>
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<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>sh</td>
<td>shop, wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>zoo, razor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uh</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>abbreviate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All other consonants are pronounced as you would expect. Capitalized letters are accented.

Step 5: READ THE MAIN DEFINITION; READ OR SCAN THE SECONDARY DEFINITIONS

Most dictionaries list the definitions in order of importance. This does not mean, of course, that the first definition is the one you are looking for. Read all the definitions; each will add to your understanding of the word.
Step 6: COMPARE THE DEFINITIONS WITH THE DEFINITIONS AND USAGES OF THE WORD’s SYNONYMS
As we showed you with the earlier examples, this step takes a little extra time, but believe us when we say that it is time well spent. Again, seeing how a word is similar to or different from synonyms or related words enhances your understanding of all of them.

Step 7: DEFINE THE WORD USING YOUR OWN WORDS
We said it before, and we’ll say it again: you don’t truly know what a word means unless you can define it yourself in your own way.

Step 8: USE IT IN A SENTENCE
Now that you know what the word means and what it doesn’t mean, use it. Make up a sentence.
It helps to use the word in a sentence that includes a person or thing or event you know and that creates a concrete feeling or image. For example, the sentence They are gregarious is not as good as Greg, Gertrude, and Greer are gregarious. Which sentence do you think will help you remember what gregarious means?

Step 9: FIX THE WORD WITH A MEMONIC, MENTAL IMAGE, OR OTHER MEMORY AID
With all that you’ve done with the word in the previous steps, you may already have memorized it. The only way to be sure, however, is to fix the word with a mnemonic.

Step 10: FILL OUT A FLASH CARD AND MAKE A NEW ENTRY IN YOUR NOTEBOOK
The paperwork is very important, particularly if you’re trying to learn a lot of new words in a short period of time.

Step 11: USE THE NEW WORD EVERY CHANCE YOU GET
Don’t be repetitious. If you don’t keep new knowledge in shape, you won’t keep it at all.

**Two Final Words of Advice: Be Suscious**
You already know some of the words in the book. You may know quite a few of them. Naturally, you don’t need to drill yourself on words you already know and use.

But be careful. Before skipping a word, make certain you really do know what it means. Some of the most embarrassing vocabulary mistakes occur when a person confidently uses familiar words incorrectly.

Get to Work
Now on to the words. Remember that you’ll retain more (and have more fun) if you tackle this book a little at a time.
ABASH (uh BASH) v to make ashamed; to embarrass
Meredith felt abashed by her inability to remember her lines in the school chorus of "Old McDonald Had a Farm.

To do something without shame or embarrassment is to do it unabashedly. Ken handed in a term paper that he had unabashedly copied from the National Enquirer.

ABATE (uh BAYT) v to subside; to reduce
George spilled a pot of hot coffee on his leg. It hurt quite a bit.
The gradually: the agony abated.
Bad weather abates when good weather begins to return. A rainstorm that does not let up continues unabated.

A tax abatement is a reduction in taxes. Businesses are sometimes given tax abatements in return for building factories in places where there is a particular need for jobs.

ABDICATE (uh DUK Kayt) v to step down from a position of power or responsibility
When King Edward VIII of England decided he would rather be married to Wallis Warfield Simpson, an American divorcee, than be king of England, he tuned in his crown and abdicated.

Even people who aren't monarchs can abdicate duties and responsibilities. Mary abdicated her responsibility as a baby-sitter by locking the five-year-old in a closet and flying to the Bahamas.

ABERRATION (ab uh RAY shun) n something not typical; a deviation from the standard
Tom's bad behavior was an aberration. So was Harry's good behavior. That is, Tom was usually good and Harry was usually bad.

A snowstorm in June is an aberration: snow doesn't normally fall in June.
The chef at this restaurant is dreadful; the food was just as bad as an aberration.

An aberration is an aberrant (uh BAYR unt) occurrence. Tom's behavior was aberrant. The summer snowstorm was aberrant.

Note carefully the pronunciation of these words.

ABHOR (ab HAWR) v to hate very, very much; to detest
To abhor something is to view it with horror. Hating a person is almost friendly in comparison with abhorring him or her.

Emanuel abhorred having ants dwelled on his head.

To abhor raw chicken livers is to have an abhorrence of them or to find them abhorrent.

THE WORDS

ABJET (ab JET) adj hopeless; extremely sad and solit; defeated; utterly bummed out
An abject person is one who is crushed as in without hope. A slave would be abject, in all likelihood.

Perhaps 90 percent of the time, when you encounter this word it will be followed by the word poverty. Abject poverty is hopeless, desperate poverty. The phrase "abject poverty" is revered. Writers use it because they are too lazy to think of anything more apposite.

ABNEGATE (ab NAY gayt) v to deny oneself things; to reject; to renounce
Samantha abnegated desserts for one month after getting on the scale.

Self-abnegation is giving up oneself, usually for some higher cause. Ascetics practice self-abnegation because they believe it will bring them nearer to spiritual purity.

ABORTIVE (ab BURT ativ) adj unsuccessful
Mary and Elizabeth made an abortive effort to bake a birthday cake; that is, their effort did not result in a birthday cake.

Fred's attempt to climb the mountain was abortive: he fell off when he was halfway up.
To abort something is to end it before it is completed. An aborted pregnancy, called an abortion, is one that is ended before the baby is born. An abortion in this sense doesn't have to be the result of a contraceptive medical procedure.

ABRIDGE (ab BRIG) v to shorten; to condense
The thoughtful editor had abridged the massive book by removing the boring parts.

An abridged dictionary is one that has been shortened to keep it from weighing desks and people's laps.

An abridgment is a shortened or condensed work.

ABSOULTE (ab soh LOOT) adj total; unlimited; perfect
An absolute ruler is one who is ruled by no one else. An absolute ma is a total mess. An absolute rule is one that has no exceptions and that you must follow, no two ways about it.

Absolute is also common. It means something that is total, unlimited, or perfect. Death, for living things, is an absolute. There just isn't any other way around it.

ABSOLVE (ab SOLV) v to forgive or free from blame; to free from sin; to free from an obligation
The priests absolved the sinner who had come to church to confess his sin.

Tom's admission of guilt absolved Dick, who had originally been accused of the crime.

It is also possible to absolve someone of a responsibility. Bill absolved Mary of her obligation to go to the prom with him. That is, he
**WORD SMART**

Told her it was all right if she went with the captain of the football team instead.

The act of absoiling is called absolution (ab shu LOO shun).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABSENT (AB shent) adj</th>
<th>abasing; voluntarily not doing something, especially something pleasant that is bad for you or has a bad reputation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCLAIM (AK klém) n</td>
<td>an authorized, on honor; the first break-dancing troops to perform in Carnegie Hall, the Teflon Toughs, received the acclamations of the critics as well as of the fans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCRUE (ak KWR) v</td>
<td>to approach and speak to someone; Amanda Karate charged the stranger who accosted her in the street and was embarrassed to find he was an old blind man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACQUIESCE (ak kwiz) v</td>
<td>to comply passively; to accept or assent; to agree; to acquiesce is to do something without objection—to do it quietly. As the similarity of their spellings indicates, the words acquiesce and quiet are closely related. They are both based on Latin words meaning &quot;rest&quot; as in quiet. The pirates asked Pete to walk the plank; he took one look at their swords and then acquiesced. Acquiesce is sometimes used sloppily as a simple synonym for agree in situations where it isn't really appropriate. For example, it isn't really possible to acquiesce politely, enthusiastically, or eagerly. Don't forget the quiet in the middle. To acquiesce is to exhibit acquiescence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACUTE (AK rit) adj</td>
<td>harsh; like acid; the chill we had at the party had an acrid taste, it was harsh and unpleasant; long after the fire had been put out, we could feel the acrid sting of smoke in our nostrils. Acid is used most often with tastes and smells, but it can be used more broadly to describe anything that is offensive in a similar way. A comment that stung like acid could be called acrid. So could a harsh personality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACUMEN (ak yoo mun) n</td>
<td>the sharp edge of judgment; mental sharpness; a woman who knew how to turn a dollar into a million; overnight might be said to have a lot of business acumen.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUH-CK</td>
<td>a. hard to understand</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUH-Z</td>
<td>b. voluntarily avoiding</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. obstinate</td>
<td>c. wretched</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. abstract</td>
<td>d. bitter (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. abstruse</td>
<td>e. comply</td>
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<td>4. abysmal</td>
<td>f. harsh</td>
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<td>5. accolade</td>
<td>g. mental sharpness</td>
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<td>6. accost</td>
<td>h. theoretical</td>
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<td>7. acerbic</td>
<td>i. avoid</td>
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<td>8. acquisitive</td>
<td>j. approach someone</td>
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<td>9. acrid</td>
<td>k. approach someone</td>
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<td>10. acrimonious</td>
<td>l. approach someone</td>
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<td>11. acumen</td>
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**ACUTE** (uh KYOOT) adj. sharp; shrewd
If your eyesight is acute, you can see things that other people can’t.
You have mental acuity (uh KYOO uh te). An acute mind is a quick, intelligent one. You have mental acuity. An acute pain is a sharp pain.
Acute means sharp only in a figurative sense. A knife, which is sharp enough to cut, is never said to be acute.
Acute is a word doctors throw around quite a bit. An acute disease is one that reaches its greatest intensity very quickly and then goes away. What could a disease be if it isn’t acute? See chronic.

**ADAMANT** (AD uh MANT) adj. stubborn; unyielding; completely inflexible
Candice was adamant: she would never go out with Paul again.
A very hard substance, like a diamond, is also adamant.
Adamantine (ad uh MAN teen) and adamant are synonyms.
Adamancy is being adamant.

**ADDRESS** (uh DRES) v. to speak to; to direct one’s attention to
To address a convention is to give a speech to the convention. To address a problem is to face it and set about solving it. Ex: addressed the problem of addressing the convention by sitting down and writing his speech.

**ADHERENT** (ad HER ent) n. follower; supporter; believer
The king’s adherents threw a big birthday party for him, just to show how much they liked him.
To adhere to something is to stick to it. Adherents are people who adhere to, or stick to, something or someone. Following someone or something, especially rules or laws, is adherence.
A religion could be said to have adherents, assuming there are people who believe in it. Governments, causes, ideas, people, philosophies, and many other things can have adherents, too.

**ADMONISH** (ad MAHN ih) v. to scold gently; to warn
The boys’ mother admonished them not to eat the pie she had just baked. When they did so anyway, she admonished them for doing it.
In the first sentence admonish means warn; in the second it means scold gently. Consider yourself admonished not to misuse this word.
The noun is admonition (ad mah NISH un) and the adjective is admonitory (ad MAHN ih TOR ee).

**ADROIT** (uh DROYT) adj. skillful; dexterous; clever; shrewd; socially at ease
Adroit comes from droll, which is the French word for right (the opposite of left). Dextrous, which means pretty much the same thing as adroit, comes from dexter, which is the Latin word for right (the opposite of left). Right-handed people were once thought to be more dextrous and adroit than left-handed people. In fact, left-handed people were once thought to be downright evil, or sinister, which is the Latin word for left (the opposite of right). To say nowadays that right-handed people are better than left-handed people would be considered gauche, which means graceless, rude, socially awkward, or clumsy.
Gauche (GAHSH) is the French word for left (the opposite of right). A synonym for gauche is maladroit.
Get all that? Here it is again. It would be gauche to go to the ball wearing your right shoe on your left foot and your left shoe on your right foot. It would also be hard to dance adroitly with your shoes that way. If you were sufficiently dextrous, you might be able to switch and rete your shoes while you were dancing, but your dancing partner might think you were up to something sinister down there and ask you to keep both your right hand and your left hand to yourself.

**ADULATION** (uh LAY shun) n. wild or excessive admiration; flattery
The boss thrived on the adulation of his scheming secretary.
The rock star grew to abhor the adulation of his fans.
There is a note of sarcasm in adulation, as there is in flattery.
The verb is to adulate (AJ uh layt)
ADULTERATE (uh DULT uh royal) v to contaminate; to make impure

We discovered that our orange juice had radioactive waste in it: we discovered, in other words, that our orange juice had been adulterated.

Vegetarians do not like their foods adulterated with animal fats.

Undulterated means pure. Undulterated joy is joy unadulterated by sadness.

ADVERSE (ad VURS) adj unfavorable, antagonistic

Airplanes often don’t fly in adverse weather.

We had to play our soccer match under adverse conditions: it was snowing and only three members of our team had bothered to show up.

An airplane that took off in bad weather and reached its destination safely would be said to have overcome adversity. Adversity means misfortune or unfavorable circumstances. To do something “in the face of adversity” is to undertake a task despite obstacles.

Some people are at their best in adversity, because they rise to the occasion.

A word often confused with adverse is adverse. The two are related but they don’t mean quite the same thing. A person who is adverse to doing something is a person who doesn’t want to do it. To be adverse to something is to be opposed to doing it—to have an aversion to doing it.

AESTHETIC (as THEE ik) adj having to do with artistic beauty; artistic

Our art professor had a highly developed aesthetic sense; he found things to admire in paintings that, to us, looked like garbage.

Someone who admires beautiful things greatly can be called an aesthete (EAS thee). Aesthetics is the study of beauty or principles of beauty.

AFFABLE [AF uh bul] adj easy to talk to; friendly

Suzan was an affable girl; she could strike up a pleasant conversation with almost anyone.

ADJECTIVE (uh JEH cij) n a word that modifies a noun or pronoun; an adjective

The words that modify a noun are adjectives. The words that modify a verb or a whole clause are adverbs.

The Jeffersons’ dog was big but affable; it liked to lick little children on the nose.

The noun is affability.

AFFECTION (uh FEK shun) n unnatural or artificial behavior, usually intended to impress

Bucky’s English accent is an affectation. He spent only a week in England, and that was several years ago.

Elizabeth had somehow acquired the absent affectation of pretending that she didn’t know how to turn on a television set.

A person with an affectation is said to be affected.

To affect a characteristic or habit is to adopt it consciously, usually in the hope of impressing other people. Edward affected to be more of an artist than he really was. Everyone hated him for it.

AFFINITY (uh FIN uh feu) n sympathy; attraction; kinship; similarity

Ducks have an affinity for water; that is, they like to be in it.

Children have an affinity for trouble; that is, they often find themselves in it.

Magnets and iron have an affinity for each other; that is, each is attracted to the other.

Affinity also means similarity or resemblance. There is an affinity between snow and sleet.

AFFLUENT (AF loo unt) adj rich; prosperous

A person can be affluent; all it takes is money. A country can be affluent, too, if it’s full of affluent people.

Affluence means the same thing as wealth or prosperity. Carefully the pronunciation of this word.

AGENDA (uh JEN duh) n program; the things to be done

What’s on the agenda for the board meeting? A little gossip, then lunch.

A politician is often said to have an agenda. The politician’s agenda consists of the things he or she wishes to accomplish.

An agenda, such as that for a meeting, is often written down, but it doesn’t have to be. A person who has sneaky ambitions or plans is often said to have a secret or hidden agenda.

AGRICULTURAL (uh GRAR ak ul) adj relating to land; relating to the management or farming of land

Agriculture usually has to do with farming. Think of agriculture. Politics in this country often pit the rural, agrarian interests against the urban interests.
AGGREGATE (AG rh gut) n sum total; a collection of separate things mixed together
Chili is an aggregate of meat and beans.
Aggregate (AG rh gut) can also be a verb or an adjective. You would make chili by aggregating meat and beans. Chili is an aggregate (AG rh gut) food.

Similar and related words include congregate, segregate, and integrate. To aggregate is to bring together, to congregate is to get together, to segregate is to keep apart (or separate), to integrate is to unite.
A church’s congregation is a group of people that gets together inside it on Sunday.

Racial segregation is the separation of people by different races. School systems in which blacks and whites attend different schools are called segregated.
The act of opening those schools to members of all races is called integration.

AGNOSTIC (ag NAHS tik) n one who believes that the existence of a god can be neither proven nor disproven
An atheist is someone who does not believe in a god. An agnostic, on the other hand, isn’t sure. H doesn’t believe but he doesn’t not believe, either.
The noun is agnosticism (ag NAHS tik sz im).

ALacrity (uh LAK ri tee) n cheerful eagerness or readiness to respond
David could hardly wait for his parents to leave; he carried their luggage out to the car with great alacrity.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

ALLEGE (uh LEJ) v to assert without proof
If I say, "Bill alleges that I stole his hat," I am saying two things: I Bill says I stole his hat.

ALLEGATE (uh LEE see gayit) v to relieve, usually temporarily or incompletely; to make wearable; to lessen
Aspirin alleviates headache pain. When your headache comes back, take some more aspirin.

Visitng the charming pet cemetery alleviated the woman’s grief over the death of her cat.

ALLOCATE (AL uh koyt) v to distribute; to assign, to allot
The long car trip had been a big failure, and David, Doug, and Jan spent several hours attempting to allocate the blame. In the end, they decided it had all been Jan’s fault.
The office manager had allocated just seven paper clips for our entire department.

ALLOY (AL oy) n a combination of two or more things, usually metals
Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc. That is, you make brass by combining copper and zinc.

Alloy (AL loy) is often used as a verb. To alloy two things is to mix them together. There is usually little implication that the mixture is less than the sum of the parts. That is, there is often something undesirable or debased about an alloy (as opposed to a pure substance).

Unalloyed means undiluted or pure. Unalloyed dislike is dislike undiminished by any positive feelings; unalloyed love is love undiminished by any negative feelings.
ALLOOF (uh LOOF) adj uninvolved; standing off; keeping one's distance.

To stand aloof from a touch-football game is to stand on the sidelines and not take part.

ALTRUISM (AL tru iz um) n selflessness; generosity; devotion to the interests of others.

The private foundation depended on the altruism of the extremely rich old man. When he decided to start spending his money on his new eighteen-year-old girlfriend instead, the foundation went out of business.

To be altruistic is to help others without expectation of personal gain. Giving money to charity is an act of altruism. The altruist does it just to be nice, although he'll probably also remember to take a tax deduction.

An altruistic act is also an act of philanthropy, which means almost the same thing.

AMBIENCE (AM bee unz) n atmosphere; mood; feeling.

By decorating their house with plastic beach balls and Popsicle sticks, the Cramers created a playful ambience that delighted young children.

A restaurant's ambience is the look, mood, and feel of the place. People sometimes say that a restaurant has "no atmosphere of ambience." To do so is redundant—ambience and ambience mean the same thing.

Ambience is a French word that can also be pronounced "ahm BYAIRZ." The adjective ambi (AH bee unz) means suffocating or circulating.

AMBIGUOUS (ahm BIG you us) adj unclear in meaning; confusing; capable of being interpreted in different ways.

We listened to the weather report, but the forecast was ambiguous; we couldn't tell if the day was going to be rainy or sunny.

AMBIENT [uh MEEN it end] adj pleasantries; attractive or comforting feature.

The amenities at the hotel included a swimming pool, a golf course, and a Fallout shelter.

If an older guest at your house asks you where the amenities are, be or she is probably asking for directions to the bathroom. Provide them. These little bars of soap and bottles of shampoo found in hotel rooms are known in the hotel business as amenities. They are meant to increase your comfort. People like them because people like almost anything that is free (although, of course, the cost of providing such amenities is simply added to the price of hotel rooms).

AMÈRABLE (AY mee uh bul) adj friendly; agreeable.

Our amiable guide made us feel right at home in what would otherwise have been a cold and forbidding museum.
The drama critic was so amiable in person that even the subjects of negative reviews found it impossible not to like her.
Amiable n a similar and related word. Two not very amiable people might nonetheless make an amicable agreement. Amicable means politely friendly, or not hostile. Two countries might trade amicably with each other even while technically remaining enemies. Jeff and Clarissa had a surprisingly amicable divorce and remained good friends even after paying their lawyers' fees.

AMNESTY (AM nuh stee) n an official pardon for a group of people who have violated a law or policy
Amnesty comes from the same root as amnestic, the condition that causes characters in movies to forget everything except how to speak English and drive their cars.
An amnesty is an official forgetting. When a state government declares a tax amnesty, it is saying that if people pay the taxes they owe, the government will officially "forget" that they broke the law by not paying them in the first place.
The word amnesty always refers to a pardon given to a group or class of people. A pardon granted to a single person is simply a pardon.

AMORAL (uh MOR uh l) adj lacking a sense of right and wrong; neither good nor bad, neither moral nor immoral; without moral feelings
Very young children are amoral; when they cry, they aren't being bad or good, they're merely doing what they have to do.
A moral person does right; an immoral person does wrong; an amoral person simply abets.

AMOROUS (AM uh rus) adj feeling loving, especially in a sexual sense; in love; relating to love
The amorous couple made quite a scene at the movie. The movie they were watching, Love Story, was pretty amorous itself. It was about an amorous couple, one of whom died.

AMORPHOUS (uh MOR fuz) adj shapeless; without a regular or stable shape; bloblike
Ed's teacher said that his term paper was amorphous; she said that it was as shapeless and disorganized as a cloud.
The sleepy little town was engulfed by an amorphous blob of glowing protoplasm—a higher intelligence from outer space.
To say that something has an "amorphous shape" is a contradiction. How can a shape be shapeless?

ANACHRONISM (uh NAHK ruh niz um) n something out of place in time or history; an incongruity
In these modern, liberated times, some women disdain the anachronistic practice of a man's holding open a door for a woman.

ANALOGY (uh NAL uh jee) n a comparison of one thing to another; similarity
To say having an allergy feels like being bitten by an alligator would be to make or draw an analogy between an allergy and an alligator bite. Analogy usually refers to similarities between things that are not otherwise very similar. If you don't think an allergy is at all like an alligator bite, you might say, "That analogy doesn't hold up." To say that there is no analogy between an allergy and an alligator bite is to say that they are not analogous (uh NAL uh jee).
Something similar in a particular respect to something else is its analog (AN uh law), sometimes spelled analogue.

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers to the back of the book.

1. amicably
2. amiable
3. amoral
4. amnestic
5. amorous
6. amnesty
7. amorphous
8. analog
9. analogy
10. anachronism
11. anarchic

ANARCHY (AN ur kee) n absence of government or control; lawlessness; disorder
The word fell into a state of anarchy after the rebels kidnapped the president and locked the legislature inside the Capitol.
The word doesn't have to be used in its strict political meaning. You could say that there was anarchy in the kindergarten when the teacher stepped out of the door for a moment. You could say it, and you would probably be right.
The words anarchy and monanarchy are closely related. Anarchy means no leader; monanarchy, a government headed by a king or queen, means one leader.

ANECDOCTE (AN ik dawt) n a short account of a humorous or revealing incident
The old lady kept the motorcycle gang thoroughly amused with anecdotes after anecdotes about her cute little dog.
Fred told an anecdote about the time Sally got her big toe stuck in a bowling ball.
The vice president set the crowd at ease with an anecdote about his childhood desire to become a vice president.

To say that the evidence of life on other planets is merely anecdotal is to say that we haven’t captured any aliens, but simply heard a lot of stories from people who claim to have been kidnapped by flying saucers.

**Anguish** (Ang kush) noun: physical or mental pain.

Theresa had been a nurse in the emergency room for twenty years, but she had never gotten used to the anguish of accident victims.

**Anonymity** (uh AM uh nity) noun: a statement that you are a witness to an illegal or potentially illegal event.

A person whose look could kill it is a person whose anonymity is evident.

The rivals for the state championship felt great animosity toward each other. Whenever they ran into each other, they avoided.

**Anomaly** (uh NAHM uh nlee) noun: an observation, an irregularity, a deviation.

A snowy winter day is an anomaly, but a snowy July day is.

A house without a roof is an anomaly—a cold, wet anomaly. A roofless house could be said to be anomalous. Something that is anomalous is something that is not normal or regular.

**Antecedent** (uh SEED uh nnt) noun: someone or something that went before, something that provides a model for something that came after it.

Your parents and grandparents could be said to be your antecedents; they came before you.

The horse-drawn wagon is an antecedent of the modern automobile.

Antecedent can also be used as an adjective. The oil lamp was antecedent to the light bulb.

In grammar, the antecedent of a pronoun is the person, place, or thing to which it refers. In the previous sentence, the antecedent is the antecedent. In the sentence “Bill and Mary were walking together, and then he hit him,” it is impossible to determine what the antecedent of the pronouns (he and him) are.

Antecedent is related to a word that is similar in meaning: precedent.

**Antipathy** (uh TIP uh ntee) noun: a dislike, a dislike.

I feel antipathy toward bananas wrapped in ham. I do not want them for dinner. I also feel a certain amount of antipathy toward the cook who keeps trying to give me to eat them. My feelings on these matters are quite antipathetic (uh TIP uh THET ik).

I could also say that ham-wrapped bananas and the cook who served them are among my antipathies. My antipathies are the things I don’t like.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.
corner of the universe. To make such predictions, or to be deeply pessimistic, is to be apocalyptic (uh pok uh LIP suh).

APOCRYPHAL (uh POK ruh ful) n of dubious authenticity; fictitious; spurious
An apocryphal story is one whose truth is not proven or whose falsehood is strongly suspected. Like apocalyptic, this word has a religious origin. The Apocrypha are a number of "extra" books of the Old Testament that Protestants and Jews don't include in their Bibles because they don't think they're authentic.

APOPHYSIS (uh poth uh OH sis) n elevation to divine status; the perfect example of something
Some people think that the Corvette is the apotheosis of American car making. They think it's the ideal. Goffrey is unbearable to be with. He thinks he's the apotheosis of masculinity.

APPEASE (uh PEEZ) v to soothe; to pacify by giving in to
Larry appeased his angry, mother by promising to make his bed every morning without fail until the end of time.
The trembling farmer handed over all his grain, but still the emperor was not appeased.
We appeased the angry juvenile delinquents by permitting them to slash the tires of Jerry's father's car.
The noun is appeasement.

APPRECIATE (uh PREE she ool) v to increase in value
The Browns bought their house twenty years ago for a hundred dollars, but it has appreciated considerably since then; today it's worth almost a million dollars.
Harry bought Joe's collection of old chewing-tobacco tins as an investment. His hope was that the tins would appreciate over the next few years, enabling him to turn a profit by selling them to someone else.
The opposite of appreciate is depreciate. When a new car loses value over time, we say it has depreciated.

APPREHENSIVE (ap ruh HEN suv) adj. worried; anxious
The apprehensive child clung to his father's leg as the two of them walked into the main circus tent to watch the lion trainer.
Bill was apprehensive about the exam, because he had forgotten to go to class for several months. As it turned out, his apprehensions were justified. He couldn't answer a single question on the test.
A misapprehension is a misunderstanding. Bill had no misapprehensions about his lack of preparation; he knew perfectly well he would fail abysmally.

APPRAISAL (ap ruh BAY shun) n approval; praise
The crowd expressed its approval of what the team had done by gleefully converging the field with chicken carcasses.
The ambassador's actions met with the approval of his commander in chief.
Approval is a fancy word for approval, to which it is closely related. Disapproval is disapproval.

APPROPRIATION (ap ruh PROH pree ool) v to take without permission; to set aside for a particular use
Nick appropriated my lunch; he grabbed it out of my hands and ate it. So I appropriated Ed's. The deer and raccoons appropriated the vegetables in our garden last summer. This year we'll build a better fence.
Don't confuse the pronunciation of the verb to appropriate with the pronunciation of the adjective appropriate (uh PROH pres it). When Congress decides to buy some new submarines, it appropriates money for them. That is, it sets some money aside. The money thus set aside is called an appropriation.
When no elected official takes money that was supposed to be spent on submarines and spends it on a Rolls-Royce and a few mink coats, he is said to have misappropriated the money.
When the government decides to build a highway through your backyard, it appropriates your property for this purpose. That is, it uses its official authority to take possession of your property.

APTITUDE (AP tuh tud) n capacity for learning; natural ability
Princeton Review students have a marked aptitude for taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test. They earn high scores.
I tried to re pare my car, but as I sat on the floor of my garage
surrounded by mysterious parts, I realized that I had no aptitude for automobile repair.

The opposite of aptitude is ineptitude.

**ARBITER** (AHR buh tur) n one who decides, a judge
A judge is an arbiter.

An arbiter of fashion is someone who determines what other people will wear by wearing it herself.

An arbiter arbitrates, or weighs opposing viewpoints and makes decisions. The words arbitrate and arbiter mean the same thing. An arbiter presides over an *arbitration*, which is a formal meeting to settle a dispute.

**ARBITRARY** (AHR buh treh ee) adj random; capricious
The judge Mr. Simms gave his English students appeared to be arbitrary; they didn't seem to be related to anything the students had done in class.

The old judge was arbitrary in sentencing criminals; there was no sensible pattern in the sentences he handed down.

**ARCANIC** (ahr KAY nik) adj mysterious; known only to a select few
The rites of the secret cult were arcane; no one outside the cult knew what they were.

The arcane formula for the cocktail was spilled in blood on a faded scrap of paper.

We could make out only a little of the arcane inscription on the old trunk.

**ARCHAIC** (ahr KAY ik) adj extremely old; ancient; outdated
The tribe's traditions are archaic. They have been in force for thousands of years. Archaic civilizations are ones that disappeared a long time ago.

An archaic meaning of a word is one that isn't used anymore.

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**QUICKS** • **QUICKS #10**

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

| 1. topography       | a. misuse public money |
| 2. inappropriate    | b. extremely old       |
| 3. misappropriate   | c. take without permission |
| 4. inappropriate    | d. weigh opposing views |
| 5. epilogue         | e. mysterious          |
| 6. perdue           | f. approved            |
| 7. arbitrary        | g. random              |
| 8. arbitrary        | h. take property officially |
| 9. arcane           | i. judge               |
| 10. archaic         | j. natural ability     |

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**THE WORDS**

**ARCHETYPE** (AHR buh typ) n original model or pattern
An archetype is similar to a prototype. A prototype is a first, tentative model that is made but that will be improved in later versions. Henry Ford built a prototype of his Model T in his basement. His mother blooded him out, to be had no choice but to start a motor car company.

An archetype is usually something that precedes something else. Plato is the archetype of all philosophers.

An archetype is archetypal or archetypical.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

**ARDENT** (AHR duhnt) adj passionate
Larry's ardent wooing finally got on Cynthia's nerves, and she told him to get lost.

Blanche happily-stuffed badgers from morning to night. She was an ardent radiatorist.

To be ardent is to have order. The young lovers were oblivious to everything except their order for each other.

**ARDUOUS** (AHR duhss) adj hard; difficult
Climbing the mountain was arduous. We were so exhausted when we got to the top that we forgot to enjoy the view.

The arduous car trip was made even more difficult by the fact that all four tires went flat, one after another.

**ARISTOCRATIC** (uh ris-uhkrat ik) adj of noble birth; snobbish
Prince Charles is aristocratic. He is a member of the British aristocracy, a small class of privileged people.

Polo, which Prince Charles enjoys, is often said to be an aristocratic sport, because it is typically played by dukes, marquises, and other privileged people.

It is possible to be an aristocrat (uh arist oh krat) without being rich, although aristocrats tend to be quite wealthy. There is nothing you can do to become an aristocrat, short of being born into a family of them.

People who act as though they think they are better than everyone else are often said to be aristocratic. A person with an "aristocratic bearing" is a person who keeps his or her nose in the air and looks down on everyone else.

**ARTIFUL** (AHR fluh fuhl) adj crafty; wily; sly
After dinner, the artful cannibal told the tarpers that there was a madman loose in the woods, thus causing them to lie quietly in the tent.

The Artful Dodger is a sly con man in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. Someone who is artless, on the other hand, is simple and honest.

Young children are charmingly artless.

**ARTIFICE** (AHR ifs) n a clever trick; running
The Trojan Horse was an *artifice* designed to get the soldiers inside the walls.
Mrs. Baker had to resort to artifice to get her children to take their baths: she told them that the bathtub was filled with sugar syrup and that they could drink it if they would take off their clothes and climb in.

Ascendance and artificial are related words.

ASCENDANCY (uh SEN dun see) n supremacy; domination
Small computers have been in ascendancy for the past few years. The ascendancy of the new regime had been a great boon for the economy of the tiny tropical kingdom. When something is in ascendancy, it is ascendant.

ASCETIC (uh SET ik) adj hermitlike; practicing self-denial
The college professor's apartment, which contained no furniture except a single tattered mattress, was uncomfortably ascetic.
In his effort to save money, Roy led an ascetic existence; he never wore out, he never ate anything but soup, and he never had any fun. Ascetic can also be a noun. A person who leads an ascetic existence is an ascetic. As ascetic is someone who practices asceticism.
A similar-sounding word with a very different meaning is aesthetic (en THEET ik). Don't be confused.

ASSIDUOUS (uh SU on us) adj hardworking; busy; quite diligent
The workmen were assiduous in their effort to get nothing done; instead of working, they drank coffee all day long. Wendell was the only assiduous student in the entire math class; all the other students had to copy their homework from him.

<table>
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<th>O-U-I-C-K</th>
<th>O-U-I-Z</th>
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</table>
| Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.
1. archetype | a. passionate |
2. ardent | b. of noble birth |
3. arduous | c. supremacy |
4. aristocratic | d. hardworking |
5. arthritic | e. difficult |
6. arctile | f. vickery |
7. ascendance | g. hermitlike |
8. ascetic | h. crafty |
9. assiduous | i. original model |

ASSIMILATE (uh SIM ul layt) v to take in; to absorb; to learn thoroughly.
To assimilate an idea is to take it in as thoroughly as if you had eaten it. (Your body assimilates nutrients from the food you eat.) To assimilate knowledge is to absorb it, to let it soak in.

ASSUAGE (uh SWAY ij) v to soothe; to pacify; to ease the pain of; to relieve
Beth was extremely angry, but I assuaged her by promising to leave the house and never return. The thunderstorm made the baby cry, but I assuaged her fears by singing her a lullaby.

ASTUTE (uh STOOT) adj shrewd; keen in judgment
Morris was an astute judge of character; he was very good at seeing what people are really like. Amanda, who notices everything that is important and many things that other people don't see, is an astute observer.

ATTENTION (uh TRISH un) n gradual wearing away, weakening, or loss; a nervous or expected decrease in numbers or size
Mr. Gregory did not have the heart to fire his workers even though his company was losing millions each year. He altruistically preferred to lose workers through attrition when they moved away, retired, or decided to change jobs.

AUDACITY (aw DASY uh see) n boldness; recklessness; daring; impertinence
Edgar's soaring step off the top of the building was an act of great audacity. Ivan had the audacity to tell that nice old lady to shut up.
A person with audacity is said to be audacious. Bert made the audacious decision to climb Mt. Everest in bowling shoes.

AUGMENT (aw MENT) v to make bigger; to add to; to increase
The army augmented its attack by sending in a few thousand more soldiers.
To augment a record collection is to add more records to it. Adding another example to this definition would augment it.

AUSPICIOUS (aw SPISH ujs) adj favorable; promising; pointing to a good result.
A clear sky in the morning is an auspicious sign on the day of a picnic.
The first quarter of the football game was not auspicious; the home team was outscored by seventy points.

AUSTERE (uh STEER) adj unadorned; stern; forbidding; without excess
The Smiths' house was very austere; there was no furniture in it, and there was nothing hanging on the walls. Quentin, with his austere personality, didn't make many friends.
Most people were too intimidated by him to introduce themselves and say hello.

The noun austerity (AW ST ER uh ter) is generally used to mean roughly the same thing as poverty. To live in austerity is to live without comforts. Conditions in Austria were very austere after the war.

AUTOCRATIC (AW tuh KRAHT ik) adj ruling with absolute authority; extremely bossy.

The ruthless dictator’s autocratic reign ended when the rebels blew up his palace with a few thousand pounds of plastic explosive.

A two-year-old can be very autocratic—he wants what he wants when he wants it.

No one at our office liked the autocratic manager. He always insisted on having his own way, and he never let anyone make a decision without consulting him.

An autocrat is an absolute ruler. Autocracy (AW TAHHK ruh see), a system of government based by an autocrat, is not democratic—its people don’t get a say.

Note carefully the pronunciation of these words.

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<th>QUH-CXK</th>
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<td>Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.</td>
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<td>1. assimilate</td>
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<td>8. aversare</td>
<td>h. unabashed</td>
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<td>9. autocratic</td>
<td>i. gradual wearing away</td>
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AUTONOMOUS (AW tuh NOHM uhs) adj acting independently.

The West German office of the law firm was quite autonomous; it never asked the East Coast office for permission before it did anything.

An autonomous nation is one that is independent—it governs itself.

It is said to have autonomy.

To act autonomously is to act on your own authority. If something happens autonomously, it happens by itself.

AVARICE (AV ur is) n greed; excessive love of riches.

The rich man’s avarice was annoying to everyone who wanted to lay hands on some of his money.

Avarice is the opposite of generosity or philanthropy.

To be aversive is to love wealth above all else and not to share it with other people.

AVOW (AW VOW) v to claim; to declare boldly; to admit.

At the age of twenty-five, Louis finally avowed that he couldn’t stand his mother’s apple pie.

To avow something is to declare or admit something that most people are reluctant to declare or admit. Mr. Smith avowed on television that he had never paid any income tax. Shortly after this avowal, he received a lengthy letter from the Internal Revenue Service.

An avowed criminal is one who admits he is a criminal. To avow is to deny or repudiate someone else’s claim. The mayor disavowed the allegation that he had embezzled campaign contributions.

AVUNCULAR (AW YUNG kuhl lur) adj like an uncle, especially a nice uncle.

What’s an uncle like? Kind, helpful, generous, understanding, out to be, in an uncle-y sort of way. This is a fun word to use, although it’s usually hard to find occasions to use it.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

AWRY (AW RYE) adj off course; twisted to one side.

The hunter’s bullet went awry. Instead of hitting the bear, it hit another hunter.

When we couldn’t find a restaurant, our dinner plans went awry.

The old man’s hat was awry; it had dipped in front of his left eye.

AXIOM (AK see um) n a self-evident rule or truth; a widely accepted saying.

“Everything that is living dies” is an axiom.

An axiom in geometry is a rule that doesn’t have to be proved, because its truth is accepted as obvious, self-evident, or unprovable.

That the rich get richer is an axiom. It is unquestionable; it is axiomatic.
BANAL (buh NAL) ADJ unoriginal; ordinary
The dinner conversation was so banal that Amanda fell asleep in her dessert dish.
A banal statement is a boring, trite, and uncreative statement. It is a banality.
What made Amanda fall asleep was the banality of the dinner conversation.
This word can also be pronounced "BANE uh."

BANE (bawn) N. poison; torment; cause of harm
A bane marks poison (whereas a phial is a kind of poisonous plant), but the word is usually used figuratively. To say that someone is the bane of your existence is to say that this person poisons your enjoyment of life.
Benevolent means helpful.

BASEMENT (Bas chon) N. stronghold; fortress; fortified place
Mrs. Garret's classroom is a bastion of banality; that is, it's a place where originality seldom if ever makes its way inside.
The authors terrorized the village for several weeks, then escaped to their bastions high in the treacherous mountains.

BERT (birt) V. to give birth to; to create; to lend to; to cause
Those who lie should be creative and have good memories, since one lie often begets another lie, which begets another.

BELAIDOR (bel uh dawr) V. to go over repeatedly or to an absurd extent
For more than an hour, the boring speaker belabored his point about the challenges of foreign competition.
Mr. Irving spent the entire period belaboring the obvious: it made the same dull observation over and over again.

BELEAGUER (bel ee gur) V. to surround; to besiege; to harass
No one could leave the beleaguered city; the attacking army had closed off all the exits.
Oscar felt beleaguered at work. He was months behind in his assignments, and he had little hope of catching up.
The beleaguered president-Polham emerged from the Oval Office as he struggled to deal with the growing scandal.

BLUE (blu LEE) V. to give a false impression of; to contradict
Melvin's smile belied the grief he was feeling; despite his happy expression he was terribly sad inside.
The noisy appearance of the banquet table belied the huge effort that had gone into setting it up.
A word that is sometimes confused with belie is betray. To rework the first example above: Melvin was smiling, but a small tear in one eye betrayed the grief he was feeling.

THE WORDS
B混乱 (buh LYE) N. to make to seem little; to put someone down
We worked hard to put out the fire, but the fire chief belittled our efforts by saying he wished he had brought some marshmallows.
The chairman's belittling comments made everyone feel small.

BELIGERENT (buh LIH ert) ADJ combative; quarrelsome; waging war
A bully is beligerent. To be beligerent is to push other people around, to be nasty and aggressive, to threaten other people, and generally to make a nuisance of oneself.
It was so beligerent that the convention had the feel of a taxing match.
Opposing armies in a war are referred to as beligerents. Sometimes one beligerent in a conflict is more beligerent than the other.

BEMUSED (buh MYOOS ID) ADJ confounded; bewildered
To maze is to think about or ponder things. To be bemused, then, is to have been thinking about things to the point of confusion.
The two stood bemused in the middle of the parking lot at Disneyland, trying to remember where they had parked their car.
Ralph was bemused when all the lights and appliances in his house began switching on and off for no apparent reason.
People often use the word bemused when they really mean amused, but bemusement is no laughing matter. Bemused means confused.

BENEFACTOR (ben uh fahk tur) N. one who provides help, especially in the form of a gift or donation
To give benefits is to be a benefactor. To receive benefits is to be a beneficiary. People very, very often confuse these two words. It would be to their benefit to keep them straight.
If your next-door neighbor reviles his life insurance policy so that you will receive all his millions when he dies, then you become the beneficiary of his policy. If your neighbor dies, he is your benefactor.
A misfit in (MAL uh fit) N. a person who does bad things. Batman and Robin make life hell for misfits in Gotham City.
**Benevolent** (buh NEV uh lunt) adj. generous; kind; doing good deeds

Giving money to the poor is a benevolent act. To be benevolent is to bestow benefits. The United Way, like any charity, is a benevolent organization.

**Malvolent** (muh LEV uh lunt) means evil, or wishing to do harm.

**Benign** (bi NYNE) adj. gentle; not harmful; kind; mild

Bette has a benign personality; she is not at all unpleasant to be with.

The threat of revolution turned out to be benign; nothing much came of it.

Charles was worried that he had cancer, but the lump on his leg turned out to be benign.

The difference between a benign person and a benevolent (see separate entry) one is that the benevolent one is actively kind and generous while the benign one is more passive. Benevolence is usually active generosity or kindness, while benignity tends to mean simply not causing harm.

The opposite of a benign tumor is a malignant one. This is a tumor that can kill you. A malignant personality is one you wish a surgeon would remove. Malignancy means nasty, evil, full of ill will. The word malignant also conveys a sense that evil is spreading, as with a cancer.

An adjective that means the same thing is malign.

As a verb, malign has a different meaning. To malign someone is to say infinitely bad things about that person, to injure that person by telling evil lies about him or her. Slander and malign are synonyms.

**Bequest** (bi KWEST) n something left to someone in a will

If your next-door neighbor leaves you all his millions in a will, the money is a bequest from him to you. It is not polite to request a bequest. Just keep smiling and hope for the best.
BLITHE (blithes) adj carefree; cheerful

The blithe birds in the garden were making so much noise that Paul began to think about the shotgun in the attic.

The children were playing blithely in the hazardous-waste dump. While they played, they were blithely unaware that they were doing something dangerous.

To be blithely ignorant is to be happily unaware.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

BOURGEOIS [boo ROH zhwa] adj middle class, usually in a pejorative sense, boringly conventional

The original bourgeoisie (boor zwow ZEH) were simply people who lived in cities, an innovation at the time. They weren’t farmers and they weren’t nobles. They were members of a new class—the middle class. Now the word is used mostly in making fun of or sneering at people who seem to think about nothing but their possessions and other comforts and about conforming with other people who share those concerns.

A hip young city dweller might reject life in the suburbs as being too bourgeois. A person whose dream is to have a swimming pool in his backyard might be called bourgeois by someone who thinks there are more important things in life. Golf is often referred to as a bourgeois sport.

Note carefully the pronunciation of these words.

BOVINE (boh VYNE) adj cow related; cowlike

Cows are bovine, obviously. Eating grass is a bovine concern.

A 16 oz mooing person might be said to be bovine, too.

The woman’s bovine figure made her very unpopular with the man sitting next to her on the airplane.

There are a number of similar words based on other animals: canine (KAY nayn): dogs

equine (EE kyin): horses

teline (PEE lynn): cats

porcine (POR sinn): pigs

ursine (UR sinn): bears

BREVITY (BREV I see) n briefness

The audience was deeply grateful for the brevity of the after-dinner speaker’s remarks.

The reader of this book may be grateful for the brevity of this example.

Brevity is related to the word abbreviate.

BROACH (brock) v to open up a subject for discussion, often a delicate subject

Henrietta was proud of her new dress, so no one knew how to broach the subject with her of how silly grandmother’s look is in leather.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>THE WORDS</th>
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</table>
| CACOPHONY (kuh KAHF uh n) n | CALLOW (KAW oh) adj
horsh-sounding mixture of words, voices, or sounds |
A cacophony isn't just a lot of noise—it's a lot of noise that doesn't sound good together. A strain whistling along isn't a cacophony. But a high school orchestra that had never rehearsed together might very well produce a cacophony. The roar of engines, horns, and sirens arising from a busy city street would be a cacophony. A lot of people all shouting at once would produce a cacophony.
| CASPAR (KAY zper) n | Cavalry (kaw VLCR ee) v
in rhythm, the rise and fall of sounds |
We wished the tone of Lewis's words would have a more pleasing cadence, but he spoke in a flat monotone.
| CAJOLE (kuh JOHL) v | CAJOLING (kuh JOHL uh n)
to persuade someone to do something he or she doesn't want to do
I didn't want to give the speech, but Joel coaxed me into doing it by telling me what a good speaker I am. As it turned out, he simply hadn't been able to find anyone else.
| Euphony (uh PFOH nee) n | Euphony is pleasing sound.
| Euphony (uh PFOH nee) n | Euphony is pleasing sound.
| CAJOLING (kuh JOHL uh n) | Euphony is pleasing sound.

C | Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

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<td>repast</td>
<td>12. indistinct</td>
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<td>baccicin</td>
<td>13. doglike</td>
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<td>bureaucracy</td>
<td>14. plant disease</td>
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<td>burgeon</td>
<td>15. open a subject</td>
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<td>burlesque</td>
<td>16. ludicrous imitation</td>
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| C | The American economy is capitalism. If you wanted to start a company to sell signed photographs of yourself, you could. You, and not the government, would decide how much you would charge for the pictures. Your success or failure would depend on how many people decided to buy your pictures.

CAPITALIST (kuh PICH uh n) n | CAPSICUM (kuh PRISH um) adj
free enterprise, an economic system in which businesses are owned by private citizens (not by the government) and in which the resulting products and services are sold with relatively little government control
The American economy is capitalism. If you wanted to start a company to sell signed photographs of yourself, you could. You, and not the government, would decide how much you would charge for the pictures. Your success or failure would depend on how many people decided to buy your pictures.

CAPITULATE (kuh PICH uh lyt) v | to surrender; to give up or give in
On the twenty-first day of the strike, the workers capitulated and went back to work without a new contract.
To recapitulation is not to recapitulate again. To recapitulation is to summarize.
So few words did attention to Mr. Jones that he had to recapitulate his major points at the end of the class.

CAPRICIOUS (kuh PRISH us) adj | CAPRICIOUS (kuh PRISH us) adj
unpredictable, likely to change at any moment
Bill was very capricious. One minute he said his favorite car was a Chevy Caprice; the next minute he said it was a Camaro. The weather is often said to be capricious. One minute it's snowing, the next minute it's 120 degrees in the shade.
A caprice (kaw PREEZ) is a whim.
**CATEGORICAL** (kat uh GOR uh kul) adj unconditioned; absolute
Categorical denial is one without exceptions—it covers every category. Crooked politicians often make categorical denials of various charges against them. Then they go to jail.
I categorically refuse to do anything whatsoever at any time, in any place, with anyone.

**CATHARSIS** (kuh THAR sis) n purification that brings emotional relief or renewal
To someone with psychological problems, talking to a psychiatrist can lead to a catharsis. A catharsis is a sometimes traumatic event after which one feels better.
A catharsis is cathartic. Some people find emotional movies cathartic—watching one often allows them to release buried emotions. Cathartic can also be a noun. Young Teddy swallowed the contents of a bottle of shoe polish, so his mother gave him a raw egg as a cathartic to make him vomit.

**CATHOLIC** (KATH iik) adj universal; embracing everything
Catholic with a small e means universal. Da Vinci was a catholic genius who excelled at everything he did. Parochial means narrow-minded, so parochial and catholic are almost opposites.

**CAUSTIC** (KAW stik) adj like acid; corrosive
Paint remover is a caustic substance; if you spill it on your skin, your skin will burn.
The caustic detergent airs right through Henry's laundry.
Caustic can be used figuratively as well. A caustic comment is one that is so nasty or insulting that it seems to sting or burn the person to whom it is directed. The teacher's caustic criticism of Sally's term paper left her in tears.

**CELIBACY** (SEL uh buhl see) n abstinance from sex
People who practice celibacy don't practice sex.
Celibacy is one of the requirements for Catholic priesthood.
To practice celibacy is to be celibate. You will look a very long time in Hollywood before you find a celibate celebrity.

**CENSURE** (SEN shur) v to condemn severely for doing something bad
The Senate sometimes censures senators for breaking laws or engaging in behavior unbecoming an elected official.
Censure can also be a noun. The climax physician feared the censure of his fellow doctors, so he stopped treating anything more complicated than the common cold.
A Senate that made a habit of censuring senators might be said to be censorious. To be censorious is to be highly critical—to do a lot of censuring.

**CEREBRAL** (ser EHL BRAL) adj brainy; intellectually refined
Your cerebrum is the biggest part of your brain. To be cerebral is to do and care about things that really smart people do and care about.
A cerebral discussion is one that is filled with big words and concerns abstract matters that ordinary people can't understand.
Bull was too cerebral to be a baseball announcer; he kept talking about the existentialism of the outfield.
This word can also be pronounced "sɛr uh bral."

CHAGRIN (chuh GRIN) n. humiliation; embarrassed disappointment
Much to my chagrin, I hung a little during the vilation at the funeral.
Doug was filled with chagrin when he lost the race because he had put his shoes on the wrong feet.
The word chagrin is sometimes used incorrectly to mean surprise.
There is, however, a definite note of shame in chagrin.
To be chagrined is to feel humiliated or mortified.

CHARISMA (kahr RHIZ moh) n. magical or seeing ability to attract followers or inspire loyalty
The glamorous presidential candidate had a lot of charisma; voters didn't seem to surprise him so much as he entered the ring.
The evangelists' undeniable charisma enabled him to bring in millions and millions of dollars in donations to his television show.
To have charisma is to be charismatic.

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<td>8. chagrin</td>
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<td>9. charisma</td>
<td>i. un-warled</td>
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CHARLATAN (CHAR luh tun) n. liquid; quick; cow man
Buck was selling what he claimed was a cure for cancer, but he was just a charlatan (the pills were jery beans).
The fish market usually attracts a lot of charlatans who sell phony products that don't do what they claim they will.

CHASM (KAZ um) n. a deep, gaping hole; a gorge
Bill was so upset that his girlfriend wondered whether there wasn't a chasm where his brain should be.

THE WORDS
The bad guys were gaining, so the hero grabbed the heroine and swung across the chasm on a slender vine.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

CHASTISE (choh TYZ ee) v. to inflict punishment on; to discipline
Michael chastised us for fixing our bottle rockets through his living room window.
Chastising the dog for sleeping in the garden never seemed to do any good; the minute we turned our backs, he'd curl up in the ashes again.

CHICANERY (kay KAY in ree) n. trickery; deviousness; artifice, especially legal or political;
Politically neutral would be dull were it not for the chicanery of our elected officials.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

CHIMERA (kye MEER uh) n. an illusion; a foolish fancy
Susan's dream of becoming a movie star was just a chimera.
Could you take a picture of a chimera with a camera? No, of course not. It wouldn't show up on the film.
Be careful not to mispronounce this word. Its apparent similarity to chimp in is just a chimera.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

CHOLERIC (KOh AR ur ik) adj. hot-tempered; quick to anger
The choleric watching would tick his teeth into anyone who came within biting distance of his doghouse.
When the grumpy old man was in one of his choleric moods, the children refused to go near him.

CHRONIC (KRAHN ik) adj. constant, lasting a long time; inveterate
Someone who always comes in last could be called a chronic loser.
Chronic is usually associated with something negative or undesirable; chronic illness, chronic failure, chronic depression. You would be much less likely to encounter a reference to chronic successes or chronic happiness, unless the writer or speaker was being ironic.
A chronic disease is one that lingers for a long time, doesn't go away, or keeps coming back. The opposition of a chronic disease is an acute disease. An acute disease in one that comes and goes very quickly; it may be severe, but it doesn't last forever.

CHRONICLE (KRAHN ih uh) n. record of events in order of time; a history
Salley's diary provided her mother with a detailed chronicle of her daughter's extracurricular activities.
Chronicle can also be used as a verb. The reporter chronicled all the events of the revolution. Chronology and chronicle are nearly synonyms; both provide a chronological list of events. Chronological means in order of time.
CIRCUMSPECT (SUR kum spekk') adj cautious... he always took great care not to say the wrong thing or give offense.

The circumspect general did everything he could not to put his soldiers in unnecessary risk.

The word circumsp ect comes from Greek roots meaning around and look (as do the words circle and inspect). To be circumsp ect is to look around carefully before doing something.

CIRCUMVENT (sur kum VENT) v to frustrate as though by surrounding

Our hopes for an early end of the meeting were circumvented by the chairman's refusal to deal with the items on the agenda.

The angry school board circumvented the students' effort to install color television sets in every classroom.

CIVIL (SVIL) adj polite; civilized; courteous

Our dinner guests conducted themselves civilly when we told them we weren't going to serve them dinner after all. They didn't bang their cups on the table or throw their plates to the floor.

The word civil also has other meanings. Civil rights are rights established by law. Civil service is government service. Consult your dictionary for the numerous shades of meaning.

CLEMENCY (KLEEM un see) n mercy; forgiveness; mildness

The judge displayed clemency in giving the student a suspended sentence for shooting Mr. Reed, his dreadful math teacher.

The governor committed an act of clemency when he released all the convicts from the state penitentiary.

Mild weather is called clement weather; bad weather is called inclement. You should wear a coat and carry an umbrella in inclement weather.

CLICHÉ (klee SHAY) n an overused saying or idea

The expression "You can't judge a book by its cover" is a cliché; it's been used so many times its freshness has been worn away.

Clichés are usually true. That's why they've been repeated often enough to become overused. But they are boring. A writer who uses a lot of clichés—referring to a foreign country as "a land of contrasts," describing spring as "a time of renewal," saying that a snowfall is "a blanket of white"—is not interesting to read, because there is nothing new about his observations. Note carefully the pronunciation of this French word.

CLIQUE (klee) n an exclusive group banded together by some shared quality or interest

The high school newspaper staff was a real clique; they all hung out together and wouldn't talk to anyone else. It's hard to have fun at that school if you aren't a member of the right clique.

The cheerleaders were cliche as well. Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.
COALESCE (kah luh LES) vi to come together as one; to fuse; to unite
When the dough coalesced into a big black blob, we began to wonder whether the cookies would be good to eat.

The people in our neighborhood coalesced into a powerful force for change in the community.

A coalition is a group of people that has come together for some purpose, often a political one. Coal mining and cola bottling might coalesce into a coalition for the purpose of persuading coal mine owners to provide cola machines in coal mines.

The Northern coalition in Congress is the group of representatives from southern states who often vote the same way.

CORESE (kah RURS) vi to force someone to do or not to do something
Darth Vader tried to corese, but Darth Vader was never able to make Han Solo reveal the hidden rebel base.

The noun is corese (kah RURS pl). The verb is corese (kah RURS vi).

COGENT (KOGENT adj) adj strongly persuasive
Cogent reasons are extremely persuasive ones.

Kris was cogent in explaining why he needed another lollipop, so we gave him one.

The lawyer’s argument in his client’s behalf was cogent, so the jury convicted his client. The jury was persuaded by the agency of the district attorney’s argument.

COGNITIVE (kah NIH adj) adj dealing with how we know the world around us through our senses, minds
Scientists study the cognitive apparatus of human beings to pattern how computers should gather information about the world.

Cognition is knowing.

COGNIZANT (kah NIZH ant adj) adj aware; conscious
To be cognizant of your responsibilities is to know why your responsibilities are.

All war cognizant of the dangers of sword swallowing, but he tried it anyway and hurt himself quite badly.

COHERENT (kah HEHR adj) adj holding together; making sense
A coherent web of cotton balls is one that holds together.

A coherent explanation is an explanation that makes sense; the explanation holds together.

To hold together is to cohere.

COLOQUIAL (kah LOH kwah uh adj) adj conversational; informal in language
A writer with a coloquial style is a writer who uses ordinary words and whose writing seems as informal as common speech.

"The way I figure it" is a coloquial expression, or a coloquialism: people often say it but it isn’t used in formal prose.

A coloquial (kah LOH kwah uh) is a conversation or conference.

COLLUSION (kah LOO zhuhn) n conspiracy; secret cooperation
The increase in oil prices was the result of collusion by the oil-producing nations.

There was collusion among the owners of the baseball teams; they agreed secretly not to sign any expensive free agents.

If the baseball owners were in collusion, then you could say that they had colluded. To collude is to conspire.

COMMENSURATE (kom MEN sur uh adj) adj equal; proportionate
Ernie’s salary is commensurate with his abilities; his abilities, his salary is small.

The number of touchdowns scored by the team and the number of its victories were commensurate (both zero).

COMPELLING (kom PEHL ing) adj forceful; causing to yield
A compelling argument for buying a videocassette recorder is one that makes you go out and buy a videocassette recorder.

The recruiter’s speech was so compelling that nearly everyone in the audience enlisted in the army when it was over.

I compelled someone to do something it to force him or her to do it.

Our convictions compelled us to turn the money we had found over to the authorities.

The noun is compulsion, which also means an irresistible impulse to do something irrational.

COMPREHEND (kom PEN duh um) v to understand; to grasp
A yearbook often contains a compendium of the offenses, foibles, and crimes of the members of the senior class.
teller. The teller neglected to turn on the alarm, and the robber rewarded him by sharing the loot.

Complicity among the students made it impossible to find out which of them had set fire to the Spanish teacher.

COMPREHENSIVE (kohm pruh HEN SUV) adj covering or including everything

The insurance policy was comprehensive; it covered all possible losses.

A comprehensive examination is one that covers everything in the course, or everything in a particular field of knowledge.

Mabel’s knowledge of English was comprehensive; she even understood what comprehensive means.

COMPRISING (kum PRIYEZ) vb to consist of

A football team comprises eleven players on offense and eleven players on defense.

A company comprises employees.

This word is very often misused. Be careful. Players do not “comprise” a football team, and employees do not “comprise” a company. Nor can a football team be said to be “comprised of” players, or a company to be “comprised of” employees. These are very common mistakes. Instead, you can say that players constitute or compose a team, and that employees constitute or compose a company. You can also say that a team consists of players or a company consists of employees.

CONCILIATORY (kon SIIL ee uh for eez) adj making peace; attempting to resolve a dispute through good will

To be conciliatory is to kiss and make up. Come on—be conciliatory!

The formerly warring countries were conciliatory at the treaty conference.

After dinner at the all-you-can-eat pancake house, the divorced couple began to feel conciliatory, so they flew to Las Vegas and were remarried.

When peace has been made, we say that the warring parties have come to a reconciliation (rek un sihl ee AE shun). To reconcile (rek un syle) is to bring two things into agreement. The accountant managed to reconcile the company books with the cash on hand only with great creativity.

CONCISE (kon SYSE) adj brief and to the point; succinct

An extractor is concise; it was brief and it helped us understand the difficult concept.

To be concise is to say much with few words.

A concise speaker is one who speaks concisely, or who speaks with conclusion.
Concord (kon'kORD) n harmony; agreement.

Nations that live in concord are nations that live together in peace.
The war between the neighboring tribes ended thirty years of concord.
The faculty meeting was marked by concord; no one yelled at anyone else.
Discord is the opposite of concord. A faculty meeting where everyone yelled at one another would be a faculty meeting marked by discord. It would be a discordant meeting.

An accord is a formal agreement, usually reached after a dispute.

Concurrent (kon'kjur ant) adj happening at the same time; parallel.
The criminal was sentenced to two concurrent fifteen-year sentences; the sentences will run at the same time, and he will be out of jail in fifteen years.
High prices, falling demand, and poor weather were three concurrent trends that made life especially difficult for popcorn farmers last month.
To concur means to agree. The assistant wanted to keep his job, so he was always concurred with his boss.

Condescend (kon' di send) v to stoop to someone else’s level, usually in an offensive way, to patronize.
I was surprised that the president of the company had condescended to talk with me, a mere temporary employee.
Many grown-ups make the mistake of condescending to young children, who usually prefer to be treated as equals, or at least as rational beings.

Condone (kon'dohn) v to overlook; to permit to happen.
To condone what someone does is to look the other way while it happens, or to permit it to happen by not doing anything about it.

The principal condemned the boodle’s smoking in the bathroom; he simply ignored it.

Conducive (kon doo' sed) adj promoting.
The chairs in the library are conducive to sleep. If you sit in them to study, you will fall asleep.
The foul weather was not conducive to our having a picnic.
The teacher’s easygoing manner was conducive to chaos in the classroom.

Confluence (kon fi' ahns) n a flowing together, especially of rivers, the place where they begin to flow together.
The confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers is at St. Louis; that’s the place where they join together.

There is a remarkable confluence in our thoughts: we think the same way about almost everything.
A confluence of many factors (too ice, bad food, terrible music) made it inevitable that the party would be a big flop.

Congenial (kon je'n yahl) adj agreeably sociable; pleasant.
The little cabin in the woods was congenial to the writer; he was able to get a lot of writing done there.
The new restaurant has a congenial atmosphere. We enjoy just sitting there playing with the ice in our water glasses. When people get along together at a restaurant, and don’t throw food at one another, they are being congenial.
Genial and congenial share similar meanings. Genial means pleasing, kind, sympathetic, or helpful. You can be pleased by a genial manner or by a genial climate.

Congenital (kon je'n ih tal) adj a trait or condition acquired between conception and birth; innate.
A congenital birth defect is one that is present at birth but was not caused by one’s genes.
The word is also used more loosely to describe any (usually bad) trait or behavior that is so firmly fixed it seems to be a part of a person’s nature.
A congenital liar is a natural liar, a person who can’t help but lie.
CONJECTURE (kon JEK chur) v to guess; to deduce or infer on slight evidence
If forced to conjecture, I would say the volcano will erupt in twenty-four hours.
Conjecture can also be a noun. The divorce lawyer for Mr. Davis argued that the putative cause of the lipstick on his collar was mere conjecture.
A conjecture is conjectural.

CONJURE (KAHN jur) v to summon or bring into being as if by magic
The chef conjured (or conjured up) a fabulous gourmet meal using nothing more than the meager ingredients in Lucy’s kitchen.
The wizard conjured (or conjured up) an evil spirit by mumbling some magic words and throwing a little powdered eye of newt into the fire.

CONNOISSEUR (kah nuh SUR) n an expert, particularly in matters of art or taste
The artist’s work was very popular, but connaisseurs rejected it as amateurish.
Frank was a connaisseur of bad movies. He had seen them all and knew which ones were genuinely dreadful and which ones were merely poorly made.
The meal was exquisite enough to impress a connoisseur.
I like sculpture, but I’m no connoisseur; I couldn’t tell you why one statue is better than another.

CONSECRATE (kah nuh krayt) v to make or declare sacred
The Veterans Day speaker said that the battlefield had been consecrated by the blood of the soldiers who had died there.
The college chaplain delivered a sermon on the consecration (kah nuh KRAY mun) ceremony for the new chapel.

THE WORDS
The opposite of consecrate is desecrate (DES es krayt), which means to treat irreverently. The vandal desecrated the cemetery by knocking down all the tombstones. Their act of vandalism was a desecration.
Desecrate can also be applied to areas outside religion.
Doodling in a book desecrates the book, even if the book isn’t a Bible.
The wife desecrated a photograph of her husband by drawing a mustache on it.
The graffiti on the front door of the school is a desecration.

CONSENSUS (kon SEHN sus) n unanimity or general agreement
When there is a consensus, everybody feels the same way.
Contrary to how the word is often used, consensus implies more than just a rough agreement or a majority opinion. Election results don’t reflect a consensus unless everyone or nearly everyone votes for the same candidate.

CONSONANT (KAHN suh nunt) adj harmonious; in agreement
Our desires were consonant with theirs; we all wanted the same thing.
The decision to construct a new gymnasium was consonant with the superintendent’s belief in physical education.
The opposite of consonant is dissonant (DIS uh nunt), which means inharmonious. Dissonant voices are voices that don’t sound good together.

CONSTRUE (kon STROO) v to interpret
The meaning of the poem, as I construed it, had to do with the love of a man for his dog.
Mickey construed his contract as giving him the right to do anything he wanted.
The law had always been construed as permitting the behavior for which Joe had been arrested.
To misconstrue is to misinterpret. Hank misconstrued Pamela’s smile, but he certainly did not misconstrue the slap she gave him.

CONSUMMATE (kon SUM it) adj perfect; complete; supremely skillful
A consummately pianist is an extremely good one. Nothing is lacking in the way he or she plays.

Consume (KAHSH um sluh may) is also a verb. Notice the different pronunciation. To consummate something is to finish it or make it complete. Signing a contract would consummate an agreement.
Note carefully the pronunciation of both parts of speech.

CONTENTIOUS (kon TEN shus) adj argumentative; quarrelsome
A person looking for a fight is contentious. To be contentious in a discussion is to make a lot of noisy objections.
A contestant is a fighter. To contest is to fight or argue for something. Someone who breaks the law may have to contest with the law.

CONTIGUOUS (kon TIE you us) adj side by side; adjoining
Two countries that share a border are contiguous. So are two events that happened one right after the other.
If two countries are contiguous, the territory they cover is continuous. That is, it spreads or continues across both countries without any interruption.

CONTINGENT (kon TENC int) adj dependent; possible
Our agreement to buy their house is contingent upon the sellers finding another house to move into. That is, they won’t sell their house to us unless they can find another house to buy.

My happiness is contingent on yours; if you’re unhappy, I’m unhappy. A contingency is a possibility or something that may happen but is at least as likely not to happen. Several contingencies stand between us and the successful completion of our business; several things could happen to screw it up.
The Joneses were prepared for any contingency. Their front hall closet contained a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, a life raft, a parachute, and a pack of sled dogs.

CONTRITE (kon TRYT ih) adj admitting guilt; especially, feeling remorseful
To be contrite is to admit whatever terrible thing you did.
Sally was contrite about her mistake, so we forgave her. A criminal who won’t confess his crime is not contrite.
Saying that you’re sorry is an act of contrition.

CONTRIVED (kon TRY VED) adj artificial; laboréd
Sam’s acting was contrived: no one in the audience believed his character or enjoyed his performance.

The artist was widely admired for his originality, but his paintings seemed contrived to me.
**CORROROBATE** (kuh ROH uh roh) v to confirm; to back up with evidence. 
I knew my statement was correct when my colleague corroborated it. 
Henry Penny's contention that the sky was falling would not be corroborated. That is, no one was able to find any fallen sky. 
The police could find no evidence of theft and thus could not corroborate Bill's claim that he had been robbed. 
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

**COSMOPOLITAN** (kuh muh PAH luh tun) adj at home in many places or situations; internationally sophisticated. 
Harry's interests were cosmopolitan—he liked Greek wine, German beer, Dutch cheese, Japanese cars, and French fries. 
A truly cosmopolitan traveler never feels like a foreigner anywhere on earth.

New York is a cosmopolitan city: you can hear nearly every language in the world spoken there.

**COUNTRANCE** (KOH vuh nuns) n face; facial expression, especially or encouraging one. 
Ed's harsh words belied his countenance, which was kind and encouraging.

Countenance can also be a verb. To countenance something is to condone it or tolerate it.

Had countenanced our back yard rock fights even though he didn't really approve of them.

**COUP** (koo) n a brilliant victory or accomplishment; the violent overthrow of a government by a small internal group. 
Winning a gold medal at the Olympics was a real coup for the skinny, sick, fifty-year-old man.

The student council's great coup was persuading the Rolling Stones to play at our prom.

In the attempted coup in the Philippines, some army officers tried to take over the government. The full name for this type of coup is coup d'état (too o day TAH). A coup de grâce (too o day GRAHS) is a final blow or concluding event. 
Note carefully the pronunciation of these words.

**COVENANT** (KUV uh nant) n a solemn agreement; a contract; a pledge. 
The warring tribes made a covenant in which they promised never to fight each other anymore.

We signed a covenant in which we promised never to drive Harry's father's car into the Murphys' living room again.

**COVERT** (KAY vort) adj secret; hidden. 
To be covert is to be covered. 
Covered activities are secret activities. 
A covert military operation is one the public knows nothing about. Most of the activities of spies are covert.

This word can also be pronounced "KHOR vort." The opposite of covert is overt. Overt (OH vort) means open or uncovered.

**COWET** (KUV it) v to wish for earnestly. 
To covet thy neighbor's wife is to want thy neighbor's wife for thyself.

Billy covet-ed Bobby's bicycle and very nearly decided to steal it. 
To be covetous is to be envious.

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**CREDULOUS** (KRED uhs) adj eager to believe; gullible. 
The credulous postal patron believed that he had won a million dollars from Publishers Clearing House.

Paula's credulity (KROO dill uh) was limitless. 
Credulous should not be confused with credible. To be credible is to be believable. 
Almost anything, however incredible, is credible to a credulous person. 
Harry's implausible story of heroism was not credible. Still, credulous old Louis believed it.

A story that cannot be believed is incredible. If you don't believe that story someone just told you, you are incredulous. 
If something is credible, it may gain credence (KRED en sehn), which means belief or intellectual acceptance. The chemist's sound techniques inspired credence in the scientific world. 

No one could prove Frank's theory, but his standing at the university helped it gain credence.
CULPABLE (KUL puh bul) adj deserving blame; guilty

A person who is culpable (a culprit) is one who can be blamed for doing something.

The accountant’s failure to spot the errors made him culpable in the tax-fraud case.

We all felt culpable when the homeless old man died in the doorway of our apartment building.

To decide that a person is not culpable after all is to exculpate (ek SUL payt) that person. Lou’s confession didn’t exculpate Bob, because one of the things that Lou confessed was that Bob had helped him do it. The opposite of exculpate is inculpate. To inculpate is to accuse someone of something.

CURSORY (KUR sub ree) adj hasty; superficial

To give a book a cursory reading is to skim it quickly without comprehending much.

To make a cursory attempt at learning French is to memorize a couple of easy words and then say “the heck with it.”

The cursory on Dave’s computer made a cursory sweep across the data as he scrolled down the page.

CYNIC (SIH nik) n one who deeply distrusts human nature; one who believes humans are motivated only by selfishness

When the rich man gave a million dollars to the museum, cynics said he was merely trying to buy himself a reputation as a cultured person.
D

DAUNT (down) v to make fearful; to intimidate  

To be daunted is to be deterred; to be daunted is to be defeated or vanquished. A man who is daunted by his own fear is a man who is defeated by his own weakness.

The word "daunt" comes from the Old French word "daunter," which means to overcome or subdue. It is related to the word "dare," which means to have courage or to face a challenge.

The noun "daunt" is the result of a verb being made into a noun, which is a common way words change in English. Other examples of this include the words "fear," "fool," and "feast.

DECAY (dike) v to become rotten or to perish; to deteriorate; to become less effective or useful.  

To decay is to lose its original form or quality. A book can decay due to exposure to moisture, a person can decay due to illness or age, and a company can decay due to poor management.

The verb "decay" was first used in the 15th century to mean "to fall into decay or ruin." It is related to the word "decree," which means to decide or determine, and "decrepit," which means to be weak or feeble.

DECAY (dike) n a state of decay or decline; a gradual process of deterioration.  

The noun "decay" is a common term used to describe a process of gradual deterioration or decline. It can be applied to physical objects, such as buildings or statues, or to living organisms, such as plants or animals.

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DECEASE (dik seyts) v to die; to pass away; to end one's life.  

To decease is to pass away or to cease to exist. A person can decease due to natural causes, such as old age, or due to unnatural causes, such as accidents or illnesses.

The verb "decease" was first used in the 16th century to mean "to die or pass away." It is related to the word "deceased," which means to have died.

DECEASE (dik seyts) n a state of being dead; a condition of nonexistence.  

The noun "decease" is the condition of being dead or deceased. It can describe a living organism that has passed away or a place that no longer exists.

The noun "decease" is the condition of being dead or deceased. It can describe a living organism that has passed away or a place that no longer exists.

DECAY (dike) n a process of breaking down; a process of losing strength or vitality.  

The noun "decay" is a process that occurs over time and involves the breakdown of materials or structures. It can be caused by natural processes, such as erosion or corrosion, or by human activities, such as pollution or overuse.

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DECAY (dike) v to cause to decay; to cause to break down.  

The verb "decay" is the act of causing something to break down or lose its original form. It can be caused by natural processes, such as corrosion or erosion, or by human activities, such as pollution or overuse.

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DECADE (dek ad) n a period of ten years; a ten-year period.  

A decade is a period of ten years. It is commonly used to describe a time span in history, such as the 1920s or the 2000s.

The noun "decade" was first used in the 16th century to mean "a period of ten years." It is related to the word "december," which means the twelfth month of the year.

DECADE (dek ad) v to spend ten years in; to be a member of a group for ten years.  

To decade is to spend ten years in a particular activity or group. It can be applied to people, such as a person who has been a member of a club for ten years, or to objects, such as a building that has been in use for ten years.

The verb "decade" was first used in the 16th century to mean "to spend ten years in." It is related to the word "decade," which means a period of ten years.

DECADE (dek ad) n a group of ten; a ten-member group.  

The noun "decade" is a group of ten people or things. It can be applied to people, such as a group of ten students in a class, or to objects, such as a group of ten books on a shelf.

The noun "decade" was first used in the 16th century to mean "a group of ten people or things." It is related to the word "decanter," which means a container for wine or other liquids.
To suffer such a loss of reputation is to suffer defamation. The businessman who believed he had been defamed by the newspaper sued the paper’s publisher for defamation.

**THE WORDS**

degenerate (di JEN ur it). The mood of the party was spoiled when drunken degenerate wandered in from off the street.

Degenerate (di JEN ur it) can also be an adjective, meaning degenerated. The slum neighborhood was degenerate. The fans’ degenerate behavior prompted the police to make several arrests.

Note carefully the pronunciation of the various parts of speech.

DELETERIOUS (del uh TIR ee us) adj harmful.

Smoking cigarettes is deleterious to your health. So is brushing your teeth with oven cleaner or washing your hair with gasoline.

Is watching Family Feud deleterious? Of course not.

Delineate (di LIN ee oy tal) v to describe accurately; to draw in outline.

After Jack had delineated his plan, we had no doubt about what he intended to do.

Sharot’s peculiar feelings about her pet gorilla were delineated in the newspaper article about her.

The portrait artist delineated Sarah’s features, then filled in the shading.

The noun is delineation.

DELUXE (di LOOKS) v to deceive.

The con man deluded us into thinking that he would make us rich.

Instead, he tricked us into giving him several hundred dollars.

The delusional patient believed that he was a chicken sandwich.

Betty is so persuasive that she was able to delude Henrietta into thinking she was a countess.

To be deluded is to suffer from a delusion. That he was a great poet was the delusion of the English teacher, who could scarcely write two complete sentences in a row.

Bert, the well-known joker, suffered from the delusion that he was a very great man.

DELUGE (DEL yooj) n a flood.

A deluge is a flood, but the word is often used figuratively. The $1 million reward for the lostoodle brought in a deluge of hot leads.

The distraught owner was deluged by phone calls all week.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

DEMAGOGUE (DEM uh gay goh) n a leader of the people, but more a rabble rouser. [Gem. demag.] A demagogue is a leader, but not a good sense of the word. He manipulates the public to support his aims, but he is little different from a dictator. A demagogue is often a despot. [Gem. demagog.] This word can also be spelled demagogy. The methods a demagogue uses are demagoguery (DEM uh gay guh rh rh) or demagogy (DEM uh gay coh).

**DEFINITION** (DEF or oy tal) n submission to another’s will; respect; courtesy.

To show deference to another is to place that person’s wishes ahead of your own.

The young man showed deference to his grandfather: he let the old man have first dibs on the birthday cake.

Herbie stopped yodeling at the dinner table in deference to the wishes of his mother.

To show deference to another is to defer to that person. Joe was supposed to go first, but he deferred to Steve, who had been waiting longer.

To show deference is also to be deferential (def uh REN anal). Joe was being deferential when he allowed Steve to go first.

DEFINITIVE (di FIN ih tiv) adj conclusive; producing the least word.

Walter wrote the definitive biography of Keats; nothing more could have been added by another book.

The army completely wiped out the invaders; its victory was definitive.

No one could find anything to object to in Cindy’s definitive explanation of how the meteorite had gotten into the bathtub.

DEGENERATE (di JEN uh ray) v to break down; to deteriorate.

The discussion quickly degenerated into an argument.

Over the years, the nice old neighborhood had degenerated into a terrible slum.

The fans’ behavior degenerated as the game went on.

A person whose behavior has degenerated can be referred to as a
DENIZEN (DEN ə zən) n. inhabitant
    To be a denizen of a country is to live there. A citizen of a country
    is usually also a denizen.
    To be a denizen of a restaurant is to go there often—so often that
    people begin to wonder whether you live there.
    Fish are sometimes referred to as "denizens of the deep." Don’t
    refer to them this way yourself; the expression is a cliché.

DEPRAVITY (di PRAY və tē) n. extreme wickedness or corruption
    Mrs. Prudhomme wonders whether the depravity of her class of
    eight-year-olds was the result of their watching Saturday morning
    television.
    To exhibit depravity is to be depraved.

DEPRECE (DE PRAY kā) vb. to express disapproval of
    To depurate a colleague’s work is to risk making yourself unwel
    come in your colleague’s office.
    "This stinks!" is a depurating remark.
    The critic’s depurating comments about my new novel put me in a
    bad mood for an entire month:
    To be self-deprurating is to make little of one’s own efforts, often
    in the hope that someone else will say, "No, you’re swell!"
    A very similar word is depurate (di PRAH shur at). To depurate
    a colleague’s work would be to represent it as being of little value.
    For another meaning of depurate, see appreciate.

DERIDE (di RYE də) vb. to ridicule, to laugh at contemptuously
    Barry derided Barbara’s driving ability after their fair-raising trip
    down the twisting mountain road.
    Sportswriters derided Columbia’s football team, which hadn’t won
    a game in many years.
    The boss derided his secretary mercilessly, so she poisoned him.
    She was someone who could not accept derision (di RIZH nə).

DEROGATORY (di RAH tər a tər e) adj. disapproving; degrading
    Derogatory remarks are negative remarks expressing disapproval.
    They are not more than merely critical remarks.
    Oliver could never seem to think of anything nice to say about
    anyone; virtually all of his comments were derogatory.

DESICATE (DES uh kāt) vb. to dry out
    The hot wind desicated the few grapes remaining on the vine; after
    a day or two, they looked like raisins.
    After a week without water, the desicated plant fell over and died.
    Plums become prunes through a process of desiccation.

RESPONDENT (di SPAHN dənt) adj. extremely depressed; full of de
    spair
    The cook became despondent when the wedding cake exploded
    fifteen minutes before the reception.
    After the death of his wife, the man was despondent for many
    months.
    The team fell into despondency after losing the state championship
    by a single point.

DESPOIT (DESP iht) n. an absolute ruler; an autocrat
    The manager of the office was a despot; workers who disagreed
    with him were fired.
    The island kingdom was ruled by a ruthless despot who executed
    suspected rebels at noon each day in the village square.
    To act like a despot is to be despotic. There was cheering in
    the street when the country’s despotic government was overthrown.
DESTITUTE (DKS /tuk tw/) adj extremely poor; utterly lacking
Destitute people are people without money or possessions, or with very little money and very few possessions.
To be left destitute is to be left without money or property.
The word can also be used figuratively. A teacher might accuse her students of being destitute of brains, or intellectually destitute.

DESULTORY (DES ul tow ree) adj without a plan or purpose; disconnected; random
Phil made a few desultory attempts to start a garden, but nothing came of them.
In his desultory address, Jack skipped from one topic to another and never came to the point.
The discussion at our meeting was desultory; no one’s comments seemed to bear any relation to anyone else’s.
Not carefully the pronunciation of this word.

DIALECTICAL (dye vik LEX ik kul) adj relating to discussions; relating to the rules and methods of reasoning; approaching truth in the middle of opposing extremes
The game of Twenty Questions is dialectical, in that the participants attempt to narrow down a chosen subject by asking a series of ever more specific questions.
The man is dialectics.

DICTUM (DAX tum) n an authoritative saying; an adage; a maxim; a proverb
“No pain, no gain” is a hackneyed dictum of realistic conditions everywhere.

DIDACTIC (dye DAK tik) adj intended to teach; morally instructive; pedantic
Luther’s seemingly amusing talk had a didactic purpose; he was trying to show his listeners the difference between right and wrong.
The priest’s conversation was always didactic. He never said anything that wasn’t intended to teach a lesson.
The new novel is painfully didactic; the author’s sole is always to instruct and never to entertain.

DIFFIDENT (DIF /dint/) adj timid; lacking in self-confidence
The diffident student never made a single comment in class. Diffident and confident are opposites.
Mary’s stammer made her diffident in conversation and shy in groups of strangers.
Amid’s diffidence led many participants to believe he hadn’t been present at the meeting, even though he had.

DIGRESS (dy Grove /gres/) v to stray from the main subject
Speaking metaphorically, to digress is to leave the main highway in order to travel aimlessly on back roads. When a speaker digresses, he departs from the main topic and tells a story only distantly related to it.

THE WORDS

Such a story is called a digression. Sometimes a writer’s or speaker’s digressions are more interesting than his or her main points.
After a lengthy digression, the lecturer returned to his speech and brought it to a conclusion.

dilettante (DAH uh tahn) n someone with superficial knowledge of the arts; an amateur; a dabbler
To be a dilettante is to dabble in something rather than doing it in a serious way.
Reginald said no was an artist, but he was only a dilettante; he didn’t know a pencil from a paintbrush.
He dismissed the members of the band’s sculpture club as nothing more than a bunch of dilettantes.

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<td>11. digress</td>
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<td>12. dilettante</td>
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DISCERN (dih SURN) v to have insight; to see things clearly, to discriminate; to differentiate
To discern something is to perceive it clearly. A writer whose work demonstrates discernment is a writer who is a keen observer.
The ill-mannered people at Louise’s party proved that she had little discernment when it came to choosing friends.

DISCREET (dih SKREE et) adj prudent; judiciously reserved
To make discerning judgments is to ask around without letting the whole world know you’re doing it.
The psychiatrist was very discreet; no matter how much he pondered him, he wouldn’t gossip about the problems of his famous patients. He had discretion (dih SKREE esh) un.
To be indirect is to be unimpressed and especially, to say or do things you shouldn’t. It was indirect of Laura to tell Sally how much she hated Betty’s new hairdo, because Sally always tells Betty everything.
When Laura told that to Sally, she committed an indiscretion.

**DISCRETE** (di SKREET) adj unconnected; separate; distinct
Do not confuse discrete with discreet. The twins were identical but their personalities were discrete. The drop in the stock market was not the result of any single force but of many discrete trends.

When things are all jumbled together, they are said to be indiscrete, which means not separated or sorted.

**DISCRIMINATE** (di SKRIM uh nayl) v to notice or point out the difference between two or more things; to discern; to differentiate
A person with a refined aesthetic sense is able to discriminate subtle differences where a less observant person would see nothing. Such a person is discriminating. This kind of discrimination is a good thing. To discriminate unfairly, though, is to dwell on differences that shouldn’t make a difference. It is unfair—and illegal—to discriminate between black people and white people in selling a house. Such a practice is not discriminating (which is good), but discriminatory (which is wrong).
Indiscriminate means not discriminating; in other words, random or haphazard.

**DISDAIN** (dis DAYN) n arrogant scorn; contempt
Bretem viewed the hot dog with disdain, believing that to eat such a disgusting food was beneath him.
The millionaire looked upon the poor workers with evident disdain. Disdain can also be a verb. The millionaire in the previous example could be said to have disdained those workers.
To be filled with disdain is to be disdainful.

**DISINTERESTED** (dis IN trish vid) adj not taking sides; unbiased
Disinterested should not be used to mean uninterested. If you don’t care about knowing something, you are uninterested, not disinterested.
A referee should be disinterested. He or she should not be rooting for one of the competing teams.
A disinterested observer is one who has no personal stake in or attachment to what is being observed.
Agatha claimed that the accident had been Lester’s fault, but several disinterested witnesses said that Agatha had actually dashed into his car after jumping the median and driving in the wrong lane for several miles.

**DISPARAGE** (di SPAR ij) v to belittle; to say uncomplimentary things about, usually in a somewhat indirect way
The mayor disparaged our efforts to beautify the town square by saying that the flowers he had planted looked somewhat worse than the weeds it had replaced.
My guidance counselor disparaged my high school record by telling me that not everybody breathe in college.

**DISPARATE** (DIS pur it) adj different; incompatible; unequal
Our interests were disparate: Cathy liked to play with dolls and I liked to throw her dolls out the window.
The disparate interest groups were united only by their intense dislike of the candidate.
The novel was difficult to read because the plot consisted of dozens of disparate threads that never came together.
The noun form of disparate is disparity (di SPAR i tee). Disparity means inequality. The opposite of disparity is parity.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

**DISSEMINATE** (di SEM uh nayl) v to spread the seeds of something; to scatter; to make widely known
News is disseminated through many media: radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and gossip.

**DISSIPATE** (DIS uh paylt) v to thin out, drift away, or dissolve; to cause to thin out, drift away, or dissolve; to waste or squander
The smoke dissipated as soon as we opened the windows.
Res’s anger dissipated as the day wore on and he gradually forgot what had upset him.
The police dissipated the riotous crowd by spraying the demonstrators with fire hoses and firing bullets over their heads.
Alex won the weekly lottery but dissipated the entire winnings in one week, fun-filled weekend. We can also say that a person is dissipated, by which we mean that he indulges in wild living. Alex is dissipated.

**DISSOLUTION** (dis uh LOO shun) n the breaking up or dissolving of something into parts; disintegration
Nothing could prevent the dissolution of the Pee Wee Herman Fan Club after he retired to seek a political career.
A person who is dissolute has lived life in the fast lane too long. Dissolute and dissipated are synonyms in this sense.
DISTEND (di STEND) v. to swell; to extend a great deal
The tire distended alarmingly as the forgetful gas station attendant kept pumping more and more air into it.
A distended belly is one symptom of malnutrition.
A swelling is a distension.

DISTINGUISH (di STING guish) v. to tell apart; to cause to stand out
The rooster's eyesight was so acute that he was able to distinguish between a crow and a rooster at a distance of more than a thousand paces.
I studied and studied but I was never able to distinguish between discrete and discreet.
His face had no distinguishing characteristics; there was nothing about him that stuck in your memory.
Lani's unenviable career as a dogcatcher was not distinguished by adventure or excitement.

DOCILE (DAHML ul) adj. easily taught; obedient; easy to handle
The docile students quietly memorized all the facts their teacher told them.
The baby raccoons appeared docile at first, but they were almost impossible to control.
Louise's docility fooled the professor into believing that she was incapable of thinking for herself.
Note carefully the pronunciation of both parts of speech.

DOCTRINAIRE (dahk truh NAIR) adj. inflexibly committed to a doctrine or theory without regard to its practicality; dogmatic
A doctrinaire supporter of manned space flights to Pluto would be someone who supported such space flights even though it might be shown that such lengthy journeys could never be undertaken.
A doctrinaire opponent of fluoridation of water would be someone whose opposition could not be shaken by proof that fluoride is good for teeth and not bad for anything else.
A person with doctrinaire views can be called a doctrinaire.

DOMINO (down MAH ik) adj arrogantly assertive of unproven ideas; stubbornly claiming that something (often a system of beliefs) is beyond dispute
A domino is a belief. A domino person, however, is stubbornly convinced of his beliefs.
Marty is dogmatic on the subject of the creation of the world; he swears at anyone whose views are not identical to his.
The philosophy professor became increasingly dogmatic as he grew older and became more firmly convinced of his strange theories.
The opinions or ideas dogmatically asserted by a doctrinaire person are known collectively as dogma.

DOMESTIC (Duh MES ik) adj having to do with the household or family; not foreign
A home that enjoys domestic tranquility is a happy home.

DORMANT (DOR mant) adj inactive; as though asleep; asleep
Dormant like dormitory, comes from a root meaning sleep.
The volcano erupted violently and then fell dormant for several hundred years.
Many plants remain dormant through the winter; that is, they stop growing until spring.
Froth's interest in playing the piano was dormant and, quite possibly, dead.
The snow fell silently over the dormant village, which became sealed in traffic jams the following morning.
The noun is dormancy.

DOUBTFUL (DUB to oob ul) adj. full of doubt; uncertain
I was fairly certain that I would be able to fly if I could merely flap my arms hard enough, but Mally was dubious; she said I'd better flap my legs as well.
We were dubious about the team's chance of success and, as it turned out, our dubious (dub BYE uht reh) was justified; the team lost.
Doubtful and doubtful don't mean exactly the same thing. A doubtful person is a person who has doubts. A doubtful outcome is an outcome that isn’t certain to occur.
E

EBULLIENT (i RUL yunt) adj boiling; bubbling with excitement; exuberant. A boiling liquid can be called ebullient. More often, though, this word describes excited or enthusiastic people. The roaring crowd in a full stadium before the World Series might be said to be ebullient.

A person overflowing with enthusiasm might be said to be ebullient. Mabel was ebullient when her fairy godmother said she could use one of her three wishes to wish for three more wishes.

Someone or something that is ebullient is characterized by ebullience. Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

ECENTRIC (ek SEN trik) adj not conventional; a little kooky; irregular. The eccentric inventor spent all his waking hours fiddling with what he said was a time machine but was actually just an old telephone booth.

Fred’s political views are eccentric: he believes that we should have kings instead of presidents and that the government should raise money by holding bake sales.

The rocket followed an eccentric course; first it veered in one direction, then it veered in another, then it crashed.

An eccentric person is a person who has eccentricities (ek sen TRIS uh teez).

ECLECTIC (i KLEK tik) adj choosing the best from many sources; drawn from many sources. Zeke’s taste in art was eclectic. He liked the Old Masters, the Impressionists, and Walt Disney.

The eclectic menu included dishes from many different countries. George’s eclectic reading made him well rounded.

EDIFY (ED uh fay) v to enlighten; to instruct, especially in moral or religious matters. We found the pastor’s sermon on the importance of not eating beans to be most edifying.

The teacher’s goal was to edify her students, not to force a handful of facts down their throats.

We would have felt lost at the art show had not the excellent and informative programs been provided for our edification.

EFFACE (i FAYS) v to erase; to rub away the features of. The inscription on the tombstone had been effaced by centuries of weather.

The vandals effaced the delicate carving by rubbing it with sandpaper.

We tried to efface the dirty words that had been written on the front of our house, but nothing would remove them.

To be self-effacing is to be modest. Jennings is self-effacing: he won an Olympic gold medal and all he said was “Aw, shucks, I’m just a regular fella.”

EFFUSION (i FYOO shun) n a pouring forth. When the child was rescued from the well, there was an intense effusion of emotion from the crowd that had gathered around the hole.

The madman’s writings consisted of a steady effusion of nonsense.

To be effusive is to be highly emotional. Sally’s effusive thanks for our silly little present made us feel somewhat embarrassed, so we decided to move to a different city.

EGALITARIAN (i gal uh FAHR ee un) adj believing in the social and economic equality of all people. People often lose interest in egalitarian measures when such measures interfere with their own interests.

Egalitarian can also be used as a noun to characterize a person. An egalitarian advocates egalitarianism.

EGOCENTRIC (e goh SEN trik) adj selfish; believing that one is the center of everything. Lou was so egocentric that he could never give anyone else credit for doing anything.
**WORD SMART**

Egocentric Bill never read the newspaper unless there was something in it about him.

It never occurred to the egocentric musician that his audiences might like to hear someone else's songs every once in a while.

An egotist is an egocentric person. He believes the entire universe exists for his benefit.

An egotist is another type of egocentric. An egotist is an egotist who tells everyone how wonderful he is.

**BOREGIOUS (BOH reh JUS) adj extremely bad; flagrant**

Save this word for things that are worse than bad.

The mother's egregious neglect was responsible for her child's accidental cross-country ride on the freight train.

Stephen's manners were egregious: he ate his mashed potatoes with his fingers and slurped the peas right off his plate.

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<td>g. erase</td>
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<td>8. egocentric</td>
<td>h. selfish</td>
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<td>9. egolist</td>
<td>i. enlighten</td>
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<td>10. egregious</td>
<td>j. believing in social equality</td>
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**ELUSIVE (EL yooz) adj hard to pin down; evasive**

To be elusive is to evade, which means to avoid, evade, or escape.

The answer to the problem was elusive; every time the mathematician thought he was close, he discovered another error. (Or, one could say that the answer to the problem eluded the mathematician.)

The elusive criminal was next to impossible for the police to catch. (The criminal eluded the police.)

The team played hard, but victory was elusive and they suffered another defeat. (Victory eluded the hard-playing team.)

**EMIGRATE (EM uh grayt) v to move to a new country; to move to a new place to live; to emigrate**

At the heart of this word is the word-migrate, which means to move from one place or country to another. Emigrate adds the sense of moving out of some place in particular. Pierre emigrated from France because he had grown tired of speaking French. Pierre became an emigre (EM uh gray). The Soviet dissidents were persecuted by the soviet police, so they sought permission to emigrate.

On the other end of every emigration is an immigration, or "in-migration." When Pierre emigrated from France, he immigrated to the United States.

To emigrate is to leave one country for another; to immigrate is to arrive in a new country from another.

**EMINENT (EM uh nut) adj well-known and respected; standing out from all others in quality or accomplishment; outstanding**

The visiting poet was so eminent that our English teacher thought the poet was preeminent in his field.

The entire audience fell silent when the eminent musician walked onto the stage and picked up his banjo and bongo drums.

Don't confuse the word with eminence.

**EMPIRICAL (em PIR uh kuhl) adj relying on experience or observation; not merely theoretical**

The Empirically dropping experiment gave the scientists empirical evidence that gravity exists.

Huy's idea about the moon being made of pizza dough was not empirical.

We proved the pie's deliciousness empirically, by eating it.
EMULATE (EH yuh layt) v to strive to equal or excel, usually through imitation.

To emulate someone is to try to be just as good as, or better than, him or her.
The American company emulated its successful Japanese competitor but never quite managed to do as well.
Little Joeyimitated his athletichobby brother in the hope of one day emulating his success.
I got ahead by emulating those who had gone before me.

ENCROACH (en KROCH) v to make gradual or stealthy inroads into; to trespass:

As the city grew, it encroached on the countryside surrounding it.
With an encroaching sense of dread, I slowly pushed open the blood-spattered door.
My neighbor encroached on my yard by building his new stockade fence a few feet on my side of the property line.

ENDEMIC (en DEM ik) adj native; restricted to a particular region or area; indigenous:

You won't find that kind of tree in California; it's endemic to our part of the country.
That peculiar strain of influenza was endemic to a small community in South Carolina; there were no cases anywhere else.
The writer Tom Wolfe coined the term "Me Decade" to describe the egocentricity endemic in the 1970s.

ENERVATE (EN ur VAYT) v to reduce the strength or energy of, especially to do so gradually:

Mark felt enervated by this long ordeal and couldn't make himself get out of bed.
Clinging to a flagpole for a month without food or water enervated me, and one day I fell asleep and fell off.
Life itself seemed to enervate the old man. He grew weaker and paler with every breath he drew.

ENFRANCHISE (en FRAN chyz) v to grant the privileges of citizenship, especially the right to vote.

In the United States, citizens become enfranchised on their eighteenth birthdays. American women were not enfranchised until the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, which gave them the right to vote.
To disenfranchise (or disenfranchise) someone is to take away the privileges of citizenship or take away the right to vote. One of the goals of the reform candidate was to disenfranchise the bodies at the cemetery, which had had a habit of voting for the crooked mayor.

ENGENDER (en JEN duh) v to bring into existence; to create; to cause to come into being.

My winning lottery ticket engendered a great deal of envy among my co-workers; they all wished that they had won.
Smiles engender smiles.
The bitter lieutenant engendered discontent among his troops.

ENIGMA (uh NIG muh) n a mystery:

Hal is an enigma; he never does any homework but he always gets good grades.
The wizard spoke in riddles and enigmas, and no one could understand what he was saying.
An enigma is enigmatic (en ih MAT ik). Hal's good grades were enigmatic. So was the wizard's speech.

ENORMITY (ih NOR muh lee) n extreme evil; a hideous offense; immensity:

Hitler's soldiers stormed through the village, committing one enormity after another.
"Hugeness" or "great size" is not the main meaning of enormity. When you want to talk about the gigantic size of something, use immensity instead.

EPHEMERAL (eh FEM ur uh) adj lasting a very short time:

Ephemeral comes from the Greek and means lasting a single day.
The word is generally used more loosely to mean lasting a short time.
Youth and flowers are both ephemeral. They're gone before you know it.
Some friendships are ephemeral.
The tread on those used tires will probably turn out to be ephemeral.
**EQUIVOCAL** (é kwév uh kawl) adj: ambiguous; intentionally confusing; capable of being interpreted in more than one way

Ambiguity means unclear. To be equivocal is to be intentionally ambiguous. Joe’s response was equivocal; we couldn’t tell whether he meant yes or no, which is precisely what Joe wanted.

The doctor’s equivocal diagnosis made us think that he had no idea what Mrs. Johnson had.

To be equivocal is to *equivocate*. To equivocate is to mislead by saying confusing or ambiguous things. When we asked Harry whether that was his car that was parked in the middle of the hardware store, he *equivocated* and asked, “In which aisle?”

**ERUDITE** (ér yoo duh t) adj: scholarly; deeply learned

The professor said things erudite that none of us had the slightest idea of what he was saying.

The erudite biologist was viewed by many of his colleagues as a likely winner of the Nobel Prize.

To be erudite is to possess erudition (ér yoo DISH un), extensive knowledge. Mr. Jones’s vast library was an indication of his erudition.

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<tr>
<th>EPigram (EP uh gam) n a brief and usually witty or satirical saying</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EPITOME</strong> (é PIT uh mee) n a brief summary that captures the meaning of the whole; the perfect example of something; a paradigm</td>
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<td><strong>EQUANIMITY</strong> (ék wah NIM uh tee) n composure; calm</td>
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**THE WORDS**

**EQUITABLE** (EK uh tuh buhl) adj: fair

King Solomon’s decision was certainly equitable; each mother would receive half the child.

The pirates distributed the loot equitably among themselves, so that each pirate received the same share as every other pirate.

The divorce settlement was quite equitable. Sheila got the right half of the house and Tom got the left half.

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<td>b. fair</td>
<td>c. composure</td>
<td>d. intentionally confusing</td>
<td>e. apt quotation</td>
<td>f. say confusing things</td>
<td>g. inscription on a grave</td>
<td>h. scholarly</td>
<td>i. brief, witty saying</td>
<td>j. characterizing term</td>
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</table>
ESOTERIC (es uh TEER ik) adj hard to understand; understood by only a select few; peculiar
Chicken wrestling and underwater yodeling were just two of Bob's esoteric hobbies.
The author's books were so esoteric that no one except his mother ever bought any of them.

ESPouse (e SPOWZ) v to support; to advocate
The Mormons used to espouse bigamy, or marriage to more than one womm.
Bert espoused so many causes that he sometimes has trouble remembering which side he was on.
The candidate for governor espoused a program in which all taxes would be abolished and all the state's revenues would be supplied by income from bingo and horse racing.

ETHEREAL (i THR ee ul) adj heavenly; as light and insubstantial as a gas or ether
The ethereal music we heard turned out to be not angels plucking on their harps but the wind blowing past our satellite-television antenna.
The ethereal mist on the hillside was delicate and beautiful.

EUPHEMISM (YOOF uh miz um) n a pleasant or inoffensive expression used in place of an unpleasant or offensive one
Uncle George had taken the big bus up town. "Taking the big bus up town" was her euphemism for dying.
She was so embarrassed by the subject that she could only bring herself to speak euphemistically about it.

EVANESCENT (ee uh NES ent) adj fleeting; vanishing; happening for only the briefest period
Metters are evanescent: they last so briefly that it is hard to tell whether one has actually appeared.

EXACRBATE (ig ZAS ur boyl) v to make worse
The widow's grief was exacerbated by the minister's momentary inability to remember her dead husband's name.
The fender-bender was exacerbated when a line of twenty-five cars plowed into the back of Margaret's car.

EXACTING (ig ZAK king) adj extremely demanding; difficult; requiring great skill or care
The exacting math teacher subtracted points for even the most unimportant errors.
Weaving cloth out of guinea-pig hair is an exacting occupation, because guinea pigs are small and their hair is short.
The surgeon's exacting task was to reconnect the patient's severed eyelashes.
EXIGENCE (EK i jen) n an emergency; an urgency
An academic exigency: you haven't opened a book all term and the final is tomorrow morning.
Exigent means urgent.

EXISTENTIAL (eg zih TĔN shŭl) adj having to do with existence; having to do with the body of thought called existentialism, which basically holds that human beings are responsible for their own actions but is otherwise too complicated to summarize in a single sentence. This word is overused but under understood by virtually all of the people who use it. Unless you have a very good reason for throwing it around, you should probably avoid it.

EXONERATE (eg ZAHN uh rayt) v to free completely from blame; to exculpate
The suspect was exonerated when the district attorney’s fingerprints were found on the murder weapon.
The defendant, who had always claimed he wasn’t guilty, expected to be exonerated by the testimony of his best friend.
Our dog was exonerated when we discovered that it was in fact the cat who had eaten all the chocolate-chip cookies.

EXTRAPOLATE (eks PAY tree oyt) v to throw (someone) out of his or her native land; to move away from one’s native land; to emigrate
The rebels were expropriated by the nervous general, who feared they would cause trouble if they were allowed to remain in the country. Hugo was fed up with his native country and so extrapolated to America. In doing so, Hugo became an expatriate (eks PAY tree oyt).
To extrapolate (see PAY tree oyt) is to return to one’s native citizenship; that is, to become a repatriate (see PAY tree it).

EXPERIMENT (ik SPEE des un) adj providing an immediate advantage; serving one’s immediate self-interest; practical
Since the basement had nearly flooded with water, the plumber felt it would be expedient to clear out the drain.
The candidate’s position in favor of higher pay for teachers was an expedient one adopted for the national teachers’ convention and abandoned shortly afterward.
Expedient can also be used as a noun for something expedient. The ev’ry repairman did not have his tool kit handy, so he used chewing gum as an expedient to patch a hole.
The most expedience or expediency is practicality, or being especially suited to a particular goal.

EXPERTISE (EK spair dyz) v to speed up or ease the progress of
The post office expedited mail delivery by hiring more letter carriers.
The lawyer expedited the progress of our case through the courts by bribing a few judges.
Our wait for a table was expedited by a waiter who mistook Angela for a movie star.

EXPLICIT (ik SPLIES it) adj clearly and directly expressed
The sexually explicit movie received an X rating.
The machine’s instructions were explicit—they told us exactly what to do.
No one explicitly asked us to set the oven on fire, but we got the impression that that was what we were supposed to do.
Implicit means indirectly expressed or implied. Gerry’s dissatisfaction with our work was implicit in his expression, although he never criticized us directly.

EXTRACT (ik STOH hl) v to praise highly; to loud
The millionnaire extolled the orest who returned his gold watch, and then reassured him with a bartlet handshake.

EXTRANEOUS (ik STRAY nee us) adj unnecessary; extra
To be extraneous is to be extra, but always with the sense of being unnecessary. Extra ice cream would never be extra-regis, unless everyone had already eaten so much that no one wanted any more.
The book’s soluble plot was buried in a lot of extraneous material about a smiling dog.
The soup contained several extraneous ingredients, including hair, sand, and a single-dead fly.

EXTRAPOLATE (ik STRAP ih rayt) v to project or deduce from something known, to infer
George’s estimates were extrapolated from last year’s data; he simply took all the old numbers and doubled them.
Jacob came up with a probable recipe by extrapolating from the taste of the cookies he had eaten at the store.
**EXTRICATE** (EK struh kayl) v to free from difficulty

It took two and a half days to extricate the little girl from the abandoned well into which she had fallen.

Sam had to pretend to be sick to extricate himself from the blind date with the mud wrestler.

Mary had no trouble driving her car into the ditch, but she needed a tow truck to extricate it.

Something that is permanently stuck is inextricable (in EKS in trih buhl).

**EXTROVERT** (EK struh vurt) n an open, outgoing person; a person whose attention is focused on others rather than on himself or herself.

The little girl was quite an extrovert; she walked boldly into the roomful of strange adults and struck up a friendly conversation.

Hal was an extrovert in the sense that he was always more interested in other people's business than in his own.

An introvert (IN trih vurt) is a person whose attention is directed inward and who is concerned with little outside himself or herself. And was an introvert; he spent virtually all his time in his room, writing in his diary and talking to himself. An introvert is usually introspective.

**EXULT** (ig ZUHLT) v to rejoice; to celebrate.

The women's team exulted in its victory over the men's team at the badminton finals. They were exultant.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE WORDS</th>
<th>MATCH each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. exigency</td>
<td>a. free from blame</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. existential</td>
<td>b. clearly expressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. exonerate</td>
<td>c. indirectly expressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. expatriate</td>
<td>d. having to do with existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. expedient</td>
<td>e. outgoing person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. expelde</td>
<td>f. spend up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. implicit</td>
<td>g. infer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. explicit</td>
<td>h. free from difficulty</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. extol</td>
<td>i. immediately advantageous</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. extraneous</td>
<td>j. unnecessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. extraplate</td>
<td>k. inwardly directed person</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. extricate</td>
<td>l. throw out of native land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. extrovert</td>
<td>m. emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. introvert</td>
<td>n. rejoicer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. exult</td>
<td>o. praise highly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**FABRICATION** (FAB  uh kay shun) n a lie; something made up

My story about being the Prince of Wales was a fabrication. I'm really the king of Denmark.

The suspected murderer's alibi turned out to be an elaborate fabrication; in other words, he was lying when he said that he hadn't killed the victim.

To create a fabrication is to fabricate.

**FACETIOUS** (fuh SEE shus) adj humorous; not serious; clownishly humorous

David was sent to the principal's office for making a facetious remark about the intelligence of the French teacher.

Our proposal about shipping our town's garbage to the moon was facetious, but the first selectman took it seriously.

**FACILE** (FAS il) adj fluent; skilled in a superficial way; easy

To say that a writer's style is facile is to say both that it is skillful and that it would be better if the writer exerted himself or herself more. The word facile almost always contains this sense of superficiality.
Joe’s pones were facile rather than truly accomplished; if you read them closely, you soon realized they were filled with cliches.

The bank president was a facile speaker. He could speak engagingly on any topic with very little preparation. He spoke with great facility.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

FACTION (FAK shun) n a group, usually a small part of a larger group, united around some cause; disagreement within an organization.

At the Republican National Convention, the Ford faction spent much of its time shooting at the Reagan faction.

The faculty was relatively happy, but there was a faction that called for higher pay.

When the controversial topic of the fund drive came up, the committee descended into bitterness and faction. It was a facetious topic.

FARCICAL (FARS i kul) adj absurd; ludicrous.

Farcical means like a farce, which is a mockery of a ridiculous satire.

The serious play quickly turned farcical when the leading man’s belt broke and his pants fell to his ankles.

The formerly secret documents detailed the CIA’s farcical attempt to discredit Fidel Castro by sprinkling his shoes with a powder that was supposed to make his beard fall out.

FASTIDIOUS (fa STID ee us) adj meticulous; demanding; finicky.

Mrs. Brown was a fastidious housekeeper; she cleaned up our crumbs almost before they hit the floor.

Jeb was so fastidious in his work habits that he needed neither a wastebasket nor an ashtray.

The fastidious secretary was nearly driven mad by her boss, who used the floor as a file cabinet and his desk as a pantry.

FATALIST (FA TAL ist) n someone who believes that future events are already determined and that humans are powerless to change them.

Fatalism is closely related to the word fate. A fatalist is someone who believes that fate determines everything.

The old man was a fatalist about his illness, believing there was no sense in worrying about something over which he had no control.

Bill was such a fatalist that he never wore a seat belt; he said that if he were meant to die in a car accident, there was nothing he could do to prevent it.

To be a fatalist is to be fatalistic.

FATUOUS (FA ch us) adj foolish; silly; idiotic.

Pauline is so pretty that her suitors are often driven to fatuous acts of devotion. They are infatuated with her.

FAUNA (FAW nhu) n animals.

We saw little evidence of fauna on our walk through the woods. We did, however, see plenty of flora, or plants.

"Flora and fauna" means plants and animals. The terms are used particularly in describing what lives in a particular region or environment.

Arctic fauna are very different from tropical fauna.

In Jim’s yard, the flora consists mostly of weeds.

It’s easy to remember which of these words means what. Just remember flowers and发言人.

FECUND (FEK kund) adj fertile; productive.

The fecund mother rabbit gave birth to hundreds of rabbits.

The philosopher’s imagination was so fecund that ideas hopped out of him like so many baby rabbits.

Our compost heap became increasingly fecund as it decomposed. The state of being fecund is fecundity (fih KUN di tee).

This word can also be pronounced "PEK und."

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**Q-U-I-C-K • Q-U-I-Z #42**

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

| 1. fabrication | a. plane |
| 2. facetious | b. fertile |
| 3. facile | c. absurd |
| 4. faction | d. one who believes in fate |
| 5. farcical | e. humorous |
| 6. facetious | f. animals |
| 7. fatalist | g. superficially skillful |
| 8. fastidious | h. group with a cause |
| 9. fatuous | i. liar |
| 10. flora | j. meticulous |
| 11. fecund | k. foolish |

---

**FEELITY (fy DIL uh ti) n happiness; skillfulness, especially of expressing things; adeptness **

Love was not all felicity for Glen and Pam; they argued all the time.

In fact their relationship was characterized by infelicity.

Shakespeare wrote with great felicity. His works are filled with felicitous expressions.

**FEVER (FEV ur) n great warmth or nervousness; ordor; zeal **

Avid baseball fans frequently display their fervor for the game by throwing food at bad players.

**FEETER (FEJ ur) v to restrain; to hamper **

In his pursuit of the Nobel Prize for physics, Professor Jenkins was fettered by his near-total ignorance of the subject.
To be unfettered is to be unrestricted or free of hindrances. When his parents went to Europe for a few months, Jimmy invited all his friends for some unfettered partying in the empty house.

A fiera is literally a chain (attached to the foot) that is used to restrain a criminal or, for that matter, an innocent person. A figurative fiera is anything that hampers or restrains someone. The housewife’s young children were the fetters that prevented but from pursuing her love affair with the washing-machine repairman.

FIDELITY (fih DIL uh tee) n 1) faithfulness; loyalty
The motto of the United States Marine Corps is semper fidelis, which is Latin for always loyal.
A high-fidelity record player is one that is very faithful in reproducing the original sound of whatever was recorded.
The crusader’s life was marked by fidelity to the cause of justice.
The soldiers couldn’t shoot straight, but their fidelity to the cause of freedom was never in question.
Infidelity means faithlessness or disloyalty. Marital infidelity is another way of saying adultery. Early phonograph records were marked by infidelity in the original.

FIGURATIVE (FIG yor uh tiv) adj based on figures of speech; expressing something in terms usually used for something else; metaphorical
To say that the autumn harvest was a blaze of color is to use the word blaze in a figurative sense. The hillside wasn’t really on fire, but the colors of the leaves made it appear (somewhat) as though it were.
When the mayor said that the housing market had sprouted wings, he was speaking figuratively. The housing market hadn’t really sprouted, it was; it had merely grown so rapidly that it had almost seemed to fly.
A figurative meaning of a word is one that is not literal. A literal statement is one in which every word means exactly what it says. If the housing market had literally sprouted wings, genuine wings would somehow have popped out of it.
People very, very often confuse these words, using one when they really mean the other. Andy could literally eat money if he chewed up and swallowed a dollar bill. Andy’s cat eats money only figuratively, in the sense that it is very expensive to operate.

FINESSE (fih NEHSS) n skillful maneuvering; seductively; craftiness
The doctor sewed up the wound with finesse, making stitches so small one could scarcely see them.
The boxer moved with such finesse that his opponent never knew what hit him.

FLAGRANT (FLAY grunt) adj glaringly bad; notorious; scandalous
A flagrant theft is stealing a car, for example, from the lot behind the police station. A flagrant spelling error is one that jumps right off the page. See the listing for blatant.

FLAUNT (flaunt) v to show off; to display ostentatiously

The brand-new millionaire annoys all his friends by driving around his old neighborhood to flaunt his new Rolls-Royce. Colleen flaunted her engagement ring, showing it in the face of almost anyone who came near her.

This word is very often confused with flow.

FLOW (flow) v to disregard something out of disrespect
A driver flows the traffic laws by driving through red lights and knocking down pedestrians.
To flow success is to make certain everyone knows that you are successful. To flow success is to be conspicuous of success or to act as though it means nothing at all.

FOBLING (FOY bul n) n a minor character flaw
Barbara’s foibles included a tendency to prefer dogs to people.
The delegates to the state convention ignored the candidates’ positions on the major issues and concentrated on their foibles.

FOMENT (foh MENT) v to stir up; to instigate
The bad news from abroad fomented pessimism among professional investors.
The radicals set off several bombs in an effort to foment rebellion among the peasants.

| Q-U-I-C-K  | Q-U-I-Z  | #43
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. fallacy</td>
<td>a. loyalty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. fervor</td>
<td>b. stir-up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. fatter</td>
<td>c. restrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. fidelity</td>
<td>d. meaning exactly what it says</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. figurative</td>
<td>e. minor character flaw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. literal</td>
<td>f. show off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. finesse</td>
<td>g. based on figures of speech</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. flagrant</td>
<td>h. to disregard contemptuously</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. fount</td>
<td>i. skillful maneuvering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. flow</td>
<td>j. happiness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. foible</td>
<td>k. glaringly bad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. foment</td>
<td>l. zeal</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

FORBEAR (for BAYR) v to refrain from; to abstain
Stephen told me I could become a millionaire if I joined him in his business, but his company makes me nervous so I decided to forbear.
George forbore to punch me in the nose, even though I had told him that I thought he was a sniveling idiot.
The noun is forbearance.
A forbear (FOR bay) — sometimes also spelled forbear — is an ancestor. William’s forebears came to America on the Mayflower.

FOREGO (for GOH) v t o do without; to forbear
We had some of the chocolate cake, and some of the chocolate mousse, and some of the chocolate cream pie, but we were worried about our weight so we decided to forego the chocolate-covered potato chips. That is, we forbore them.

FORSAKE (for SAYK) v t to abandon; to renounce; to relinquish
We urged Buddy to forsake his self with the alien beings and return to his job at the drugstore.
All the guilt’s followers had forsaken him, so he became a real estate developer and turned his temple into an apartment building.

FORTUNOUS (for TOO uH luH) adj accidental; occurring by chance
The program’s outcome was not the result of any plan but was entirely fortuitous.
The object was so perfectly formed that its creation could not have been fortuitous.
Fortuitous is often misspelled to mean lucky or serendipitous. Don’t make that same mistake. It means merely accidental.

FOUND (FOWN) v t to fail; to collapse; to sink
The candidate’s campaign for the presidency floundered when it was revealed that he had once been married to an orangutan.
Zeka successfully struggled through the first part of the course but floundered when the final examination was given.
The ship floundered shortly after its hull fell off.
Be careful not to confuse this word with found, which means to move clumsily or in confusion. Our field hockey team floundered helplessly around the field while the opposing team scored point after point.
The witnesses began to flounder as the attorney fired question after question.
If you want to remember the difference between the two words, think that when a river flounders, he is flapping around like a flounder.

FRATERNAL (fruh TUR nuH) adj like brothers
The fraternal feeling among the meeting’s participants disappeared when one of them stood up at dinner and began firing a machine gun.
A fraternity is an organization of men who have bound themselves together in a relationship analogous to that of real brothers.

FRENZIED (fruh NEEZ id) adj frantic; frenzied
There was a lot of frenzied activity in the office, but nothing ever seemed to get accomplished.
The bird’s frenzied attempt to free itself from the thorn bush finally exhausted it. Then the cat stalked over and ate it.

FRUGAL (FRoo guil) adj economical; penny-pinching
Laura was so frugal that she even tried to bargain with the checkout girl at the supermarket.
We were as frugal as we could be, but we still ended up several thousand dollars in debt.
Harsham’s frugality annoyed his husband, who loved nothing better than spending money.

FURTIVE (FUR viH) adj secretive; sly
Cat wagged his ears while the countess was talking to him in a furtive attempt to catch our attention.
The burglars were furtive, but not furtive enough; the alert policeman grabbed them as they carried the color TV through the Washington’s back door.

Q-U-I-N-C-Y • Q-U-I-Z #44
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. forbear
   a. economical
2. forbear
   b. ancestor
3. forgo
   c. move in confusion
4. flounce
   d. do without
5. forbiddon
   e. refrain from
6. flounder
   f. sink
7. found
   g. secretive
8. frenetic
   h. accidental
9. frugal
   i. abandon
10. furtive
    j. frantic

FUTILE (FYOOT uH) adj useless; hopeless
A+ average and no extracurricular interests to speak of meant that applying to Harvard was futile, but Lucinda hoped against hope.
Something futile is a futility (fyoo TIL uH tee). Lucinda doesn’t know what a futility it is.

G

GARRULOUS (GAR uh luH) adj talkative; chatty
Gillette in garrulous and garrulous, he loves to hang out with the gang and gab.
HACKNEYED (HAK nek ed) adj oversold; trite; stale
"As sold as ice" is a hackneyed expression.
Michael's book was full of clichés and hackneyed phrases.

The creationism issue had been discussed so much as to become hackneyed.

HAPLESS (HAP lis) adj unlucky
Joe's hapless search for fun led him from one disappointment to another.
Alex led a hapless existence that made all his friends' lives seem fortunate by comparison.

HARBRINGER (HAR brin ger) n a forerunner; a signal of
Warm weather is the harbinger of spring.
A cloud of bad breath and body odor, which preceded him by several yards everywhere he went, was Harold's harbinger.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

HEDONISM (HEED uh niz uhm) n the pursuit of pleasure as a way of life
A hedonist practices hedonism twenty-four hours a day.

HEGEMONY (HEY jeh muh nee) n leadership, especially of one nation over another
America once held an unchallenged nuclear hegemony.
Japan and Germany vie for hegemony in the foreign-car market.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

HERESY (HER ee) n any belief that is strongly opposed to established beliefs
Galileo was tried for the heresy of suggesting that the sun did not revolve around the earth. He was almost convicted of being a heretic, but he recanted his heretical (hur EHT ik) view.

HERMETIC (HER met ik) adj impervious to external influence; airtight
The wall was built with hermetic existence in the White House, as his advisers attempted to seal him off from the outside world.
The old men felt vulnerable and unwanted outside the hermetic security of their club.
The poisonous substance was sealed hermetically inside a glass cylinder.

HEYDAY (HEY day) n golden age; prime
In his heyday, Vernon was a world-class athlete; today he's just Vernon.
The heyday of the British Navy ended a long, long time ago.

HIATUS (hye AY tus) n a break or interruption, often from work
Spencer looked forward to spring break as a welcome hiatus from the rigors of campus parties.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

HIERARCHY (HYE reh say) n an organization based on rank or degree; pecking order
George was very low in the State Department hierarchy. In fact, his phone number wasn't even listed in the State Department directory.
There appeared to be no hierarchy in the newly discovered tribe; there was no leader and, for that matter, no followers.
The adjective is hierarchical (hye uh RAYR ik i kul).

HISTRIONIC (his trahn ik) adj overly dramatic; theatrical
Adonis's histrionic support for his ratio embarrassed everyone in the office. She gesticulated wildly, jumped up and down, pulled out handfuls of hair, threw herself to the ground, and howled in agony.
The chairman's histrionic presentation convinced no one.
Histrionic behavior is referred to as histrionic. The young actor's histrionics made everyone in the audience squirm.

HOMILY (HOH muh lee) n a sermon
The football coach often began practice with a lengthy homily on the virtues of clean living.

HOMOGENEOUS (hoh muh JEE nuh us) adj uniform; made entirely of one thing
Homogenized (huh MAH zuh neyzed) milk is milk in which the cream, which usually floats on top, has been permanently mixed with the rest of the milk. Skim milk is milk from which the layer of cream has been skimmed off. When milk is homogenized, it becomes a homogeneous substance—that is, it's the same throughout, or uniform.
The kindergarten class was extremely homogeneous: all the children had brown hair, blue eyes, red shoes, and the same last name.
To be heterogeneous (huh tuh JEE nay us) is to be mixed or varied. On Halloween the children amassed a heterogeneous collection of candy, chewing gum, popcorn, cookies, and razor blades.
The nouns are homogeneity (hoh muh juh NEE uh te) and heterogeneity (huh tuh ruh juh NEE uh te) respectively.

HUSBANDRY (HUB sund ree) n thrifty management of resources; livestock farming
Husbandry is the practice of conserving money or resources. To husband is to economize. Everyone husbanded oil and electricity during the energy crisis of the seventies.

HYPERBOLE (hye pur buh lee) n exaggeration used as a figure of speech; exaggeration
When Joe said "I'm so hungry I could eat a horse," he was using hyperbole to convey the extent of his hunger.
HYPOTHETICAL (hye puh THET uh keuhl) adj. uncertain; unproven.

Ernie’s skill as a baseball player was entirely hypothetical, since he had never played the game.

There were several hypothetical explanations for the strange phenomenon, but no one could say for certain what had caused it.

A hypothetical explanation is a hypothesis (hye PAHTH uh sit), the plural of which is hypotheses (hye PAHTH uh sees).

**Q-U-H-C-K + Q-U-H-Z #46**

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. hackneyed a. leadership
2. hapless b. uniform
3. harbinger c. outright
4. hedonism d. forerunner
5. hegemony e. pacifying order
6. heresy f. overused, trite
7. hermetic g. exaggeration
8. hecchey h. golden age
9. hint h. varied
10. hierarchy i. abstruse
11. kindred k. unlucky
12. hysteria l. uncertain; unproven
13. hollisy m. overly dramatic
14. homogeneous n. break
15. heterogeneous o. sermon
16. hoboody p. thrifty management of
17. hyperbole q. lifelong pursuit of pleasure
18. hypothetical r. strongly contrary belief

**ICONOCLAST** (eye KAHN uh klahst) n. one who attacks popular beliefs or institutions.

Iconoclast comes from Greek words meaning image breaker. The original iconoclasts were opponents of the use of icons, or sacred images, in certain Christian churches. Today the word is used to refer to someone who attacks popular figures and ideas—a person to whom “nothing is sacred.”

The popular columnist was an inveterate iconoclast, avidly attacking public figures no matter what their party affiliation.

To study and go to class is to be an iconoclast on that campus, which has a reputation for being the biggest party school in the country if not the world.

Herbert’s iconoclastic (eye kah nuh KLAS tik) views were not popular with the older members of the board.

**IDEOLOGY** (eye dee AHJ uh jee) n. a system of social or political ideas.

Conservatism and liberalism are competing ideologies.

The candidate never managed to communicate his ideology to the voters, so few people were able to grasp what he stood for.

The senator’s tax proposal had more to do with ideology than with common sense; his plan, though consistent with his principles, was clearly impractical.

A dogmatic person attached to an ideology is an ideologue (EYE deh uh lawg). An ideologue is doctrinaire.

Ideology is sometimes pronounced “ID ee ah jee jee.”

**IDIOSYNCRASY** (id ee oh SINK ruh see) n. peculiarity; on eccentricity.

Eating green beans drenched in ketchup for breakfast was one of Jordana’s idiosyncrasies.

The doctor’s interest was aroused by an idiosyncrasy in Bill’s skull: there seemed to be a coin slot in the back of his head.

A person who has an idiosyncrasy is said to be idiosyncratic (id ee oh sin KRAT ik). Tara’s driving was somewhat idiosyncratic; she sometimes seemed to prefer the sidewalk to the street.

**IDYLIC** (eye DIL ik) adj. charming in a rustic way; naturally peaceful.

They built their house on an idyllic spot. There was a babbling brook in back and an unbroken view of wooded hills in front.

Our vacation in the country was idyllic: we went for long walks down winding dirt roads and didn’t see a newspaper all week.

An idyllic vacation or other experience could also be called an idyll.

**IGNOMINY** (IG ruh min ee) n. deep disgrace.

After the big scandal, the formerly high-flying investment banker fell into a life of shame and ignominy.
The (ignoring of) losing the spelling bee was too much for Arnold, who decided to give up spelling altogether.

Something that is deeply disgraceful is ignominious (ig nuh MIN ee us). The massacre of the farm family was an ignominious act.

Note carefully the pronunciation of both parts of speech.

ILICIT (il EYE sit) adj illegal; not permitted

Criminals engage in illicit activities.

Don't confuse this word with elicit, listed previously. The police interviewed hundreds of witnesses, trying to elicit clues that might help them stop at elicit business.

IMMENSE (IM uh MENT) adj just about to happen

The pink glow in the east made it clear that sun was imminent. George had a feeling that disaster was imminent, but he couldn't figure out why, then the jugo hit crashed into his garage.

Don't confuse this word with eminent, listed previously.

IMMUTABLE (im YOOOO tah bull) adj unchangeable

Jerry's mother had only one immutable rule: no dancing on the dinner table.

The statue of the former principal looked down on the students with an immutable scowl.

Something that is changeable is said to be mutable. The mutable shoreline shifted continuously as the tides moved sand first in one direction and then in another.

Helen's needs were mutable; one minute she was kind and gentle, the next minute she was screaming and angry.

Both immutable and mutable are based on a Latin root meaning change. So are mutation and mutate.

IMPARTIAL (IMP AIR SHUL) adj fair; not favoring one side over the other; unbiased

Justices are supposed to be impartial rather than partial; they aren't supposed to make up their minds until they've heard all the evidence.

Beverly tried to be an impartial judge at the beauty contest, but in the end she couldn't help selecting her own daughter to be the new Pork Queen.

The noun is impartiality (im paIR she ah LIT  uh teet).

IMPECCABLE (im PEE KAB bull) adj flawless; entirely without sin

The children's behavior was impeccable; they didn't set fire to the cat, and they didn't pour dye into the swimming pool.

Hat's clothes were always impeccable; even the wrinkles were perfectly creased.

By the way, peekable means liable to be seen. And while we're at it, peccable is a bitter sin.

IMPENETRABLE (im FEE TUR uh bull) adj like an emperor or an empire

"Empirical, emperor, and empire are all derived from the same root. England's imperial days are over, now that the British Empire has crumbled away.

George's imperial manner was inappropriate, since he was nothing more than the local gas station.

A similar word is impertinent (im PEER tun), which means bossy and, usually, arrogant. The director's impertinent style rubbed everyone the wrong way; he always seemed to be giving orders, and he never listened to what anyone said.

IMPERVIOUS (im FUR vee us) adj not allowing anything to pass through; impenetrable

A raincoat, if it is any good, is impermeable to water. It is made of an impermeable material.

David was imperious to criticism—he did what he wanted to do no matter what anyone said.

IMPETUOUS (im PET oo us) adj impulsive; extremely impatient

Impetuous Dick always seemed to be rushing off to buy a new car, even if he had just bought one the day before.

Samantha was so impatient that she never took more than a few seconds to make up her mind.

IMPLEMENT (IM pluh MENT) v to carry out

Leo developed a plan for shortening the grass in his yard, but he was unable to implement it, because he didn't have a lawn mower.

The government was better at creating new laws than at implementing them.

IMPUDENT (IM puh TENT) adj powerless; helpless; unable to perform

Impudent means not power— not powerful.
JOE AND BETTY MADE A FEW IMPOSSIBLE EFFORTS TO TURN ASIDE THE STEAMROLLER, BUT IT SPINNED THEIR VEGETABLE GARDEN ANYWAY.

WE FELT IMPERIOUS IN THE FACE OF THEIR OVERPOWERING OPPOSITION TO OUR PLAN.

OMNIPOWERS (ahm NIP sh tars) MEANS ALL POWERFUL. AFTER WINNING A DOZEN GAMES IN A ROW, THE FOOTBALL TEAM BEGAN TO FEEL OMNIPOWERS.

NOTE CAREFULLY THE PUNCTUATION IN THIS WORD.

IMPUGN (in PYOON) v TO ATTACK, ESPECIALLY TO ATTACK THE TRUTH OR INTEGRITY OF SOMETHING.

THE CRITIC IMPUGNED THE ORIGINALITY OF JACOB'S NOVEL, CLAIMING THAT LONG STRUGGLES OF IT HAD BEEN LIFTED FROM THE WORK OF SOMEONE ELSE.

FRED SAID I WAS IMPUGNING HIS HONESTY WHEN I CALLED HIM A DIRTY Liar, BUT I TOLD HIM HE HAD NO HONESTY TO IMPUGN. THIS JUST SEEMED TO MAKE HIM ANGER, FOR SOME REASON.

INANE (i NAYN) adj SILLY; SENSELESS

THEIR PLAN TO MAKE AN INDOOR SWIMMING POOL BY FLOODING THEIR BASEMENT WAS INANE.

MRS. MADE A FEW INANE COMMENTS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF CHEWING ONLY ON THE LEFT SIDE OF ONE'S MOUTH, AND THEN SHE PASSED OUT BENEATH THE TABLE.

SOMETHING THAT IS INANE IS AN INANITY.

INAUGURATE (in AW ghyu ray) v TO BEGIN OFFICIALLY; TO INDUCT FORMALLY INTO OFFICE

THE MAYOR INAUGURATED THE NEW NO-SMOKING POLICY AND THEN CELEBRATED BY LIGHTING UP A BIG CIGAR.

THE TEAM'S LOSS INAUGURATED AN ERA OF DEFEAT THAT LASTED FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

TO INAUGURATE A PRESIDENT IS TO MAKE HIM TAKE THE OATH OF OFFICE AND THEN GIVE HIM THE KEYS TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. impervious a. begin officially
2. impétuous b. carry out
3. implement c. powerless
4. impotent d. impervious
5. impugn e. silly
6. inane f. attack the truth of
7. inaugurate g. impulsive

INCANDESCENT (in kann DES ent) adj BRILLIANT; GIVING OFF HEAT OR LIGHT.

AN INCANDESCENT LIGHT BULB IS ONE CONTAINING A WIRE OR FILAMENT THAT GIVES OFF LIGHT WHEN IT IS HEATED. AN INCANDESCENT PERSON IS ONE WHO GIVES OFF LIGHT OR ENERGY IN A FIGURATIVE SENSE.

JAN'S IDEAS WERE SO INCANDESCENT THAT SIMPLY BEING NEAR HER MADE YOU FEEL AS THOUGH YOU UNDERSTOOD THE SUBJECT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

INCANTATION (in kahn TAH shun) n A CHANT; THE REPETITION OF STATEMENTS OR PHRASES IN A WAY REMINISCENT OF A CHANT.

MUCH TO OUR DELIGHT, THE WIZARD'S INCANTATION EVENTUALLY CAUSED THE SMALL STONE TO TURN INTO A STEAK BLACK BMW.

THE STUDENTS QUICKLY BECAME INFATUATED WITH THE PRINCIPAL'S INCANTATIONS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL SPIRIT.

INCENSE (in SENS) v TO MAKE VERY ANGRY

JEREMY WAS INCENSED WHEN HE TOLD ME THAT EVEN THOUGH HE WAS STUPID AND LOATHSOME, HE WOULD ALWAYS BE MY BEST FRIEND.

MY COMMENT ABOUT HIS LOVELY PAINTING OF A TREE INCENSED THE ARTIST, WHO SAID IT WAS ACTUALLY A PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER.

INCESSANT (in SES ent) adj UNCEASING

I WILL GO DEAF AND LOSE MY MIND IF YOU CHILDREN DON'T STOP YOUR INCRESSANT BICKERINGS.

THE NOISE FROM THE CITY STREET WAS INCESSANT; THERE ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE A FIRE ENGINE OR A POLICE CAR SCREAMING BY.

A CESSATION IS A CEASING.

INCIPIENT (in SIP ee ent) adj BEGINNING; EMERGING

SITTING IN CLASS, HELEN SAW A INCipient GLEAM OF BOREDOM THAT TOLD HER SHE WOULD SOON BE ASLEEP.

SUPPORT FOR THE PLAN WAS INCipient, AND THE PLANNERS HOPED IT WOULD SOON GROW AND SPREAD.

THE INCEPTION OF SOMETHING IS ITS START OR FORMAL BEGINNING.

INCISIVE (in SYE sv) adj CUTTING RIGHT TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

WHEN A SURGEON CUTS INTO YOU, HE OR SHE MAKES AN INCISION. TO BE INCISIVE IS TO BE AS SHARP AS A SWORD IN A FIGURATIVE SENSE.

AFTER HOURS OF DEBATE, LOUIS OFFERED A FEW INCISIVE COMMENTS THAT MADE IT IMMEDIATELY CLEAR TO EVERYONE HOW DUMB THE ORIGINAL IDEA HAD BEEN.

LLOYD'S ESSAYS WERE ALWAYS INCISIVE; HE NEVER WASTED ANY WORDS, AND HIS REASONING WAS ALWAYS SHARP AND PERSUASIVE.

INCONGRUOUS (in KAHN gro vs) adj NOT HARMONIOUS; NOT CONSISTENT; NOT APPROPRIATE; NOT FITTING IN

THE ULTRAMODERN KITCHEN SEEMED INCONGRUOUS IN THE RESTORED EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FARMHOUSE. IT WAS AN INCONGRUITY (IN KAHN GOO ah tee).

BILLY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE MOTORCYCLE GANG WAS INCONGRUOUS WITH HIS MILD PERSONALITY AND HIS CAREER AS A MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT.
INCORRIGIBLE (IN KOR uh joh bull) adj incapable of being reformed
The convict was an incorrigible criminal; as soon as he got out of
prison, he said, he was going to rob another doughnut store.
Bill is incorrigible—he eats three bags of potato chips every day
even though he knows that eating two would be better for him.
Ever-cheerful Annie is an incorrigible optimist.
Think of incorrigible as incorrigible. The word incorrigible is
rarely seen or used these days.

INCREMENT (IN kruh munt) n an increase; one in a series of increases
Bernard received a small increment in his salary each year, even
though he did less and less work with every day that passed.
This year’s fund-raising total represented an increment of 1 percent
over last year’s. This year’s total represented an incremental change
from last year’s.
Otville built up his savings account incrementally, one dollar at a
time.

INDIFFERENT (IN dif ur vunt) adj not caring one way or the other;
aphathetic; mediocre
Red was indifferent about politics; he didn’t care who was elected
to office so long as no one passed a law against Monday Night Foot-
ball.
Henry’s indifference was extremely annoying to Melissa, who
loved to argue but found it difficult to do so with people who had no
opinions.
We planned a big garden but the results were indifferent; only about
half of the flowers came up.
The painter did an indifferent job, but it was good enough for
Susan, who was indifferent about painting.

INDIGENOUS (IN di jug nus) adj native; originating in that area
Fast-food restaurants are indigenous to America, where they were
invented.
The grocer said the corn had been locally grown, but we didn’t
believe him because it didn’t appear to be indigenous.
The botanist said that the small cactus was indigenous but that the
large one had been introduced to the region by Spanish explorers.

INDIGENT (IN di junt) adj poor
The indigent family had little to eat, nothing to wear, and virtually
nothing to wear.
Rusty had once been a lawyer but now was indigent; he spent most
of his time sleeping on a bench in the park.
Don’t confuse this word with indigenous, listed above.

INDIGNANT (IN dig munt) adj angry, especially as a result of some-
thing unjust or unworthy/insulted
Primo became indignant when the policewoman accused him of
stealing the nuclear weapon.
Isabel was indignant when we told her all the nasty things that
Blake had said about her over the public address system at the big
party.

INDULGENT (IN duh lunt) adj lazy
The indolent teenager’s sleep late, moped around, and never looked
for summer jobs.
Inheriting a lot of money enabled Rodney to do what he loved most:
pursue a life of indolence.

INDULGENCE (IN duh junt) n lenient; yielding to desire
The nice mom was indulgent of her children, letting them have all
the candy, cookies, and ice cream that they wanted, even for breakfast.
Our indulgent teacher never punished us for not turning in our
homework. She was nice. She didn’t want us to turn into ascetic
grinds.
Someone who is self-indulgent yields to his or her every desire.

INEFFABLE (IN ef uh bul) adj incapable of being expressed or de-
decribed
The simple beauty of nature is often so ineffable that it brings tears
to our eyes.
The word ineffable—expressible—is rarely used.

INEPT (IN EFT) adj clumsy; incompetent; gauche
Joshua is an inept dancer; he is as likely to stomp on his partner’s
foot as he is to step on it.
Asia’s inept attempt at humor drew only groans from the audience.
To be inept is to be characterized by ineptitude, which is the oppo-
site of aptitude. The woodworking class’s ineptitude was both broad
and deep; there was little that they were able to do, and nothing that
they were able to do well.
WORD SMART

The opposite of inert is adept (sh DEPT). Adapt and adroit are synonyms.

INERT (in URT) adj inactive; sluggish; not reacting chemically. The baseball team seemed strangely inert; it was as though they had lost the will not only to win but also to even to play.

Having colds made the children inert and reluctant to get out of bed.

Helium is an inert gas; it doesn’t burn, it doesn’t explode, and it doesn’t kill you if you inhale it.

To be inert is to be characterized by inertia. As it is most commonly used, inertia means lack of get-up-and-go, or an inability or unwillingness to move.

In physics, inertia refers to an object’s tendency to continue doing what it’s doing (either moving or staying still) unless it’s acted on by something else.

INEXORABLE (in EK sur oh bull) adj relentless; inevitable; unavoidable. The inexorable waves pounded the shore, as they have always pounded it and as they always will pound it.

Elliot drove his father’s car slowly but inexorably through the grocery store, wucking aisle after aisle despite the manager’s agonized pleading.

Inexorable death finds everyone sooner or later. Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

INFAMOUS (in FAM us) adj shamefully wicked; having an extremely bad reputation; disgraceful. Be careful with the pronunciation of this word.

To be infamous is to be famous for being evil or bad. An infamous cheater is one whose cheating is well known.

Deep within the prison was the infamous torture chamber, where hooded guards tickled their prisoners with feathers until they confessed.

Infamy is the state of being infamous. The former Nazi lived the rest of his life in infamy after the court convicted him of war crimes and atrocities.

President Roosevelt said that the date of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor would “live in infamy.”

INFATUATED (in FACH oo ty fo) adj foolish; foolishly passionate or affected; madly foolish; foolishly in love. To be infatuated is to be infatuated or foolish. I was so infatuated with Polly that I drooled and gurgled whenever she was near.

The infatuated candidate thought so highly of himself that he had the ceiling of his bedroom covered with his campaign posters.

My ride in Boris’s racing car infatuated me: I knew immediately that I would have to have a racing car, too.

THE WORDS

Q-U-I-I-C-K + Q-U-I-Z #50

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. indigenous a. native
2. igngenuine b. innocent
3. indignant c. lazy
4. indulgent d. foolish
5. indulgent e. shamefully wicked
6. infallible f. poor
7. imp. g. relentless
8. inert h. angry
9. inexorable i. clumsy
10. infamous j. lament
11. infatuated k. inexpressible

INFER (in FER) v to conclude; to deduce. Ruth said she loved the brownies, but I inferred from the size of the piece left on her plate that she had actually despised them.

She hadn’t heard the score, but the silence in the locker room led her to infer that we had lost.

Infer is often confused with imply. To imply something is to hint at it, suggest it, or state it indirectly. To infer something is to figure out what it is without being told directly.

An inference is a deduction or conclusion.

INFINITESIMAL (in FAY uh TES uh mal) adj vary, very, very small; infinitely small. Infinitesimal does not mean huge, as some people incorrectly believe.

Dumb old Willy’s brain, if he had one at all, was undoubtedly infinitesimal.

An infinitesimal bug of some kind crawled into Heather’s ear and bit her in a place she couldn’t scratch.

Our chances of winning were infinitesimal, but we played our hearts out anyway.

Now carefully the pronunciation of this word.

INGENUOUS (in JEN you us) adj frank; without deception; simple; artless; charmingly naïve. A young child is ingenuous. He doesn’t know much about the ways of the world, and certainly not enough to deceive anyone.

An ingenuous (IN-ju neg uhs) is a somewhat naive young woman, especially a young actress.

Distinguishing means crafty or selfish. The movie producer was being distinguished when he said, “I don’t care if I make a cent on this
movie. I just want every man, woman, and child in the country to see it."

INHABIT (in HAY bir) adj part of the essential nature of something; intrinsic.
Wetness is an inherent quality of water. (You could also say that wetness is inherent in water.)
There is an inherent strength in steel that is lacking from copper.
The man’s inherent stamina, jolliness, and beardedness made it easy for him to play the part of Santa Claus.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

INJUNCTION (in JUNG k shun) n a command or order, especially a court order.
Woody’s neighbor got a court injunction prohibiting her from playing her radio loud.
Verbs, lighting up, disobeying his doctor’s injunction to stop smoking.

INNATE (in NAY t) adj existing or inherent by nature; inherited.
Joseph’s kindness was innate; it was part of his natural character.
Bill has an apparently innate ability to throw a football. You just can’t teach someone to throw a ball as well as he can.
There’s nothing innate about good manners; all children have to be taught to say “please” and “thank you.”

INOCUOUS (in YAH k yoo us) adj harmless; banal.
Innocuous is closely related, in both origin and meaning, to innocent.
The supposedly obscure record sounded pretty innocuous to us; there wasn’t even any four-letter words in it.
The speaker’s voice was loud, but his words were innocuous; there was nothing to get excited about.
Meredith took offense at Bruce’s innocuous comment about the saltiness of her soup.

INORDINATE (in OR dun nit) adj excessive; unreasonable.
The young math teacher held an inordinate amount of authority.
The limousine was inordinately large, even for a limousine; there was room for more than a dozen passengers.
Romeo’s love for Juliet was perhaps a bit inordinate, given the outcome of their relationship.

INSATIABLE (in SAY sh buhl) adj hard or impossible to satisfy; greedy; voracious.
Peter had an insatiable appetite for chocolate macadamia ice cream; he could never get enough. Not even a gallon of chocolate macadamia was enough to sate (say) or satiate (SAY shay aj) his craving. Peter’s addiction never reached satiety (SAY TEE uh yee).
Note carefully the pronunciation of these words.

INSIDIOUS (in SIZ ee us) adj treacherous; sneaky.
The spy’s insidious plan was to steal all the kryptonite in Metropolis.
Winter was insidious; it crept in under the doors and through cracks in the windows.
Cancer, which can spread rapidly from a small cluster of cells, is an insidious disease.

INSINUATE (in SIN yoo ayt) v to hint; to creep in.
When I told her that I hadn’t done any laundry in a month, Valerie insinuated that I was a slob.
He didn’t ask us outright if we would leave; he merely insinuated, through his tone and his gestures, that it was time for us to go.
Jessica insinuated her way into the conversation by noting her chair closer and closer to where we were sitting.
Before we realized what was happening, the stray cat had insinuated itself into our household.
To insinuate is to make an insinuation.

INSIPID (in SIP id) adj dull; bland; boring.
Barney’s jokes were so insipid that no one in the room managed to force a smile out of a chuckle.
We were bored to death at the party; it was full of insipid people making insipid conversation.
The thin soup was so insipid that all the spoons in the world could not have made it interesting.

INSOLENT (in sul lent) adj arrogant; insulting.
The ill-mannered four-year-old was so insolent that even adults were tempted to kick him in the rear end.
The opposite of inert is adept (in DEPT). Adept and adroit are synonyms.

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INSOLENT [in sə lENT] adj arrogant; insulting.

The ill-mannered four-year-old was so insolent that even adults were tempted to kick him in the rear end.
The insistent sales clerk said she was sorry but the store did not accept cash.

INSTIGATE (IN sigh gayt) v to provoke; to stir up
The strike was instigated by the ambitious union president, who wanted to give his name into the newspapers.
The CIA tried unsuccessfully to instigate rebellion in the tiny country by distributing pamphlets that, as it turned out, were printed in the wrong language.

INSULATING (IN sigh lur) adj like on island; isolated
The Latin word for island is insula. From it we get the words peninsula ("almost an island"), insulate (insulation) makes a house an island of heat, and insular, among others.
Lying flat on his back in bed for twenty-seven years, the 1,200-pound man led an insular existence.
The insular little community had very little contact with the world around it.
Something that is insular has insularity. The insularity of the little community was so complete that it was impossible to buy a big-city newspaper there.

INSURGENT (IN SIR junt) n a rebel; someone who revolts against a government
The heavily armed insurgents rushed into the presidential palace, but they paused to taste the fresh blueberry pie on the dinner table and the president’s bodyguards captured them.
This word can also be an adjective. A rebellion is an insurgent activity.
"Insurgency is another word for rebellion; so is 'insurrection.'"

INTEGRAL (IN tigrul) adj essential
A solid offense was an integral part of our football team; so was a strong defense.
Date was integral to the organization; it could never have gotten along without him.

INTRACTABLE (IN trak tuh bul) adj uncontrollable; stubborn; disobedient
The intractable child was a torment to her nursery school teacher.
Bill was intractable in his opposition to pay increases for the library employees; he swore he would never vote to give them a raise.
The disease was intractable. None of the dozens of medicines the doctor tried had the slightest effect on it.
The opposite of intractable is tractable.

INTRINSIC (IN tra nik skik) adj part of the essential nature of something; inherent
Larry’s intrinsic boldness was always getting him into trouble.
There was an intrinsic problem with Owen’s allith: it was a lie.
The opposite of intrinsic is extrinsic.

INTRANSITIVE (in trans tiv) v to flood; to cover completely with water; to overwhelm
The tiny island kingdom was inundated by the tidal wave. Fortunately, no one died from the deluge.
The fifteen-year-old girl was inundated with telegrams and gifts after she gave birth to occupants.

INVESTED (IN vist ed) adj invested; invested
The critic’s searing review was filled with bitterness and invective.
A former President wasn’t much of an invective, but he was brilliant at invective.

INVESTMENT (IN vest ur ment) n a substantial investment in a company that is expected to provide a return; the money put into a business or project
Larry’s investments in the company were instrumental in his success.

INVESTMENT (IN vest ment) n an investment; an investment
The investments in the company were instrumental in his success.

INVESTMENT (IN vest ment) n a substantial investment in a company that is expected to provide a return; the money put into a business or project
Larry’s investments in the company were instrumental in his success.
IRASCIBLE (i Ras uh bul) adj easily angered or provoked; irritable
A grouch is irascible. The CEO was so irascible, his employees were afraid to talk to him, for fear he might hurl paperweights at them.

IRONIC (eye RAHN ik) adj meaning the opposite of what you seem to say; using words to mean something other than what they seem to mean
Don’t use the alternate form, ironical.
Eddie was being ironic when he said he loved Peter like a brother: in truth, he hated him.
Blake’s discussion of Reagan’s brilliance was, of course, ironic: he really thinks that Reagan is idiotic. Blake is a wiser known for his irony.
Credulous George never realized that the speaker was being ironic as he discussed what he called his plan to put a nuclear-missile silo in every backyard in America.

IRREVOCABLE (i REV uh bul) adj irreversible
To revoke (ti VOHK) is to take back. Something irrevocable cannot be taken back. My decision not to wear a Tarzan costume and ride on a float in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade is irrevocable; there is absolutely nothing you could do or say to make me change my mind.
Shortly after his car began to plunge toward the sea, Tom decided not to drive off the cliff after all, but by that point his decision to do so was irrevocable.
Something that can be reversed is revocable (REV uh bul).
Note carefully the pronunciation of both words.

ITINERANT (eye TIN or unk) adj moving from place to place
The life of a traveling salesman is an itinerant one.
The itinerant junk dealer passes through our neighborhood every month or so, putting his wares of odds and ends. The international banker’s itinerant lifestyle began to seem less glamorous to him after his first child was born.
A closely related word is itinerary, which is the planned route or schedule of a trip. The traveling salesman taped his itinerary to the refrigerator before every trip so that his wife would know how to reach him on the telephone.

Q-U-I-C-K • Q-U-I-Z #53
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. invective a. irreverent
2. introspective b. insulting speech
3. invincibility - c. furnished trip route
4. inveterate d. round
5. irrevocable e. inherent
6. irascible f. examining one’s feelings
7. ironic g. meaning other than what’s said
8. irrevocable h. moving from place to place
9. itinerant i. irritable
10. itinerary j. habituall

JUDICIOUS (joo DISH us) adj exercising sound judgment
The judge was far from judicious; he told the jury that he thought the defendant looked guilty and said that anyone who would wear a red bow tie into a courtroom deserved to be sent to jail.
The firefighters made judicious use of flame-retardant foam as the burning airplane skidded along the runway.
The mother of twins boys judiciously used an electron microscope and a laser to divide the ice cream into equal parts.
The word judicial is obviously closely related, but there is a critically important difference in meaning between it and judicious. A judge is judicial simply by virtue of being a judge; judicial means having to do with judges, judgment, or justice. But a judge is judicious only if he or she exercises sound judgment.

JUXTAPOSE (juk stuh pohz) v to place side by side
Comedy and tragedy were juxtaposed in the play, which was alternately funny and sad.
Juxtaposing the genuine painting and the counterfeit made it much easier to tell which was which.
The final examination requires students to juxtapose two unrelated works of fiction.
The noun is juxtaposition (juk stuh poh ZISH un).
K

KINETIC (ki NEHT ik) adj having to do with motion; lively; active
Kinetic energy is energy associated with motion. A speeding bullet has a lot of kinetic energy.
Kinetic art is art with things in it that move. A mobile is an example of kinetic art.
A kinetic personality is a lively, active, moving personality.

L

LABYRINTH (lab uh rinth) n a maze; something like a maze
Each of the fifty floors in the office building was a labyrinth of dark corridors and narrow passageways.
The bill took many months to pass through the labyrinth of congressional approval.
A labyrinth is labyrinthine, or matasijpe. Before beginning construction on the new house, the contractor had to weave his way through the labyrinthine (lab uh RINTH in) bureaucracy in order to obtain a building permit.

LACONIC (lah KAHN ik) adj using few words, especially to the point of seeming rude
The manager’s laconic dismissal letter left the fired employees feeling angry and hurt.
When she went backstage, June discovered why the popular rock musician was so laconic in public: his voice was high and squeaky.

LAMENT (leh MENT) v to mourn
From the balcony of the bullet-pocked motel, the foreign correspondents could hear hundreds of women and children lamenting the fallen soldiers.
As the snowstorm gained in intensity, Stan lamented his decision that morning to dress in shorts and a T-shirt.
Lamentable (LAM en tub bul) or (leh MENT tub bul) means regrettable.
Note carefully the pronunciation of both parts of speech.

LAMPOON (lah POON) v to satirize; to mock; to parody
The irreverent students mercilessly lampooned their Latin teacher’s lisp in a skit at the school talent show.
The Harvard Lampoon, the nation’s oldest humor magazine, has lampooned just about everything there is to lampoon in its 112-year history.

LANGUISH (lahn gwish) v to become weak, listless, or depressed
The formerly eager and vigorous accountant languished in his tedious job at the international conglomerate.
The longer Bill remained unemployed, the more he languished and the less likely it became that he would find another job.
To languish is to be languid. The child seemed so languid that his father thought he was sick and called the doctor. It turned out that the little boy had simply had an overdose of television.

LARGESS (lahr JESS) n generous giving of gifts (or the gifts themselves); generously; philanthropy
Sam was marginally literate at best. Only the largess of his uncle got Sam into Princeton.
Largess can also be spelled largeesse.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

LATENT (LAT ut) adj present but not visible or apparent; potential
A photographic image is latent in a piece of exposed film; it’s there, but you can’t see it until the film is developed.

LAUD (lowd) v to praise; to applaud; to extol; to celebrate
The bank manager lauded the hero who trapped the escaping robber. The local newspaper published a laudatory editorial on this interred individual. Laudatory means praising.
Giving several million dollars to charity is a laudable act of philanthropy. Laudable means praiseworthy.

LEGACY (LEG uh see) n something handed down from the past; a bequest
The legacy of the corrupt administration was chaos, bankruptcy, and despair.
A shoebox full of baseball cards was the dead man’s only legacy.
To be a legacy at a college sorority is to be the daughter of a former sorority member.

LETHARGY (LETH urj) n sluggishness; listlessness; drowsiness; indulgence
The couch potato had fallen into a state of such total lethargy that he never moved except to change channels or get another bag of Doritos from the kitchen.
The lethargy of the library staff caused what should have been a quick strand to expand into a full day’s work.
To be filled with lethargy is to be lethargic. The lethargic (leh THAIR jik) teenagers took all summer to paint the Hendersons’ garage.

LEVITY (leh VEE see) n lightness; liveliness; unseriousness
To levitate something is to make it so light that it floats up into the air. Levity comes from the same root and has to do with a different kind of lightness.
The speaker’s levity was not appreciated by the convention of fu-
neral directors, who felt that a convention of funeral directors was no place to tell jokes.

The judge’s attempt to inject some levity into the dreary court proceedings (by setting off a few firecrackers in the jury box) was entirely successful.

Q-U-I-C-K + Q-U-I-Z #54
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. judicious a. sluggishness
2. juxtapose b. lightness
3. kinetic c. using few words
4. labyrinth d. more
5. laconic e. place side by side
6. lamest f. present but not visible
7. lampoon g. Seques
8. languish h. active
9. luteful i. become weak
10. loud j. satirize
11. legacy k. mourn
12. lethargy l. praise
13. levity m. exercising sound judgment

LIBEL [LIE buhl] n. a written or published falsehood that injures the reputation of, or defames, someone.

The executive said that the newspaper had committed libel when it called him a squalid, good, corrupt, incompetent, overpaid, lying, worthless man. He claimed that the newspaper had libeled him, and that its description of him had been libelous. At the trial, the jury disagreed, siding that the newspaper’s description of the executive had been substantially accurate.

Don’t confuse this word with liable, which has an entirely different meaning.

Slender is just like libel except that it is spoken instead of written. To slander someone is to say something untrue that injures that person’s reputation.

LITIGATE [lit uh gait] v. to try in court; to engage in legal proceedings

His lawyer thought a lawsuit would be frivolous, but the client wanted to litigate. He was feeling litigious (lit IJ uus); that is, he was feeling in a mood to go to court.

When the company was unable to recover its money outside of court, its only option was to litigate.

To litigate is to engage in litigation, a court hearing; an example of litigation.

Note carefully the pronunciation of litigious.

LOQUACIOUS [loh kway shus] adj. talking a lot or too much

The child was surprisingly loquacious for one so small.

Mary is so loquacious that Belinda can sometimes put down the telephone receiver and run a load of laundry while Mary is talking.

A loquacious person is one who is characterized by loquaciousness or loquacity (loh kwahs uh tee).

The English teacher’s loquacity in class left little time for any of the students to speak, which was fine with most of the students.

LUCID [LOO sid] adj. clear; easy to understand

The professor’s explanation of the theory of relativity was so astonishingly lucid that even I could understand it.

Hubert’s remarks were few but lucid; he explained the complicated issue with just a handful of well-chosen words.

The extremely old man was lucid right up until the moment he died; his body had given out but his mind was still going strong.

To elucidate something is to make it clear, to explain it. The poem was an enigma until a second grader in Encino, California, elucidated it for his admiring elders.

LUGUBRIOUS [loo GOO bree us] adj. exaggeratedly mournful

To be mournful is to be sad and sorrowful. To be lugubrious is to make a big show of being sad and sorrowful.

Harry’s lugubrious egging at the funeral of his dog eventually made everyone start giggling.

The valedictorian suddenly turned lugubrious and began sobbing and tearing her hair at the thought of graduating from high school.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

LUMINOUS [luh Mihn uhs] adj. giving off light; glowing; bright

The moon was a luminous disk in the cloudy, starry sky.

The snow on the ground appeared eerily luminous at night—it seemed to glow.

The dial on my watch is luminous; it casts a green glow in the dark.

Q-U-I-C-K + Q-U-I-Z #55
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. libel a. giving off light
2. slander b. try in court
3. litigate c. exaggeratedly mournful
4. loquacious d. easy to understand
5. lucid e. written injurious falsehood
6. lugubrious f. spoken injurious falsehood
7. luminous g. talking a lot
MACHINATION (mak uh NAY shun) n scheming activity for an evil purpose

This word is almost always used in the plural—machinations—in which form it means the same thing.

The ruthless machinations of the mobsters left a trail of blood and bodies.

The machinations of the conspirators were aimed at nothing less than the overthrow of the government.

This word is often used imprecisely to mean something like "machinistic activity." It should not be used in this way.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

MAGNAMOUS (mak AN uh muh) adj forgiving, unresentful; noble in spirit; generous

The boxer was magnanimous in defeat, telling the sports reporters that his opponent had simply been too talented for him to beat.

Mrs. Jones magnanimously offered the little boy a cookie when he came over to confess that he had broken her window while attempting to shoot her cat with his pellet gun.

To be magnanimous is to have magnanimity (mak uh nim uh tey).

The magnanimity of the conquering general was much appreciated by the defeated soldiers.

MAGNATE (MAG nayt) n a rich, powerful, or very successful business person

John D. Rockefeller was a magnate who was never too busy to give a shoeshine boy a dime for his troubles.

MALAISE (muh LAYZ) n a feeling of depression, uneasiness, or queasiness

Malaise descended on the calculus class when the teacher announced a quiz.

MAFEASANCE (mal FEE zuns) n an illegal act, especially by a public official

President Ford officially pardoned former president Nixon before the latter could be convicted of any malfeasance.

MALINGER (muh LING gur) v to pretend to be sick to avoid doing work

Dilantin Leon always malingered when it was his turn to clean up the house. Arthur is afeet and he always manages to malinger before a big exam.

MALLEABLE (MAL uh eh buh) adj easy to shape or bend

Modeling clay is very malleable. So is Stuart. We can make him do whatever we want him to do.
MAUDIN (MAW D IN) adj silky and ovenerly sentimental

The high school reunion grew more and more maudlin as the participants had more and more to drink.

The old lady had a maudlin concern for the worms in her yard; she would hang a going before walking in the grass in order to give them a chance to get out of her way.

MAVERICK (MAV ur ik) n a nonconformist; a rebel

The word maverick originated in the Old West. It is derived from the name of Samuel A. Maverick, a Texas banker who once accepted a herd of cattle in payment of a debt. Maverick was a banker, not a sheepdog. He failed to confine or brand his calves, which habitually wandered into his neighbors’ pastures. Local ranchers got in the habit of referring to

any unbranded calf as a maverick. The word is now used for anyone who has refused to be "branded"—who has refused to conform.

The political scientist was an intellectual maverick; most of his theories had no followers except himself.

Maverick can also be an adjective. The maverick police officer got in trouble with the department for using illegal means to crack down criminally.

MAVIR (MAH IR) n someone who gives up his or her life in pursuit of a cause, especially a religious one; one who suffers for a cause; one who makes a show of suffering in order to arouse sympathy.

Many of the saints were also maverics; they were executed, often gruesomely, for refusing to renounce their religious beliefs.

Maverick is a maverick in his job; he would stay at his desk twenty-four hours a day if his wife and the janitor would let him.

Eloise played the maverick during her hay fever season, treading warily from room to room with a jumbo box of Kleenex in each hand.

MATRICULATE (mah TRIK yuh loyt) v to enroll, especially at a college

Benny told everyone he was going to Harvard, but when he actually matriculated it was at the local junior college.

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. machination
2. macronomic
3. magnanimous
4. magnum
5. malaise
6. malfeasance
7. malingering
8. nalleable
9. mandate
10. manifesto
11. manufact
12. martial
13. martial
14. martyr
15. matriculate

- a. forgiving
- b. easy to show
- c. depression
- d. command to do something
- e. chemically evil activity
- f. public declaration
- g. pretend to be sick
- h. visible
- i. one who dies for a cause
- j. arrange in order
- k. illegal act
- l. enroll
- m. worklike
- n. rich businessperson
- o. dealing with the economy

MELLIFLUOUS (muh LEH flus) adj sweetly flowing

Mellifluous comes from Greek words meaning, roughly, “honey flowing.” We use the word almost exclusively to describe voices, music, or sounds that flow sweetly, like honey.

Melasie’s clarinet playing was mellifluous; the notes flowed smoothly and beautifully.

The choir’s mellifluous singing made us feel as though we were being covered with a sticky yellow liquid.

MENDACIOUS (men DASH shus) adj lying; dishonest

Children are naturally mendacious. If you ask them what they are doing, they will automatically answer, “Nothing.”

The jury saw through the mendacious witness and convicted the defendant.

To be mendacious is to engage in mendacity, or lying. I have no flaw, except occasional mendacity. Don’t... ” “use this word with mendicant, listed below.

MENDICANT (MEN di kant) n a beggar

The presence of thousands of mendicants in every urban area is a sad commentary on our national priorities.

MENTOR (MEN ter) n a teacher, tutor, counselor, or coach; especially in business, an experienced person who shows an inexperienced person the ropes

Mentor is too big a word to apply to just an ordinary teacher. A student might have many teachers but only one mentor—the person who taught him what was really important.
Chris's mentor in the pole vault was a former track star who used to hang out by the gym and give the students pointers.

Young men and women in business often talk about the importance of having a mentor—usually an older person at the same company who takes an interest in them and helps them get ahead by showing them the ropes.

Mentor is often used as a verb, but you shouldn't do it.

MERCENARY (MUR suhn e) n a hired soldier; someone who will do anything for money.

If an army can't find enough volunteers or draftees, it will sometimes hire mercenaries. The magazine Soldier of Fortune is aimed at mercenaries and would-be mercenaries; it even runs classified advertisements by soldiers looking for someone to fight.

You don't have to be a soldier to be a mercenary. Someone who does something strictly for the money is often called a mercenary.

Our business contains a few dedicated workers and many, many mercenaries, who want to make a quick buck and then get out.

Mercenary can also be used as an adjective.

Larry's motives in writing the screenplay for the trashy movie were strictly mercenary—he needed the money.

MERCURIAL (Mur KYOR ee ul) adj emotionally unpredictable; rapidly changing in mood.

A person with a mercurial personality is one who changes rapidly and unpredictably between one mood and another.

Mercurial Helen was crying one minute, laughing the next.

METAMORPHOSIS (met uh MOR fah sis) n a magical change in form; a waking or sudden change.

When the magician passed his wand over Eileen's head, she underwent a bizarre metamorphosis: she turned into a hamster.

Damon’s metamorphosis from college student to Hollywood superstar was so sudden that it seemed a bit unreal.

To undergo a metamorphosis is to metamorphose. No matter how hard he tried, the accountant was unable to metamorphose the losses into gains.

MICROCOM (MYE kruh kahz um) n the world in miniature.

The cosmos is the heavens, cosmopolis means worldly, and a microcosm is a miniature version of the world. All three words are related.

The opposite of microcosm is macrocosm (MAK ruh kahz um). A macrocosm is a large-scale representation of something, or the universe at large.

MILIEU (mil YOO) n environment; surroundings.

A caring and involved community is the proper milieu for raising a family.

The farmer on vacation in the big wigg fett out of his milieu.

MINuscule (MIN uh skyool) adj very tiny.

Be careful with the spelling of this word. People tend to spell it "minuscule." Think of minus.

Bob’s minuscule brain was just enough to get him out of junior high school and into a job at the gas station.

Hank’s salary was miniscule, but the benefits were pretty good. He got to sit next to the refrigerator and eat all day long.

Minute (nye NOOT) is a synonym for minuscule. The small details of something are the minutiae (mi NOO shee ah).

MISANTHROpIC (mis un THAIR AP ik) adj hating mankind.

A misogynist (muh AH juh nist) hates women. A misanthropic person doesn’t make distinctions; he or she hates everyone. The opposite of a misanthrope (MIS on throp) is a philanthropist (fuh LYN throb pizt). Curiously, there is no word for someone who hates men only.
MITIGATE [muh GAYT] v to moderate the effect of something
The sense of imminent disaster was mitigated by the guide's calm behavior and easy smile.

The effects of the disease were mitigated by the experimental drug treatment.

Nothing Joel said could mitigate the enormity of forgetting his mother-in-law's birthday.

Unmitigated means absolute, unmoderated, not made less intense or severe.

MOLLIFY [MAHL uh FAY] v to soothe; to soothe; to pacify
Lucy mollified the angry police officer by kissing him on the tip of his nose.

My father was not mollified by my promise never to crash his car into a brick wall again.

The baby-sitter was unable to mollify the cranky child, so she put him in the clothes dryer and spun him around for a little while.

MONOLITHIC [muh uh NUTH uh LITH ik] adj massive, solid, uniform, and unyielding
A monolith is a huge stone shaft or column. Many other things can be said to be monolithic.

A huge corporation is often said to be monolithic, especially if it is enormous and powerful and all its parts are dedicated to the same purpose.

If the opposition of a plan were said to be monolithic, it would probably consist of a very large group of people who all felt the same way.

MORIBUND [muh BUND] adj dying
The steel industry in this country was moribund a few years ago, but now it seems to be reviving somewhat.

The senator's political ideas were moribund; no one thought that way anymore.

A dying creature could be said to be moribund, too, although this word is usually used in connection with things that die only figuratively.

MOROSE [muh ROHHS] adj gloomy; sullen
Losers were always so morose about everything that she was certain any fun to be with.

New Yorkers always seemed morose to the writer who lived in the country; they seemed beaten down by the vast, unfriendly city in which they lived.

MORTIFY [muhr FYE] adj to humiliate
I was mortified when my father asked my girlfriend whether she thought I was a dumb, pathetic wimp.

We had a mortifying experience at the opera; when Stanley sneezed, the entire orchestra stopped playing and stared at him for several minutes.
### Word Smart

**Q-U-I-C-K** + **Q-U-I-Z** = **#58**

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

| 1. microcosm | a. a huge number |
| 2. milieu | b. moderate the effect of |
| 3. minuscule | c. massive and unyielding |
| 4. misanthropic | d. humiliate |
| 5. mitigate | e. ordinary |
| 6. mollify | f. sooth |
| 7. myopic | g. myopia |
| 8. molder | h. very tiny |
| 9. nauseous | i. gloomy |
| 10. morbid | j. environment |
| 11. mundane | k. very generous |
| 12. munificent | l. dyimg |
| 13. myopia | m. world in miniature |
| 14. myriad | n. hating mankind |

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**N**

### Narcissism

In Greek mythology, Narcissus was a boy who fell in love with his own reflection and, after lying around for a long time sucking at it, turned into a flower. To engage in narcissism is to be like Narcissus.

### Nebulous

Nebulous (NEB yuh luhs) adj vague, hazy, indistinct

Oscar’s views are so nebulous that no one can figure out what he thinks about anything.

The community’s boundaries are somewhat nebulous; where they are depends on whom you ask.

Molly’s expensive new hairdo was a sort of nebulous mass of wispy waves, and hair spray.

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### The Words

A nebula (NEB yuh luhs) is an interstellar cloud, the plural of which is nebulae (NEB yuh lee).

Nefarious (ne FARR ee us) adj evil, flagrantly wicked

‘The radicals’ nefarious plot to destroy New York by filling the reservoir with strawberry Jell-O.’

The convicted murderer had committed a myriad of nefarious acts.

Neologism (nee OL uh jiz um) n a new word or phrase; a new usage of a word

Pedants don’t like neologisms. They like the words we already have. But at one time every word was a neologism. Someone somewhere had to be the first to use it.

Nepotism (NEP uh fritz um) n showing favoritism to friends or kinsmen in business or politics

Clarence had no business women, so he was counting on nepotism when he married the boss’s daughter.

Nihilism (NYE uh hiz um) n the belief that there are no values or morals in the universe

A nihilist does not believe in any objective standards of right or wrong.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

Nominal (NOH muh nil) adj in name only; insignificant; A-OK (during rocket launches)

Bert was the nominal chairman of the committee, but Sue was really the one who ran things.

The cost was nominal in comparison with the enormous value of what you received.

“All systems are nominal,” said the NASA engineer as the space shuttle successfully headed into orbit.

Nostalgia (NOH stal juh) n sentimental longing for the past; homesickness

A wave of nostalgia overcame me when the old Temptations song came on the radio; hearing it took me right back to 1967.

Some people who don’t remember what the decade was really like feel a misplaced nostalgia for the 1950s.

To be filled with nostalgia is to be nostalgic. As we talked about the fun we’d had together in junior high school, we all began to feel a little nostalgic.

Notorious (NOH tor uhs) adj famous for something bad

A well-known quitter is famous; a well-known criminal is notorious.

No one wanted to play poker with Jersey, because he was a notorious cheater.

Luther’s practical jokes were notorious; people always kept their distance when he came into the room.

To be notorious is to have notoriety (NOH tuh NORT uh tee). Jesse’s
notoriety as a bank robber made it difficult for him to find a job in banking.

NOVEL (NAHV u) adj new; original
Ray had a novel approach to homework: he didn’t do it. Ray failed geometry as a result of this novelty.
There was nothing novel about the author’s latest novel; the characters were old and the plot was borrowed.

NOXIOUS (NOHS) adj harmful; offensive
Smoking is a noxious habit in every sense. Poison ivy is a noxious weed.
Carbon monoxide is a noxious gas.
The mothers’ committee believed that rock ‘n’ roll music exerted a noxious influence on their children.

NUANCE [NUHNS] n a subtle difference or distinction
The artist’s best work explored the nuance between darkness and deep shadow.
Harry was incapable of nuance; everything for him was either black or white.
In that Chinese dialect, the difference between one word and its opposite is sometimes nothing more than a nuance of inflection.

Q, U, H, C, K + Q, U, H, Z #59
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. narcissism o. excessive love of self
2. nebulous b. in name only
3. nefarious c. harmful
4. neologism d. original
5. nepotism e. evil
6. nihilism f. subtle difference
7. nominal g. famous for something bad
8. nostalgia h. vague
9. notorious i. longing for the past
10. novel j. favoritism
11. noxious k. belief in the absence of all values and morals
12. nuance l. new word

OBEDURATE (AH-BUH-ruh) adj stubborn and insensitive
Obedurate contains one of the same roots as durable and endurance; each word conveys a different sense of hardness.
The committee’s obedient refusal to listen to our plan was heartbreaking to us, since we had spent ten years coming up with it.
The same, nagging and bitter, to have a bubble gum machine installed in his bedroom, but his parents were obedient in their insistence that he have a soft-drink machine instead.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

OBfuscATE (AH-BF-skyt) v to darken; to confuse; to mowke confusing
The spokesman’s attempt to explain what the president had meant merely obfuscated the issue further. People had hoped the spokesman would elucidate the issue.
Too much gin had obfuscated the old man’s senses.
The professor’s inept lecture gradually obfuscated a subject that had been crystal clear to us before.
To obfuscate something is to engage in obfuscation. Laxie called himself a used-car salesman, but his real job was obfuscation: he sold cars by confusing his customers.

OBlique (oh BLYEK) adj indirect; of an angle
In geometry, lines are said to be oblique if they are neither parallel nor perpendicular to one another. The word has a related meaning outside of mathematics. An oblique statement is one that does not directly address the topic at hand, that approaches it as if from an angle.
An allusion could be said to be an oblique reference.
An oblique argument is one that does not directly confront the true subject.
To insult someone obliquely is to do so indirectly.
Harry spritangled his student council speech with oblique references to the principal’s new toupee; the principal is so dense that he never figured out what was going on, but the rest of us were rolling on the floor.

OBvIous (oh BLIV ee un) adj total forgetfulness; the state of being forgotten
A few of the young actors would find fame, but most were headed for oblivion.
After missing and musing with anxiety for most of the night, Richie finally found the oblivion of sleep.
To be obvious is to be forgetful or unaware. Old age had made the retired professor oblivious of all his old theories.
The workers stood in and out of the room, but the happy child, playing on the floor, was oblivious of all distraction.
OBSCURE (uh SKYOH) adj unknown; hard to understand; dark  The comedy nightclub was filled with obscure comedians who stole one another’s jokes and seldom got any laughs.

The artist was so obscure that even his parents had trouble remembering his name.

The noted scholar’s dissertation was terribly obscure; it had to be translated from French into English before anyone could make head or tail of it.

Some contemporary poets apparently believe that the only way to be great is to be obscure.

The features of the forest grew obscure as night fell.

The state of being obscure in any of its senses is called obscurity.

OBSEQUIOUS (uh SEE kwah us) adj fawning; subservient; sucking up to

Ann’s assistant was so obsequious that she could never tell what he really thought about anything.

My obsequious friend seemed to live only to make me happy and never wanted to do anything if I said I didn’t want to do it.

OBSTUSE (oh TOOS) adj insensitive; blockheaded

Mabel was so obtuse that she didn’t realize for several days that Carl had asked her to marry him.

The obtuse student couldn’t seem to grasp the difference between addition and subtraction.

OFFIGIOUS (oh FISH us) adj annoyingly eager to help or advise

The officious officer could never resist sticking his nose into other people’s business.

The officious salesperson refused to leave us alone, so we finally left without buying anything.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

ONEROUS (AHN uw us) adj burdensome; oppressive

We were given the onerous task of cleaning up the fairgrounds after the carnival.

The job had long hours but the work wasn’t onerous; Bill spent most of his time sitting with his feet on the desk.

This word can be pronounced (UHR nur us).

OPAQUE (oh PAHYK) adj impossible to see through; impossible to understand

The windows in the movie star’s house were made not of glass but of some opaque material that was intended to keep his fans from spying on him.

We tried to figure out what Horace was thinking, but his expression was opaque; it revealed nothing.

Marvin’s mind, assuming he had one, was opaque.

The statement was opaque; no one could make anything of it.

The noun form of opaque is opacity (uh PAS ah tee).

OPULENT (AH Puh yuh lunt) adj luxurious

Everything in the opulent palace was made of gold—except the toilet-paper holder, which was made of platinum.

The investment banker had grown so accustomed to an opulent lifestyle that he had trouble adjusting to the federal penitentiary.

Opulence is often ostentations.

ORTHODOX (ohr thuh DOX) adj conventional; adhering to established principles or doctrines, especially in religion; by the book

The doctor’s treatment for Lou’s cold was entirely orthodox: plenty of liquids and aspirin, and lots of rest.

Austie’s views were orthodox: there was nothing shocking about any of them.

The body of what is orthodox is called orthodoxy. The teacher’s lectures were characterized by strict adherence to orthodoxy.

To be unconventional is to be unorthodox. “Green cheese” is an unorthodox explanation for the composition of the moon.

OSTENSIBLE (oh STEN uh bull) adj apparent (but misleading); pretended

Blake’s ostensible mission was to repair a broken telephone, but real goal was to plant a bomb that would blow up the building.

Trevor’s ostensible kindness to squirrels belied his deep hatred of them.

OSTENTATIONOUS (oh STEN uh shus) adj excessively conspicuous; showing off

The designer’s use of expensive materials was ostentatious; every piece of furniture was covered with silk or velvet, and every piece of hardware was made of silver or gold.

The donor was ostentatious in making his gift to the hospital. He held a big press conference to announce it and then walked through the wards to give patients an opportunity to thank him personally.

The young lawyer had ostentationously hung his Harvard diploma on the door to his office.

To be ostentatious is to engage in ostentation. Jerry wore solid-gold shoes to the party; I was shocked by his ostentation.

PACIFY (PASH uh fye) v to calm someone down; to placate

A parent gives a baby a pacifier to pacify him or her. A pacifier is someone who does not believe in war.
PAINSTAKING (PAIN-staking A) adj. extremely careful; taking pains. Painstaking ≠ pains-taking ≠ taking pains.

The jeweler was painstaking in his effort not to ruin the $30 million diamond.

We made a painstaking effort to move the piano without harming it: first we wrapped it in Kleenex, then we covered it with bubble wraps, then we placed it on rollers and pushed it down the ramp.

PALLIATE (PAL ee eyt) v. to relieve or alleviate something without getting rid of the problem; to assuage; to mitigate.

You take aspirin in the hope that it will palliate your headache. Aspirin is a palliative (PAL ee eyt).

PALPABLE (Pal ep bul) adj. capable of being touched; obvious; tangible.

The tumor was palpable: the doctor could feel it with his finger.

Harry's disappointment at being rejected by every college in America was palpable; it was so obvious that you could almost reach out and touch it.

There was palpable danger in flying the kite in a thunderstorm.

The opposite of palpable is impalpable.

PALELY (PAY lee) adv. insignificant; worthless.

The lawyer's efforts in our behalf were paltry; they didn't add up to anything.

The paltry fee paid us was scarcely large enough to cover our expenses.
PARSIMONIOUS (pur TUR nuh MOH nee us) adj stingy
The old widow was so parsimonious that she hung up teabags out
to dry on her shoetline so that she would be able to use them again.
We tried to be parsimonious, but without success. After just a
couple of days at the resort we realized that we had spent all the money
we had set aside for our entire month-long vacation.
To be parsimonious is to practice parsimony.

PARTISAN (PAHR tuh zuhn) n one who supports a particular person,
cause, or idea
Henry's plan to give himself the award had no partisan except
himself.
I am the partisan of any candidate who promises not to make
promises.
The mountain village was attacked by partisans of the rebel chief-
tain.
Partisan can also be used as an adjective meaning biased, as in
partisan politics. An issue that everyone agrees on regardless of the
party he or she belongs to is a nonpartisan issue. Bipartisan means
supported by two (bi) parties.
Both the Republican and Democratic senators voted to give them-
selves a raise. The motion had bipartisan support.

PATERNAL (pur TUR nuh luh MAH nuh) adj fatherly, paterlike
Fred is paternal toward his niece. Maternal (mah TUR nuh) means
motherly or monilike.

PATHOLOGY (pur TAYIHL uh ee) n the science of diseases
Pathology is the science or study of diseases, but not necessarily in
the medical sense. Pathological means relating to pathology, but it
also means arising from a disease. So if we say Brad is an invertebrate,
incorrigible, pathological (pur uh LAYH uh kuhl) liar, we are saying
that Brad's lying is a sickness.

PATRIARCH (PAY tree shirk) n the male head of a family or tribe
A patriarch is generally a strong male head of a family or tribe.

PATRICIAN (pur TRISHuhn) n a person of noble birth; an aristocrat
Mr. Anderson was a patrician, and he was never truly happy unless
his place at the dinner table was set with at least half a dozen forks.
Patrician can also be an adjective. Polo is a patrician sport.
The noisy crowd on the luxury ocean liner was patrician in every aspect.
They were wearing studded boots throwing deck chairs into the
ocean.

PATRONIZE (PAY truh nyzuh) v to treat as an inferior; to condescend to
Our guide at the art gallery was extremely patronizing, treating us
as though we wouldn't be able to distinguish a painting from a piece of
sidewalk without her help.
We felt patronized by the waiter at the fancy French restaurant; he
ignored all our efforts to attract his attention and then pretended not to
understand our requests.
Patronize also means to frequent or be a regular customer of. To
patronize a restaurant is to eat there often, not to treat it as an inferior.

PAUCITY (PAW suh ti) n scarcity
There was a paucity of fresh vegetables at the supermarket, so we
didn't buy frozen.
The plan was defeated by a paucity of support.
There is no paucity of water in the ocean.

PECCADILLO (pek uh DELL uh) n a minor offense
The smiling defendant acted as though first-degree murder were a
mere peccadillo rather than a hideous crime.
The reporters sometimes seemed more interested in the candidates' sexual
peccadillos than in their latest programs and proposals.

PEDEANTIC (pay Dahn nik) adj boringly scholarly, or academic
The discussion quickly turned pedantic as each participant tried to
sound more learned than all the others.
Periclaus's feelings about love were mostly pedantic; he'd read
about love in books but had never really encountered it in his life.
The professor's interpretation of the poem was pedantic and empty
of genuine feeling.
A pedantic person is called a pedant (P E D ant). A pedant is fond of pedantry (P E D anty).

**Pedestrian** (puh DES tree uhn) adj: unimaginative; bland.
This is one of the favorite words of the people who write the SAT. A pedestrian is someone walking, but to be pedestrian is to be something else altogether.

Mary Ann said the young artist's work was brilliant, but I found it to be pedestrian. I've seen better paintings in kindergarten classrooms.

The term was pedestrian; I had encountered each of the dishes dozens of times before.

**Prorative** (puh JOR uh tiv) adj: negative, disparaging
"Hi, stupid," is a prorative greeting.

"Loudmouth" is a nickname with a prorative connotation.

Abe's description of the college as "a pretty good school" was unintentionally prorative.

**Penchant** (P E N chunt) n: a strong taste or liking for something; a predilection

Dogs have a penchant for chasing cats and mailmen.

**Penitent** (P E N uh tuhn) adj: sorry; repentant, contrite

Julie was penitent when Hank explained how much pain she had caused him.

The two boys tried to sound penitent at the police station, but they weren't really sorry that they had loaded the shots into Mr. Ingersoll's house. They were just sorry.

**Pensive** (P E N siv) adj: thoughtful and sad

Norton became suddenly pensive when Jack mentioned his dead father.

The gloomy weather made everyone feel pensive, so we cheered them up by shooting off a few firecrackers in the living room.

**Peremptory** (puh REM puh reh tuhn) adj: final, categorical; dictatorial

Someone who is peremptory says or does something without giving anyone a chance to dispute it. Fraser's father peremptorily banished him to his room.

*Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.*

**Perennial** (puh REN i uh) adj: continual; happening again and again or year after year

Mr. Phillips is a perennial favorite of students at the high school because he always gives everyone an A.

- Miller was a perennial candidate for governor; every four years he primed up another batch of his hounds and worsted wrong brannick vickens.

- Flowers called perennials are flowers that bloom year after year without being replanted.

*Annual* (uh NUR uhn) and *biennial* (bi uh NUR uhn) are related words. Biennial means happening once every two years (biennial means happening twice a year). Centennial means happening once every century.

**Perfidy** (puh fih dy) n: treachery

- It was the omnibus' natural perfidy that finally did them in, as each one became an instrument of the other.

I was appealed to Ali's perfidy, he had sworn to me that he was my best friend, but then he asked my girlfriend to the prom.

To engage in perfidy is to be perfidious (past P E D i us).
PERFUNCTORY (pur FUNK ti) adj unenthusiastic; careless.
Larry made a couple of perfunctory attempts at answering the questions on the test, but then he put down his pencil and his head and slept until the end of the period.

PERIPATETIC (per uh peh TEK it) adj wandering; traveling continually; itinerant.
Groups are a peripatetic lunch, traveling from concert to concert to follow their favorite rock stars.

PERIPHERY (pur RIF ee) n the outside edge of something.
Just never got involved in any of our activities; he was always at the periphery.
The professional finger painter enjoyed his position at the periphery of the art world.

PERIIPHERAL (pur RIF er al) adj peripheral.
To be at the periphery is to be peripheral (pur RIF rh ruh). A peripheral interest is a secondary or side interest.
You peripheral vision is your ability to see to the right and left while looking straight ahead.

PERJURY (pur JUR ee) n lying by oath.
The defendant was acquitted of bribery but convicted of perjury, because he had lied on the witness stand during his trial.

PERTUSSIS (pur ROOZ) v to read carefully.
This word is misspelled more often than it is used correctly. To peruse something is not to skim it or read it quickly. To peruse something is to study it or read it with great care.
The lawyer perused the contract for many hours, looking for a loophole that would enable his client to back out of the deal.

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ING of despair on Wall Street on the day the Dow-Jones industrial average fell more than 500 points.

There was a pervasive odor of fuel oil in the house, and we soon discovered why: the basement was filled with the stuff.

PETULANT (PAYTuhnt) adj rude, crossly, ill-tempered

Gloria became petulant when we suggested that she leave her pet chinchilla at home when she came to spend the weekend; she said that she had insulted her chinchilla and that an insult to her chinchilla was an insult to her.

The petulant waiter slammed down our water glasses and spilled a tureen of soup onto Roger’s trousers.

To be petulant is to engage in petulance, or rudeness.

PHILANTHROPY (fil LANTH rohp ee) n a love of mankind, especially by doing good deeds.

Charity is a philanthropic institution. An altruist is someone who cares about other people. A philanthropist is actively doing things to help, usually by giving time or money.

PHILISTINE (FIIL i steen) n a hopelessly ignorant person with no appreciation of intellectual or artistic matters.

The novelist dismissed his critics as philistines, saying they wouldn’t recognize a good book if it crawled up and bit them on the nose; the critics, in reply, dismissed the novelist as a philistine who wouldn’t recognize a good book if it crawled up and rolled itself into his typewriter.

Philistine can also be an adjective. To be philistine is to act like a philistine.

PIOUS (PYUS) adj reverent or devout; outwardly (and sometimes falsely) respectful or devout; hypocritical

This is a sometimes confusing word with meanings that are very nearly opposite each other.

A pious Presbyterian is one who goes to church every Sunday and says his prayers every night before bed. Pious in this sense means something like religiously dutiful.

Pious can also be used to describe behavior or feelings that aren’t religious at all but are quite hypocritical. The amiable minister’s sermon on marital fidelity was filled with pious disregard for his own sins.

The state of being pious is piety (PIE eth ee). The opposite of pious is impious (IM pazh). Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

PIVOTAL (PIV uhl) adj crucial

Pivotal is the adjective form of the verb to pivot. To pivot is to turn on a single point or shaft. A basketball player pivots when he turns while leaving one foot planted in the same place on the floor.

A pivotal comment is a comment that turns a discussion. It is a very important comment.

A pivotal member of a committee is a crucial or extremely important member of a committee.

Harry’s contribution was pivotal, without it we would have failed.

PLACATE (PLAY kate) v to pacify; to appease; to soothe.

The tribe placated the angry volcano by tossing a few teenagers into the raging crater.

The beleaguered general tried to placate his fierce attacker by sending him a pleasant flower arrangement. His duplicitous enemy decided to attack anyway. He was implacable.

PLAINTIVE (PLAYTIV) adj expressing sadness or sorrow

The lead singer’s plaintive love song expressed his sorrow at being abandoned by his girlfriend for the lead guitarist.

The chilly autumn weather made the little bird’s song seem plaintive.

You could also say that there was plaintiveness in that bird’s song.

Don’t confuse plaintive with plaintiff. A plaintiff is a person who takes someone to court— who makes a legal complaint.

PLATITUDE (OHT uh tuhd) n a dull or trite remark; a cliché

The principal thinks he is a great orator, but his loud, boring speech was full of platitudes.

Instead of giving us any real insight into the situation, the lecturer threw platitudes at us for the entire period. It was a platitudeous speech.

PLEBEIAN (PLuh BEE uhn) adj common; vulgar; low class; bourgeois

Plebeian is the opposite of aristocratic.

Sarah refused to eat dinner with them, saying they were too plebeian for her discriminating palate.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

PLEthora (PLETH uh uhr) n an excess

We ate a plethora of candy on Halloween and a plethora of turkey on Thanksgiving.

Lettuce the air force tow our backyard as a bombing range created a plethora of problems.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

POIGNANT (POYNT uhn) adj painfully emotional; extremely moving; touching; striking

The words poignant and pointed are very closely related, and they share much of the same range of meaning.

A poignant scene is one that is so emotional or moving that it is almost painful to watch.

All the reporters stopped taking notes as they watched the old woman’s poignant reunion with her daughter, whom she hadn’t seen in eighty-five years.

Poignant can also mean pointed in the sense of sharp or astute. A poignant comment might be one that shows great insight.

To be poignant is to have no fences.
POLARIZE (P0h lih ryze) v to break up into opposing factions or groupings

The issue of what kind of sand to put in the sandbox polarized the nursery school class; some students would accept nothing but wet, while some wanted only dry.

The increasingly acrimonious debate between the two candidates polarized the political party.

POLEMIC (pih LEEM ik) n a powerful argument often made to attack or refute a controversial issue

The book was a convincing polemic that revealed the fraud at the heart of the large corporation.

Instead of the traditional Groundhog Day address, the state senator delivered a polemic against the sales tax.

A polemic is polemical.

PONDEROUS (P0hn dur us) adj so large as to be clumsy; massive; dull

The wedding cake was a ponderous blob of icing and jelly beans.

The fat man was unable to type, because his ponderous belly prevented him from putting his chair up to his desk.

The chairman, as usual, gave a ponderous speech that left half his listeners snoring in their plates.

PORTENT (POR tent) n an omen; a sign of something coming in the future

The distant rumbling we heard this morning was a portent of the thunderstorm that hit our area this afternoon.

Stock market investors looked for portents in their complicated charts and graphs; they hoped that the market's past behavior would give them a clue as to what would happen in the future.

POTENT (pih TENT iht) adj the adjective form of potent, meaning ominous or filled with portent. But it is very often used to mean pompous, or self-consciously serious of ominous sounding. It can also mean amazing or prodigious.

A portentous speech is one that you would enjoy listening to. A portentous announcement might be one that tried to create an inappropriate sense of alarm in those listening to it.

Portentous can also mean amazing or astonishing. A portentous sunset might be a remarkably glorious one rather than an ominous or menacing one.

POSTULATE (PAHSH chuh luht) v something accepted as true without proof; an axiom

A postulate is taken to be true because it is convenient to do so. We might be able to prove a postulate if we had the time, but not now. A theorem is something that is proven using postulates.

Postulate (PAHSH choh layt) n can be used as a verb, too. Sherlock Holmes rarely postulated things, waiting for evidence before he made up his mind.

PRAGMATIC (proh MAT ik) adj practical; down to earth; based on experience rather than theory

A pragmatic person is one who deals with things as they are rather than as they might be or should be.

Erecting a gigantic dome of gold over our house would have been the ideal solution to the leak in our roof, but the small size of our bank account forced us to be pragmatic; we patched the hole with a dab of tar instead.

Pragmatism (PRAH maht iz uhm) is the belief or philosophy that the value or truth of something can be measured by its practical consequences.

PRECEDENT (PREH shunt) n an earlier example or model of something

Precedent is a noun form of the verb to precede, or go before. To set a precedent is to do something that sets an example for what may follow.

Last year's million-dollar prom set a precedent that the current student council hopes will not be followed in the future. That is, the student council hopes that future proms won't cost a million dollars.

To be unprecedented is to have no precedent, to be something entirely new. George's consumption of 10,577 hot dogs was unprecedented; no one had ever eaten so many hot dogs before.

PRECEPT (PREH sept) n a rule to live by; a principle establishing a certain kind of action or behavior; a maxim

"Love thy neighbor" is a precept we have sometimes found difficult to follow; our neighbor is a noisy old who painted his house electric blue and who threw his empty beer cans into our yard.
PROCEDE (pri KLOOD) v to prevent something from ever happening
Ann feared that her abnormal academic career might preclude her becoming a brain surgeon.

PRECEDE (pri KUR sur) n forerunner; something that goes before and anticipates or paves the way for whatever it is that follows.

The arrival of a million-dollar check in the mail might very well be the precursor of a brand-new car.
WORD SMART

mildly negative. The quaint farmhouse had an unprepossessing exterior, but a beautiful interior. Who would have imagined?

PREROGATIVE (pri RAHG uh tiv) n a right or privilege connected exclusively with a position, a person, a class, a nation; or some other group or classification.

Giving traffic tickets to people he didn’t like was one of the prerogatives of Junior’s job as a policeman.

Sentencing people to death is a prerogative of kings and queens.

Big mansions and fancy cars are among the prerogatives of wealth.

PREVAIL (pri VAYL) v to triumph; to overcome rivals; [with on, upon, or with] to persuade.

When justice prevails, it means that good defeats evil.

The prosecutor prevailed in the murder trial; the defendant was found guilty.

My mother prevailed on me to make my bed. She told me she would tell me if I didn’t, so I did.

The adjective prevailing means most frequent or predominant. The prevailing opinion on a topic is the one that most people hold. If the prevailing winds are out of the north, then the wind is out of the north most of the time. A prevailing theory is the one most widely held at the time. It is prevalent (PREV oh lent).

PRISTINE (PRIS teen) adj original; unspoiled; pure.

An antique in pristine condition is one that hasn’t been tampered with over the years. It’s still in its original condition.

A pristine mountain stream is a stream that hasn’t been polluted.

PRODIGAL (PRAHID uh gal) adj wastefully extravagant.

The vicar was prodigal with his employer’s money, spending thousands of dollars on ingredients for what was supposed to be a simple meal.

The young artist was prodigal with his talents; he wasted time and energy in greeting cards that might have been devoted to serious paintings.

The prodigal gambler soon found that he couldn’t afford even a dollar bet.

To be prodigal is to be characterized by prodigality.

THE WORDS

QUN+CK + QUN+Z #66

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. preclude a. outstanding
2. precursor b. triumph
3. predilection c. seize by prior right
4. preeminent d. wastefully extravagant
5. precept e. unspoiled
6. premise f. natural preference
7. prerequisite g. worry, anxiety
8. prerogative h. right or privilege
9. prevail i. assumption
10. pristine j. forerunner
11. prodigal k. prevent

PRODIGIOUS (proh DUH us) adj extraordinary; enormous.

To view the Grand Canyon with Pong-Pong balls would be a prodigious undertaking; it would be both extraordinary and enormous.

The little boy caught a prodigious fish—it was ten times his size and might more easily have caught him had their situations been reversed.

See also prodigy.

PRODIGY (PRAHID uh gee) n an extremely talented child; an extraordinary accomplishment or occurrence.

The three-year-old prodigy could play all of Beethoven and most of Brahms on his harmonica.

Larry was a mathematical prodigy; he had calculated pi to 100 decimal places almost before he could walk.

Josephine’s tower of dominoes and Popcicle sticks was a prodigy of engineering.

PROFANE (proh FAYN) adj not having to do with religion; irreverent; blasphemous.

Profane is the opposite of sacred. W십lifting the holy dollar is profane. Profane can also mean disrespectful of religion. Sticking out your tongue in church would be a profane gesture.

Profane can also be a verb. You profaned the church by sticking out your tongue in it. Nick profaned his priceless Egyptian statue by using it as a doorknob.

The use form of profane is profanity (proh FAN uh tee). Throwing a gallon of red paint at the front door of the church was an act of profanity.
**PROFESS** (pron FES) v to declare; to declare falsely or pretend
Jason professed to teach him himself calculus; he declared that he was
going to do it.
No one in our town was fooled by the candidate's professed love
for llama farmers; everyone knew he was just trying to win votes from
the pro-llama faction.

**PROFICIENT** (pron FISH um) adj thoroughly competent; skillful; very
good at something
Jerry was a proficient cabinetmaker. He could make a cabinet that
would make you sit back and say, "Now, there's a cabinet."
I fiddled around at the piano for many years but never became
proficient at playing.
Lucy was merely competent but Molly was proficient at plucking
canaries.
Proficiency is the state of being proficient.

**PRODIGATE** (PRAH TEE gill) adj extravagantly wasteful and, usually,
wildly immoral
The fraternity members were prodigal bastards; they laid all-night
orgies in weeknights and nearly burned down their fraternity house
with their parties every weekend.
The young heir was prodigal with his fortune, spending millions
on champagne and racetracks.

**PROFOUND** (pron FOUNT) adj deep (in several senses)
Profound understanding is deep understanding.
To say something profound is to say something deeply intelligent or
discerning.
*Profound respect is deep respect. Profound horror is deep horror.*
The noun of profound is profundity (pron FUN dunt tee).

**PROFUSE** (pron FYOOS) adj flowing; extravagant
When we gave Marian our house, our car, and all our clothes, her
gratitude was profuse.
My teacher said I had done a good job, but his praise was far from
profuse. I got the feeling he hadn't really liked my epic poems about
two dinosaurs who fall in love just before they go extinct.
The grieving widow's tears were profuse. She had tears in profusion.

**PROLIFICATARIAN** (pron TEE ray at) n the industrial working class
The proliferator is the laboring class—blue-collar workers or people
who roll up their shirt sleeves to do a honest day's work.

**PROLIFICATE** (pron UEH rayt) v to spread or grow rapidly
Honey bees proliferated when we filled our yard with flowering
plants.
Coughs and colds proliferate when groups of children are cooped
up together during the winter.
The police didn't know what to make of the proliferation of con-
vention money in the town end of town.

**PROLIFIC** (pron UF ik) adj abundantly productive; fruitful or fertile
A prolific writer is a writer who writes a lot of books. A prolific
artist is an artist who paints a lot of pictures.
The old man had been extravagantly prolific; he had thirty chil-
dren and more than one hundred grandchildren.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q-U-H-C-K</th>
<th>Q-U-H-Z #67</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MARK</strong> each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. prodigious</td>
<td>a. declare</td>
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<td>2. prodigy</td>
<td>b. irreverent</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. profound</td>
<td>c. abundantly productive</td>
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<td>4. profit</td>
<td>d. flowing</td>
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<td>5. proficient</td>
<td>e. extraordinarily talented child</td>
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<td>6. prolific</td>
<td>f. extraordinary</td>
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<td>7. profound</td>
<td>g. spread rapidly</td>
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<td>8. profuse</td>
<td>h. deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. proliferation</td>
<td>i. thoroughly contemporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. prolific</td>
<td>j. extravagantly wasteful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. prolific</td>
<td>k. industrial working class</td>
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**PROMULGATE** (PRAH M UL gat) v to proclaim; to publicly or formally
declare something
The principal promulgated a new dress code over the loudspeaker
system: red, green, yellow, and blue were the only permissible artifi-
cial hair colors.

**PROPENSITY** (pron PEN suh teel) n a natural inclination or tendency; a
predilection
Jesse has a propensity for saying stupid things: every time she
opens her mouth, something stupid comes out.
Bill's propensity to sit around all day doing nothing came into
conflict with his mother's propensity to kick him out of the house.

**PROPITIOUS** (pron FISH us) adj marked by favorable signs or condi-
tions
Rush hour is not a propitius time to drive into the city.
The early negotiations between the union and the company had
been so propitious that no one was surprised when a new contract
was announced well before the strike deadline.

**PROPONENT** (pron POh HUNT) n an advocate; a supporter of a posi-
tion
Promoters and opponents are antonyms. The proponents of a tax
increase will probably not be reelected next fall.
PROPRIETARY (pruh PRYE uh ter ee) adj characteristic of an owner of property; constituting property.

To take a proprietary interest in something is to act as though you own it. George felt very proprietary about the chocolate-cookie recipe; he had invented it himself.

The company's design for musical toilet paper is proprietary; the company owns it, and outsiders can't look at it for nothing.

A proprietor (pruh PRYE uh tur) is an owner.

PROPRIETY (pruh PRYE uh hee) n propriety; good manners.

The old lady viewed the little girl's failure to curtsey as a flagrant breach of propriety. She did not approve of or countenance such improprieties.

Propriety prevented the young man from trash talking the town in celebration of his unexpected acceptance by the college of his choice.

Propriety derives from proper, not property.

PROSAIC (pruh ZAY ik) adj dull; unimaginative; like prose (as opposed to poetry)

His description of the battle was too prosaic for his listeners to believe that any of the soldiers had even been wounded, much less blown to smithereens.

The little boy's ambitions were all prosaic: he said he wanted to be an accountant, an auditor, or a claims adjuster.

PROSCRIBE (pruh SHYEB) v to outlaw; to prohibit

Spitting on the sidewalk and shooting at road signs were both prescribed activities under the new administration.

The young doctor prescribed smoking in the waiting room of his office.

The act of proscribing is proscription; an individual act of proscribing is also a proscription.

PROSELITIZE (FRAHSH uhh tyetz) v to convert (someone) from one religion or doctrine to another; to recruit converts to a religion or doctrine

The former Methodist had been proselyitized by a Lutheran deacon.

The airport terminal was filled with proselytizers from a dozen different sects, cults, and religions. They were attempting to proselytize the passengers walking through the terminal.

PROTAGONIST (pruh TAG uh nist) n the leading character in a novel, play, or other work; a leader or champion

Martin Luther King, Jr., was a protagonist in the long and continuing struggle for racial equality.

The protagonist of the movie was an eleven-year-old boy who saved his hometown from destruction by eating all the doughnuts that the mad scientist had been using to fuel his nuclear reactor. The mad scientist was the boy's chief antagonist. An antagonist is an opponent or adversary.

PROTRACT (pruh TRAKT) v to prolong

The trial was so protracted that one of the jurors died of old age and another gave birth.

The commencement speaker promised not to protract his remarks, but then he spoke for two solid hours. It was a protracted speech.

PROVIDENT (FRAHNT uhn dunt) adj preparing for the future; frugal

We were provided with our limited food supplies, knowing that the winter ahead would be long and cold.

The provident father had long ago set aside money for the college educations of each of his children.

To be provident is to fail to provide for the future. It was in provident of the grasshopper not to store any food for the winter, unlike his acquaintance the provident ant.

PROVINCIAL (pruh VIN shuhl) adj limited in outlook; to one's own small corner of the world; narrow

The farmers were very provincial; they had no opinions about anything but the price of corn and no interest in anything except growing more of it.

New Yorkers have reputations for being very sophisticated and cosmopolitan, but most of them are actually very provincial; they act as though nothing of interest had ever happened on the other side of the Hudson River.

-PROVISIONAL (pruh VIZH uhn nul) adj conditional; temporary; tentative

Louis had been accepted as a provisional member of the club. He
PROXIMITY (pr-o-SE-tee) n. nearness
I can’t stand being in the proximity of a nuclear explosion. The radiation leaves my hair a mess.

In a big city, one is almost always in the proximity of a restaurant.

PROUD (prood) adj. self-satisfied; conceited
Joe is a proud money manager. He doesn’t invest heavily in racetracks, and he puts only a small part of his savings in the office football pool. Joe is the epitome of pride.

The opposite of proud is immodest. It was immodest of us to pour gasoline all over the floor of our living room and then light a fire in the fireplace.

PURPORTED (pur-PORT id) adj. rumored; claimed
The heiress is purported to have been kidnapped by adventurers and hauled in a concrete vault beneath the busiest intersection in Times Square. No one believes this story except the psychic who was consulted by the police.

To purport something is to claim or allege it.

PUTATIVE (pyoo HAT iv) adj. commonly accepted; supposed; reputed
The putative reason for placing the monument downtown is that nobody had wanted it up there. When you use the word putative, you emphasize that the reason is only supposed, not proven.

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<th>Q-UnCK</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. provincial</td>
<td>a. commonly accepted</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. proximity</td>
<td>b. nearness</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. purported</td>
<td>c. narrow in outlook</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. prudent</td>
<td>d. rumored</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. putative</td>
<td>e. careful</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. putative</td>
<td>f. conditional</td>
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QUALIFY (KWAHL ee) v. to modify or restrict
You already know the primary meaning of qualify. Here’s another meaning.

Susan qualified her praise of Judith by saying that her kind words applied only to Judith’s skillful cooking and not to her inauspicious personality. Judith was upset by Susan’s qualification.

The library trustees trad their fund-raiser a qualified success; many more people than expected had come, but virtually no money had been raised.

An unqualified success is a complete, unrestricted success.

QUALITATIVE (KWAHL triv iv) adj. having to do with the quality or qualities of something (as opposed to the quantity)
If a school achieves a qualitative improvement in attendance, it means the school is being attended by better students. If the school achieves a quantitative improvement, it means the school is being attended by more students.

The difference between the two restaurants was quantitative rather than qualitative. Both served the same dreadful food, but the second restaurant served more of it.

QUARRELIOUS (KWAR ih us) adj. complaining; grumbling; whining
Although a query is a question, quarrelic does not mean questioning.

The exasperated mother finally managed to bash her quarrelious child.

The quarrelious voices of the students, who believed that their quiz had been graded too harshly, could be heard all the way at the other end of the school building.

QUIXTIC (kwik SHT ik) adj. romantic or idealistic to a foolish or impractical degree
The word quixotic is derived from the name of Don Quixote, the protagonist of Miguel de Cervantes’s classic seventeenth-century novel. Don Quixote had read so many romances about the golden age of chivalry that he set out to become a knight himself and have chivalrous adventures. Instead, his romantic idealism almost invariably got him into trouble. To be quixotic is to be as foolish or impractical as Don Quixote in pursuing an ideal.

For many years Mr. Morris had led a quixotic effort to repeal the federal income tax.

The political organization had once been a powerful force in Washington, but its membership had dwindled and its causes had become increasingly quixotic.
| R |

**RAMIFICATION** (rom uh FISH kah shun) n. a consequence; a branching out

A tree could be said to ramify, or branch out, as it grows. A ramification is a consequence that grows out of something in the same way a tree branches out of a tree trunk.

The professor found a solution to the problem, but there are many ramifications; some experts are afraid that he has created more problems than he has solved.

**RANCOR** (RANG kor) n. a bitter, long-lasting ill will or resentment.

The mutual rancor felt by the two nations eventually led to war.

To feel rancor is to be rancorous. The rancorous public exchanges between the two competing boxes are strictly for show; outside the ring, they are the best of friends.

**RAPACIOUS** (rah PAY shus) adj. greedy; plundering; avaricious.

Wall Street investment bankers are often accused of being rapacious;

The noun form is rapacity (rah PAS uh tee).

**REBUKE** (ri BYOOK) v. to criticize sharply.

The judge rebuked the convicted murderer for defying up as many people and ignoring them in the woods.

We trembled as Mr. Solomon rebuked us for slipping over his car and taking off the sides.

A piece of sharp criticism is called a rebuke. When the students pushed their friend teacher out the window, the principal delivered a rebuke that made their ears revolt.

**REBUT** (ri BURT) v. to contradict; to argue in opposition to; to prove to be false.

They all thought I was crazy, but none of them could rebut my argument.

The defense attorney attempted to rebut the prosecutor’s claim that the defendant’s fingerprints, hair, clothing, signature, wallet, wristwatch, credit cards, and car had been found at the scene of the crime.

An act in instance of rebutting is called a rebuttal. Rebut and refute are synonyms.

**RECALCITRANT** (ri KAL suh trant) adj. stubbornly defiant of authority or control; disobedient.

The recalcitrant barrier continued to spread through the patient’s body despite every therapy and treatment the doctors tried.

The country was in turmoil, but the recalcitrant district refused even to listen to the pleas of the international representatives.

**RECAPITULATE** (ri KAP uh TAYT uht) v. to publicly hire back and deny (something previously told or believed); to openly confess error.

The weather scientist recanted his theory that mice originated on the moon; it turned out that he had simply mixed up the results of two separate experiments.

The secret police tortured the intellectual for a week, by tickling his feet with a feather duster, until he finally recanted.

**RECIProCAL** (ri SIP roh kuhl) adj. mutual; shared; interchangeable.

The Rochester Club had a reciprocal arrangement with the Duluth Club. Members of either club had full privileges of membership at the other.

Their hatred was reciprocal; they hated each other.

To reciprocate is to return is kind, to interchange, or to repay.

Our new neighbors had lent us over for dinner several times, but we were unable to reciprocate immediately because our dining room was being remodeled.

Peter hit Paul over the head with a stick. Paul reciprocated by punching Peter in the nose.

A reciprocally (riz uh prah sek uhl) is a reciprocal relation between two parties, often whereby both parties gain.

**RECLUSIVE** (ri KLOOS uv) adj. withdrawn; withdrawn from society.

The ailing millionaire led a reclusive existence, shielding himself up in his labyrinthine mansion and never setting foot in the outside world.

Our new neighbors were so reclusive that we didn’t even meet them until a full year after they had moved in.

A reclusive person is a recluse. After his wife’s death, the grieving old man turned into a recluse and seldom ventured out of his house.
RECONDITE (REK un dyte) adj hard to understand; over one’s head
The philosopher’s thesis was so recondite that I couldn’t get past
the first two sentences.
Every now and then the professor would lift his head from his desk
and deliver some recondite pronouncement that left us scratching our
heads and trying to figure out what he meant.
The scholarly journal was so recondite as to be utterly incomprehensible.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

Q-U-I-C-K • Q-U-I-Z #71

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the
second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. remission a. hard to understand
2. rancor b. criticize sharply
3. rapacious c. consequence
4. rebuke d. mutual
5. rebut e. hasty
6. recalcitrant f. bitter resentment
7. recount g. stubbornly defiant
8. redress h. publicly deny
9. reclusive i. contradict
10. recondite j. greedy

RECRIMINATION (ri krim uh NAY shun) n a bitter counteraccusation,
or the act of making a bitter counteraccusation
Mary was full of recrimination. When I accused her of stealing my
pen, the angrily accused me of being careless, evil, and stupid.
The word is often used in the plural. The courtroom echoed with the
recriminations of the convicted defendant as he was taken off to
the penitentiary.
To make a recrimination is to recriminate. The adjective is
recriminatory (tra KRIM uh nah tor ee).

REDOLENT (RED uh lunt) adj fragrant;
The air in autumn is redolent of wood smoke and fallen leaves.
The flower arrangements on the tables were both beautiful and
redolent.
Something that is redolent has redolence.
Redolent also means suggestive. The new play was redolent of
one I had seen many years ago.

REUNDANT (ri DUN dunt) adj unnecessarily repetitive; excessive;
excessively wordy
Will had already bought paper plates, so our purchase of paper
plates was redundant.
REMNOSTATE (ri MAHN stray) v to argue against; to protest; to raise objections

My boss remonstrated with me for telling all the secretaries they could take the rest of the week off.

The manager remonstrated, but the umpire continued to insist that the base runner had been out at third. When the manager continued to remonstrate, the umpire threw him out of the game.

An act of remonstrating is a remonstrance.

RENAISSANCE [REN uh sahn] n a rebirth or revival

The capital R Renaissance was a great blossoming of art, literature, science, and culture in general that transformed Europe between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. The word is also used in connection with lesser rebirths.

The declining neighborhood underwent a renaissance when a group of investors bought several crumbling tenements and turned them into attractive apartment buildings.

The small college’s football team had endured many losing seasons but underwent a dramatic renaissance when the new coach recruited half a dozen 400-pound freshmen.

Renaissance can also be spelled renaissance (ri NAY sans).

RENOUCE (ri NOVWNSH) v to give up formally or resign; to disown; to have nothing to do with anymore

Despite the pleadings and protestations of her parents, Deborah refused to renounce her love for the leader of the motorcycle gang.

The presidential candidate renounced his manager after it was revealed that the zealous manager had tried to murder the candidate’s opponent in the primary.

To renounce is to make a renunciation (ri now see AY shun).

Q-U-I-C-K + Q-U-I-Z #72
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. remonstrate
   - a. surrender
   - b. shown
   - c. rebuff
   - d. argue against
   - e. fragment
   - f. banish
   - g. prove to be false
   - h. unnecessarily repetitive
   - i. unnecessarily repetitive
   - j. unnecessarily repetitive

1. rend
2. redent
3. redundunt
4. refuse
5. retrote
6. repelate
7. repelish
8. remonstrate
9. renaissance
10. renounce

THE WORDS

REPARATION (rep uh RAY shun) n paying back; making amends; compensation

To make a reparation is to repair some damage that has occurred.

This word is often used in the plural. The defeated country demanded reparations for the destruction it had suffered at the hands of the victorious army.

After the accident we sought reparation in court, but our lawyer was not competent and we didn’t win a cent.

Something that cannot be repaired is irreparable (i REP uh rub bull).

Note carefully the pronunciation of these words.

REPERCUSSION (ree pur KUSH un) n a consequence; an indirect effect

One repercussion of the new tax law was that accountants found themselves with a lot of new business.

The declaration of war had many repercussions, including a big increase in production at the bomb factory.

REPLENISH (ri PLEN ish) v to fill again; to resupply; to restore

The manager of the hardware store needed to replenish his stock: quite a few of the shelves were empty.

The commanding general replenished his army with a trainload of food and other supplies.

After the big Thanksgiving meal, everyone felt replenished.

An act of replenishing is a replenishment.

The replenishment of our firewood supply was our first thought after the big snowstorm.

REPLET (ri PLEET) adj completely filled; abounding

The once polluted stream was now replete with fish of every description.

The bride wore a magnificent sombrero replete with fuzzy dice and campaign buttons.

Tim ate all nine courses at the wedding banquet. He was filled to the point of repletion.

REPREHENSIBLE (ri PREHuhn suh bul) adj worthy of blame or censure

He put the cat in the laundry chute, tied the dog to the chimney, and committed several other reprehensible acts.

Malcolm’s manners were reprehensible: he ate his soup by drinking it from his empty wineglass and flipped his peas into his mouth with the back of his salad fork.

REPRISAL (ri PRI zoil) n a military action undertaken in revenge for another; an act of taking “on eye for an eye”

The raid on the Iranian oil-drilling platforms was a reprisal for the Iranians’ earlier attack on the American tanker.

Fearing reprisals from the terrorists, the CIA beefed up its security after capturing the terrorist leader.
REPROACH (IPROHCH) v to scold, usually in disappointment; to blame; to disgrace
My doctor reproached me for gaining twenty pounds after he had advised me to lose fifteen.
The police officer reproached me for leaving my car parked overnight in a no-parking zone.
Reproof can also be a noun. To look at someone with reproach is
to look at that person critically or accusingly. To be filled with self-
reproach can mean to be ashamed. Imperfectable behavior is beyond fault, it is irreproachable. Even
even though I once did split Aunt Mabel's skull with an ax, his motive was
irreproachable; he had merely been trying to kill a fly perched on her
hairnet.
REPROVE (IPROOV) v to criticize mildly
Aunt May reproved me for eating too much, but we could tell she
was actually thrilled that we had enjoyed the meal.
My wife reproved me for leaving my dirty dish in the sink.
An act of reproving is called a reproof. The judge's decision was
less a sentence than a gentle reproof; he put Jerry on probation and
told him never to get in trouble again.
REPUUDATE (IPYOO) one way to reject; to renounce; to disdain: to have
nothing to do with
Hopeing to receive a lighter sentence, the convicted gangster repudiated
his former connection with the mob.
REQUISITE (IREK WIZ) adj required; necessary
Howard bought a hunting rifle and the requisite ammunition.
As the requisite number of members was six in attendance, the
chairman adjourned the meeting just after it had begun.
Requisite can also be a noun; meaning a requirement or a necessity.
A hammer and a saw are among the requisites of the carpenter's trade.
A prerequisite is something required before you can get started.
A high school diploma is usually a prerequisite to entering college.
RESOLUTE (IREZL OOT) adj determined; firm; unswerving
Uncle Ted was resolute in his decision not to have a good time at
our Christmas party; he stood alone in the corner and muttered to himself all night long.
The other men were strong, but our players were resolute. They kept
pushing and shoving until, in the final moments, they won the roller-
derby tournament.
Someone who sticks to his New Year's resolution is resolute. Reso-
lution and resolute are synonymous.
To be irresolute is to be wavering or indecisive. Our irresolute
leader led us first one way and then the other way in the process of
getting us thoroughly and completely lost.

RESPITE (IRESPIT) n a period of rest or relief
We worked without respite from five in the morning until five in
the afternoon.
The new mother fell asleep when her baby stopped crying, but the
respite was brief; the baby started up again almost immediately.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.
RETRICENT (IRET RUEEENT) adj quiet; restrained; reluctant to speak, espe-
cially about oneself
Luther's natural reticence made him an ideal speaker; his speeches
never lasted more than a few minutes.
Jeffrey was reticent on the subject of his accomplishiments; he
didn't like to talk about himself.
To be reticent is to be characterized by reticence.
REVERSE (IRE VUR) v to respect highly; to honor
Einstein was a preeminent scientist who was revered by everyone,
even his critics. Einstein enjoyed nearly universal reverence (REP uh
riness). To be reverent is to be mildly disrespectful. Peter made jokes
about his younger sister's painting. She was perturbed at its irrever-
ence and began to cry.
RHETORIC (IRET uh RUK) n the art of formal speaking or writing; inflated
discourse
A talented public speaker might be said to be skilled in rhetoric.
The word is often used in a persuasive sense to describe speaking or
writing that is skillfully executed but insincere or devoid of meaning.
A political candidate's speech that was long on drama and promises
but short on genuine substance might be dismissed as "mere rhetoric."
To use rhetoric is to be rhetorical (ruth TUR ik UHL). A rhetorical
question is one the speaker intends to answer himself or herself—that it, a question asked only for rhetorical effect.

RIGOROUS (RIG or AG) adj strict; harsh; severe
To be rigorous is to act with rigor.
Our exercise program was rigorous but effective; after just a few months, our eighteen hours of daily exercise had begun to pay off.

The professor was popular largely because he wasn’t very rigorous; there were no tests in his course and only one paper, which was optional.

ROBUST (rob BUST) adj strong and healthy; vigorous
The hundred-year-old man was still robust. Every morning he ran several miles down to the ocean and jumped in.
The tree we planted last year isn’t looking very robust. Most of the leaves have fallen off, and the bark has begun to peel.

ROGUE (rohg) n a criminally dishonest person; a scoundrel
A rogue is someone who can’t be trusted. This word is often used, however, to characterize a playfully mischievous person.

RUDIMENTARY (ruh duh MEN tuh ven) adj basic; crude; unformed or undeveloped
The primitive tribe’s tools were very rudimentary. In fact, they looked more like rocks than like tools.
The boy who had lived with wolves for fifteen years lacked even the most rudimentary social skills.
The strange creature had small bumps on its torso that appeared to be rudimentary limbs.

RUMINATE (ROO nuh nayt) v to contemplate; to mull over
Rumination comes from a Latin word meaning to chew cud. Cows, sheep, and other cud-chewing animals are called ruminants. To ruminate is to quietly chew on or ponder your own thoughts.
The teacher’s comment about the causes of weather set me to ruminating about what a nice day it was and to wishing that I were outside.
The very old man spent his last days ruminating about death and eating box after box of vanilla wafers.
An act of ruminating is called a rumination. Serge was a very private man; he kept his ruminations to himself.

RUSTIC (RUS tik) adj rural; lacking urban comforts or sophistication; primitive
Life in the log cabin was too rustic for Leah: she missed hot showers, cold beer, and electricity.
Rustic can be used as a noun. A rustic is an unsophisticated person from the country. We enjoyed the rustic scenery as we traveled through the countryside. To rusticate is to spend time in the country.

S

SACCHARINE (SAK uh rin) adj sweet; excessively or disgustingly sweet
Saccharine is a calorie-free sweetener; saccharine means sweet.
Except for the spelling, this is one of the easiest-to-remember words there is. Don’t screw up.
Saccarine can be applied to things that are literally sweet, such as sugar, saccharine, fruit, and so on. It can also be applied to things that are sweet in a figurative sense, such as children, personalities, and sentiments—especially things that are too sweet, or sweet in a sicken-
ing way.
We wanted to find a nice card for Uncle Moe, but the cards in the display at the drugstore all had such saccharine messages that we would have been too embarrassed to send any of them.
The love story was so saccharine that I ended up loathing the heroine and wishing the hero would belch or pick his nose just to break the goopy monotony.

SACRILEGE (SAK ril ij) n a violation of something sacred; blasphemy
The minister committed the sacrifice of delivering his sermon while wearing his golf shoes; he didn’t want to be late for his tee-off time, which was just a few minutes after the scheduled end of the service.
The members of the fundamentalist sect believed that dancing, going to movies, and watching television were sacrileges.
To commit a sacrilege is to be sacrilegious. Be careful with the spelling of these words.

THE WORDS

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Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. respite a. basic
2. reticent b. contemplate
3. retract c. vigorous
4. reverberate d. withdraw
5. reverence e. formal writing or speaking
6. rhetoric f. restrained
7. rigorous g. rural
8. robust h. period of rest
9. rogue i. echo
10. rudimentary j. strict
11. ruminate k. honor
12. rustic l. scoundrel
SACROSANT (SAK roh sohngk) adj sacred; held to be inviolable
A church is sacrosanct. So, for Christians, is belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ.
Sacrrosant is also used loosely, and often ironically, outside of religion. Mr. Peter's lunchtime trip to his neighborhood bar was sacrosanct; he would no sooner skip it than he would skip his mother's funeral.

SAGACIOUS (suh GAY shus) adj discerning; shrewd; keen in judgment; wise
Edgar's decision to move the chickens into the barn turned out to be sagacious: about an hour later, the hailstorm hit.
The announcer's sagacious commentary made the baseball game seem vastly more interesting than we had expected it to be.
To be sagacious is to have sagacity (suh GAS uh see). A similar word is sage, which means wise, possessing wisdom derived from experience or learning.
When we were contemplating starting our own popcorn business, we received some sage advice from a man who had lost all his money selling candied apples.
The professor's critique, which consisted of just a few sage comments, sent me back to my room feeling pretty stupid.
Sage can also be a noun. A wise person, especially a wise old person, is often called a sage.

SAINTLY (SAYLT ee) adj stickling; conspicuous; leaping
A saintly characteristic is one that leaps right out at you.
Ursula had a number of saintly features including, primarily, her nose, which stuck out so far that she was constantly in danger of slamming it in doors and windows.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

SAUCY (SAY tuh see) adj haughty; remedial; curious
Lowered blood pressure is among the saucy effects of exercise.
The long sea voyage was saucy; when Elizabeth landed she looked ten years younger than she had when she set sail.

SANCTIMONIOUS (sang kuh MOH niss us) adj pretending to be devout; affecting religious feeling
The sanctimonious old bore pretended to be deeply offended when Lucius whispered a mild swearer after dropping the anvils on his bare feet.
Simon is an egoist who speaks about almost nothing but caring for one's fellow man. His altruism is sanctimonious.

SANGUINE (SANG gwihn) adj cheerful; optimistic; hopeful
Peter was sanguine about his chances of winning the Nobel Peace Prize; even though, as an eighth grader, he hadn't really done anything to deserve it.
The ebullient checkers champion remained sanguine in defeat; he was so sure of himself that he viewed even catastrophe as merely a temporary setback.

THE WORDS
Don't confuse sanguine (a nice word) with sanguinary (not a nice word). Sanguinary means bloodthirsty.

SARDONIC (sahr Dahn ik) adj mocking; scornful
Robert's weak attempts at humor were met by nothing but a few scattered pockets of sardonic laughter.
Even George's friends found him excessively sardonic; he couldn't discuss anything without mocking it, and there was almost nothing about which he could bring himself to say two nice words in a row.

Q-U-I-U-Z #75
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. saucy
2. sacrilegious
3. sacrificial
4. sagacious
5. sage
6. salient
7. salutary
8. sanctimonious
9. sanguine
10. sardonic

SCINTILLATE (sin tuh layt) v to sparkle, either literally or figuratively
Stars and diamonds scintillate. So do witty comments, charming personalities, and anything else that can be said to sparkle.
Warner was a quiet drudge at home, but at a party he could be absolutely scintillating, tossing off witty remarks and charming everyone in the room.
Benny's grades last term weren't scintillating, to put it mildly; he had four Ds and an F.
The act of scintillating is called scintillation.

SCRUPULOUS (SKROO pyth lus) adj strict; careful; hesitant for ethical reasons
Doug was scrupulous in keeping his accounts; he knew where every penny came from and where every penny went.
We tried to be scrupulous about not dripping paint, but by the time the day was over there was nearly as much paint on the floor as there was on the walls.
Phillip was too scrupulous to make a good armed robber; every time he started to point his gun at someone, he was overcome by ethical doubts.
A scruple is a qualm or moral doubt. To have no scruples—to be unscrupulous—is to have no conscience.

Q-U-I-C-K + Q-U-I-Z
SCRUTINIZE (SKROOT·nuh vyz) v to examine very carefully
I scrutinized the card catalog at the library but couldn't find a single book on the topic I had chosen for my term paper.

The rocket scientists scrutinized thousands of pages of computer printouts, looking for a clue to why the rocket had exploded.

My mother scrutinized my clothes and my appearance before I left for the evening, but even after several minutes of careful analysis she was unable to find anything to complain about.

To scrutinize something is to subject it to scrutiny. The clever forgery-fueled the museum curator but did not withstand the scrutiny of the experts; after studying for several weeks, the experts pronounced the painting to be a fake.

Something that cannot be examined is inscrutable. Inscrutability means mysterious, impossible to understand. We had no idea what Bill was thinking since his smile was inscrutable. Poker players try to be inscrutable to their opponents.

SECULAR (SEK·yuh luh) adj having nothing to do with religion or spiritual concerns
The halfway house had several nuns on its staff, but it was an entirely secular operation; it was run by the city, not the church.

The priest's secular interests include German food and playing the trombone.

SEDITION (Suh DESSH uh n) n treason; the incitement of public disorder or rebellion
Revolutions usually begin as a small band of seditionists individuals plot to change the established order.

SENSORY (SEN·soh ree) adj having to do with the senses or sensation
Bakies enjoy bright colors, moving objects, pleasant sounds, and other forms of sensory stimulation.

Your ears, eyes, and tongue are all sensory organs. It is through them that your senses operate.

Extraordinary perception is the supposed ability of some people to perceive things without using the standard senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch, or taste.

Two similar-sounding and often confusing words are sensual and sensuous. To be sensual is to be devoted to gratifying one's senses through physical pleasure, especially sexual pleasure; to be sensuous is to delight the senses. A sensual person is one who eagerly indulges his or her physical desires. A sensuous person is one who stimulates the senses of others (sometimes, though by no means invariably, inspiring them thoughts of sensual gratification).

SENTIENT (SEN·shuh n) adj able to perceive by the senses; conscious
Human beings are sentient. Rocks are not.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

SEQUESTER (sheKES·tur) v to set or keep apart
Since much of the rest of the city had become a battle zone, the visiting entertainers were sequestered in the international hotel.

The struggling writer sequestered himself in his study for several months, trying to produce the Great American Novel.

Justices are sometimes sequestered during trials to prevent them from talking to people or reading newspapers.

D-UraC-K • Qai-17 #76

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. scientist
   a. sparkler
2. scrupulous
   b. having nothing to do with
3. scrutinize
   c. reason
4. secular
   d. having to do with the senses
5. sedition
   e. set apart
6. sensory
   f. scion
7. sensuous
   g. delighting the senses
8. sentient
   h. examined very carefully
9. sequester
   i. devoted to pleasure
10. sequester
    j. conscious

SEERONPITY (ser oon· 너p·te) n accidental good fortune; discovering good things without looking for them
It was serendipity rather than artifice that led the archaeologist to his breathtaking discovery of the ancient civilization. While walking his dog in the desert, he tripped over the top of a buried tomb.

Something that occurs through serendipity is serendipitous. Our arrival at the airport serendipitously coincided with that of the queen, and she offered us a ride to our hotel in her carriage.

SERVILE (SIR·vil) adj submissive and subservient; like a servant
Cat lovers sometimes say that dogs are too servile; they follow their owners everywhere and obsequiously all over them at every opportunity.

The horrible boss demanded servility from his employees; when he said "Jump!" he expected them to ask "How high?"

A very similar word is slavish (SLAV·ish), which means even more subservient than servile. Slavish devotion to a cause is devotion in spite of everything. An artist's slavish imitator would be an imitator who imitated everything about the artist.

SINGULAR (SING·yuh lur) adj unique; superior; exceptional; strange
Dante had the singular ability to stand out one big toe for several hours at a stretch.
The man on the train had a singular deformity; both of his eyes were on the same side of his head.

A singularity is a unique occurrence. Singularity is also the quality of being unique.

Slander (SuAN dör) v to speak badly about someone publicly; to defame; to spread malicious rumor.

Jonathan slandered Mr. Prewinkle by telling everyone in school that the principal wore a toupee. Mr. Prewinkle resented this slander. Since he was the principal, he expelled the slyness student.

Sloth (slowth) n laziness; sluggishness.

You may have seen a picture of an animal called a sloth. It hangs upside down from tree limbs and is never in a hurry to do anything. To fall into sloth is to act like a sloth.

Ivan’s weekends were devoted to sloth. He never arose before noon, and he never left the house before Monday morning.

To be lazy and sluggish is to be slothful. Ophelia’s slothful husband virtually lived on the couch in the living room, and the television remote-controlled device was in danger of becoming grafted to his hand.

Sobriety (sub BREE uh nee) n the state of being sober; seriousness.

A sober person is a person who isn’t drunk. A sober person can also be a person who is serious, soberminded, or not ostentatious. Sobriety means both "endurance" and seriousness or sobriety.

Sobriety was such an unfamiliar condition that the reforming alcoholic didn’t recognize it at first. Sobriety of dress is one characteristic of the hardworking Amish. Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

Solitude (suh LOH uh tuh) adj lonely and attentive, often to the point of being 

Every time we turned around, we seemed to step on the foot of the solicitous solicitus, who appeared to feel that if he left us alone for more than a few seconds, we would decide to leave the store.

When the slick movie star sneezed, half a dozen solicitous nurses came rushing into his hospital room.

The noun is solicitus.

Solvent (SOHL uhn) adj not broke or bankrupt; able to pay one’s bills.

Jerry didn’t have the hope to become a millionaire; all he wanted to do was remain solvent.

The struggling company was bailed out by a solvent investor. The plan paid its billion-dollar fine for setting up each Christmas ornament.

To be broke is to be insolvent. An insolvent company is one that can’t cover its debts.

The state of being solvent is called solvency; the state of being insolvent is called insolvency.

Soporific (soh POUR ih fic) adj sleep inducing; extremely boring; very sleepy.

The doctor calmly his hysterical patient by injecting him with some sort of soporific medication.

Sam’s soporific address was acknowledged not by applause but by a chorus of snores.

The soporific creature from the bottom of the sea lay on a gigantic blob on the beach for several days and then tossed itself enough to consume the panic-stricken city.

Sordid (SOR dör) adj vile; filthy; squalid.

The college tenements led a sordid existence. The principal inhabitants were dirty laundry; rotting garbage, and body odor.

The conspirators plotted their sordid schemes at a series of secret meetings in an abandoned warehouse.

The drug dealers had turned a once-pretty neighborhood into a sordid outpost of despair and crime.

Spawn (spawn) v to bring forth; to produce a large number.

A bestselling book or box office movie will spawn dozens of imitators.

Spacious (SPAY shus) adj descriptively plausible or attractive.

The billboard’s spacious theories about caring baldness with used tea bags charmed the television studio audience, but did not convince the experts, who believed that fresh tea bags were more effective.

The river’s bounty turned out to be spacious; what had looked like churning rapids from a distance was, on closer inspection, some sort of foamy industrial waste.

To be spacious is to be characterized by spaciousness.
SPORADIC (spuh RAD ik) adj stopping and starting; scattered; occurring in beats every once in a while
The hatters were made jitters by sporadic gunfire than peppered the beach.
Kylie’s attendance to his schoolwork was sporadic at best; he tended to lose his concentration after a few minutes of effort.

SPURIOUS (SPIYoor as u) adj false; fake
An apocryphal story is one whose truth is uncertain. A spurious story, however, is cut-and-dried false, no doubt about it. The political candidate attributed his loss to numerous spurious rumors that hounded him throughout his campaign.

SQUALOR (SKWAL ur) n filth; wretchedness; degrading; repulsive
If people live in squalor for too long, the ruling elite can count on an insurgency.

SQUANDER (SKWAHD ur) n waste; slumber
Jerry failed to husband his inheritance; instead, he squandered it on stuffed toys.

STAGNATION (stig NAY shun) n motionlessness; inactivity
The company grew quickly for several years, then fell into stagnation.
Many years of ceaselessly dumping pollutants led to the gradual stagnation of the river.
To fall into stagnation is to stagnate. To be in a state of stagnation is to be stagnant.

STATIC (STAT ik) adj stationary; not changing or moving
Sales of the new book soared for a few weeks, then became static. The movie was supposed to be a thriller, but we found it to be tediously static; nothing seemed to happen from one scene to the next.

STAUNCH (STAWNCH) adj firmly committed; firmly in favor of; steadfast
A staunch Republican is someone who always votes for Republican candidates. A staunch supporter of tax reform would be someone who firmly believes in tax reform. To be staunch in your support of something is to be unshakable.

STEADFAST (STED fast) adj loyal; faithful
Steadfast love is love that never wavers. To be steadfast in a relationship is to be faithfully committed. To be steadfast is to be like a rock; unchanging, unyielding, unmoving.

STIGMATIZE (STIG mih tzayz) v to brand with disgrace; to set a mark of disgrace upon
Steve’s jeans were Lee’s instead of Levi’s, and this mistake stigmatized him for the rest of his high school career.
A stigma is a mark of disgrace.

STIPULATE (STIP yuh lot) v to require something as part of an agreement
You are well advised to stipulate the maximum amount you will pay in any car-repair contract. Guarantees often stipulate certain conditions that must be met if the guarantee is to be valid.

STOIC (STOH ik) adj indifferent (at least outwardly) to pleasure or pain, to joy or grief, to fortune or misfortune
Niss was noted about the death of her canary; she went about her business as though nothing and bad happened.
We tried to be stoic about our defeat, but as soon as we got into the locker room, we all began to cry and bang our foreheads on the floor.

STRATUM (STRAT um) n a layer; a level
The middle class is one stratum of society. The plural of stratum is strata. A hierarchy is composed of strata. To stratify is to make into layers.
This word can also be pronounced “STRAW ium.”

STRICITURE (STRIK chur) n a restriction; a limitation; a negative criticism
Despite the strictures of apartment living, we enjoyed the eight years we spent in New York City. The unfavorable lease placed many strictures on how the building could be used. The poorly prepared violinist went home trembling after his concert to await the inevitable strictures of the reviewers.

QUH-CK = QUH-Z #78
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. acid
2. spawn
3. sporous
4. sporadic
5. spurious
6. squander
7. stagnation
8. static
9. staunch
10. steadfast
11. stigmatize
12. stipulate
13. stoic
14. stratum
15. stricture

d. disgrace
b. stopping and starting
c. restrictive
d. inactivity
e. require
f. indifferent to pain, pleasure
g. bring forth
h. vile
i. firmly committed (2)
j. layer
k. stationary
l. deceptively plausible
m. false
n. waste
STRIFE (strif) n bitter conflict; discord; a struggle or clash
Marital strife often leads to divorce.

STRINGENT (strin) adj strict; restrictive
The restaurant’s stringent dress code required diners to wear paper hats, army boots, and battery-operated twirling bow ties.

STYLMIC (stye myk) v to thwart; to get in the way of; to hinder
Stylin’ is a going term. A golfer is stylin’ when another player’s ball lies on the direct path between his or her own ball and the cup.

Off the golf court, one might be stylin’ by one’s boss. In my effort to make a name for myself in the company, I was stylin’ by my boss, who always managed to take credit for all the good things I did and to blame me for his mistakes.

SUBJUGATE (sub jyj gat) v to subdue and dominate; to enslave
I bought the fancy riding lawn mower because I thought it would make my life easier, but it quickly subjulgated me; all summer long, it seemed, I did nothing but change its oil, sharpen its blades, and drive it back and forth between my house and the repair shop.

The tyrant subjulgated all the peasants living in the kingdom; once free, they were now forced to do his bidding.

SUBLIME (sub BLYME) adj awesome; extremely excited; lofty; majestic
After winning 770 million in the lottery and quitting the job as sewer workers, our hapiness was sublime.

Theodore was an sublime thinker; after pondering even a difficult problem for just a few minutes, he would invariably arrive at a concise and elegant solution.

The sub at the restaurant was sublime. I’ve never tasted anything so good.

The noun form of sublime is sublimity (sub BLIM 1 tee). Don’t confuse sublime with subliminal (sub BLIM oh molt), which means subconscious, or sublimair, which means to suppress one’s subconscious mind.

SUBORDINATE (sub BOR dihn) adj lower in importance, position, or rank; secondary
My desire to sit on the couch and watch television all night long was subordinate to my desire to stand in the kitchen eating junk food all night long, so I did the latter instead of the former.

A vice president is subordinate to a president.

Subordinate (sub BOR dahn) can also be a verb. To subordinate something in relation to something else is to make it secondary or less important.

To be insubordinate (in sub BOR dihn) is not to acknowledge the authority of a superior. An army private who says “Bug off!” when ordered to do something by a general is guilty of being insubordinate or of committing an act of insubordination.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q-U-I-C-K</th>
<th>Q-U-I-Z</th>
<th>#79</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. strike</td>
<td>a. not obvious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. stringent</td>
<td>b. awesome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. styline</td>
<td>c. brief and to the point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. subjigate</td>
<td>d. thwart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. sublime</td>
<td>e. subdue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. subordinate</td>
<td>f. corrupting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. insubordinate</td>
<td>g. not respectful of authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. substantive</td>
<td>h. strict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. obdurate</td>
<td>i. lower in importance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. subversive</td>
<td>j. having substance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. succinct</td>
<td>k. bitter conflict</td>
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</table>

**SUCCUMB** (soh KUM) v. to yield or submit; to die
- I had said I wasn’t going to eat anything at the party, but when Ann held the tray of imported chocolates under my nose, I quickly succumbed and ate all of them.
- When Willard reached the age of 110, his family began to think that he would live forever, but he succumbed not long afterward.

**SUPERCILOUS** (soo pur SIL us) adj. haughty; patronizing
- The supercilious Rolls-Royce salesman treated us like peasants until we opened our suitcase full of one-hundred-dollar bills.
- The newly famous author was so supercilious that he pretended not to recognize members of his own family, whom he now believed to be beneath him.

**SUPERFICIAL** (soo pur FISH ul) adj. on the surface only; shallow; not thorough
- Tom had indeed been shot, but the wound was superficial; the bullet had merely creased the tip of his nose.
- The mechanic, who was in a hurry, gave my car what appeared to be a very superficial tune-up. In fact, if he checked the oil, he did it without opening the hood.
- A person who is superficial can be accused of superficiality. The superficiality of the editor’s comments made us think that he hadn’t really read the manuscript.

**SUPERFLUOUS** (soo PUR floos us) adj. extra; unnecessary; redundant
- Andrew’s attempt to repair the light bulb was superfluous, since the light bulb had already been repaired.

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**THE WORDS**

Roughly 999 of the 1,000-page book’s pages were superfluous. The noun is superfluity (soo pur FLOO itee).
- Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

**SURFEIT** (SUR fit) n. excess; an excessive amount; excess or overindulgence in eating or drinking
- Thanksgiving meals are usually a surfeit for everyone involved.
- Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

**SURREPTITIOUS** (sur up TISH us) adj. sneaky; secret
- The dinner guest surreptitiously slipped a few silver spoons into his pocket as he was leaving the dining room.
- The baby-sitter mixed herself a surreptitious cocktail as soon as Mr. and Mrs. Robinson had driven away.

**SURROGATE** (SUR uh GIR) adj. substitute
- A surrogate mother is a woman who bears a child for someone else.
- This word is often a noun. A surrogate is a substitute. The nice father offered to go to prison as a surrogate for his son, who had been convicted of extortion.

**SYCOPHANT** (SIK uh fant) n. one who sucks up to others
- The French class seemed to be full of sycophants; the students were always bringing apples to the teacher and telling her how nice she looked.
- A sycophant is sycophantic (sik uh FAN tik). The exasperated boss finally fired his sycophantic secretary because he couldn’t stand being around someone who never had anything nasty to say.
- Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

**SYNTHESIS** (SIHN thiz us) n. the combining of parts to form a whole
- It seemed as though the meeting might end in acrimony and confusion until Raymond offered his brilliant synthesis of the two diverging points of view.
- A hot fudge sundae is the perfect synthesis of hot fudge and vanilla ice cream.

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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Q-U-I-C-K</th>
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<tr>
<td>Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. succumb</td>
<td>a. roughly</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. supercilious</td>
<td>b. yield</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. superficial</td>
<td>c. flatter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. superfluous</td>
<td>d. subdue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. surfeit</td>
<td>e. unnecessary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. surreptitious</td>
<td>f. on the surface only</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. surrogate</td>
<td>g. sneaky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. sycophant</td>
<td>h. excess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. synthesis</td>
<td>i. combining of parts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TACIT [TAS it] adj. implied; not spoken
Mrs. Rodgers never formally asked us to murder her husband, but we truly believed that we were acting with her tacit consent.
There was tacit agreement among the men that women had no business in their weekly poker game.
Tact is related to taciturn.

TACITURN [TAS it turn] adj. uncommunicative by nature
The chairman was so taciturn that we often discovered that we had absolutely no idea what he was thinking.
The taciturn physicist was sometimes thought to be brilliant simply because no one had ever heard him say anything stupid. Everyone misconceived his taciturnity; he was actually quite stupid. Taciturn is related to tact.

TANGENTIAL [tan JEN shal] adj. only superficially related to the matter at hand, not especially relevant; peripheral
The mayor’s speech bore only a tangential relationship to the topic that had been announced.
Stuart’s connection with our organization is tangential; he once made a phone call from the lobby of our building, but he never worked here.
When a writer or speaker “goes off on a tangent,” he or she is making a digression or straying from the original topic.
Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

TANGIBLE [TAN jib bul] adj. touchable; palpable
A mountain of cigarette butts was the only tangible evidence that Luther had been in our house.
There was no tangible reason I could point to, but I did have a sneaking suspicion that Ernst was an ax murderer.
The opposite of tangible is intangible.

TANUMOUNT [TAN uh mawnt] adj. equivalent to
Waving a banner for the visiting team at that football game would be tantamount to committing suicide; the home-team fans would tear you apart in a minute.
Yvonne’s method of soliciting donations from her employer was tantamount to extorting; she clearly implied that she would fire them if they didn’t pitch in.

TAUTOLOGICAL [TAU taw LAH jib kul] adj. redundant; circular
When everyone has a camera, “cameras will be universal” is a tautological statement, because “everyone having a camera” and “cameras being universal” mean the same thing.
The testing company’s definition of intelligence—“that which is measured by intelligence tests”—is tautological.

A tautology (TAW tahl uh jee) is a needless repetition of words, or saying the same thing using different words. For example: The trouble with bachelors is that they aren’t married.

TENACITY [TEN uh siss] n. boldness; recklessness; audacity
Our waiter at the restaurant had the tenacity to tell me he thought my table manners were atrocious.
The mountain climber had more tenacity than skill or sense. He tried to climb a mountain that was much too difficult and ended up in a heap at the bottom.

TEMPERATE [TEM pur et] adj. mild; moderate; restrained
Our climate is temperate during the spring and fall, but very nearly unbearable during the summer and winters.
The teacher’s temperate personality lent a feeling of calm and control to the kindergarten class.
The opposite of temperate is intemperate, which means not moderate.
Bucky’s intemperate use of oregano ruined the chili.
To temper something is to make it milder. Wilma laughed and shielded her body from every joke that even the comedians wished the would temper her appreciation.
Temperance is moderation, especially with regard to alcohol.

TENABLE [TEN uh bul] adj. defensible, as in one’s position in an argument; capable of being argued successfully; valid
Members of the Flat Earth Society continue to argue that the earth is flat, although even children dismiss their arguments as not tenable.
Unsound is unable to be defended.

TENACIOUS [TEN uh niss] adj. persistent; stubborn; not letting go
The foreign student’s tenacious effort to learn English won him the admiration of all the teachers at our school.
Louise’s grasp of geometry was not tenacious. She could handle the simpler problems most of the time, but she fell apart on quizzes and tests.
The ivy growing on the side of our house was so tenacious that we had to tear the house down to get rid of it.
To be tenacious is to have tenacity (TEN uh see).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TENET</th>
<th>TENTATIVE</th>
<th>TENUOUS</th>
<th>TESSE</th>
<th>TOUCHSTONE</th>
<th>TRANSCEND</th>
<th>TRANSGRESS</th>
<th>TRANSIENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi. a shared principle or belief</td>
<td>bi. experimental; temporary; uncertain</td>
<td>bi. flimsy; extremely thin</td>
<td>bi. using no unnecessary words; succinct</td>
<td>bi. not staying for a long time; temporary</td>
<td>bi. to go beyond or above; to surpass</td>
<td>bi. to violate (a law); to sin</td>
<td>bi. not staying for a long time; temporary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THEOLOGY**  
The study of God or religion

**TIRE**  
A prolonged, bitter speech

**TORPOR**  
A sluggishness; inactivity; opathy

**TOUCHSTONE**  
A standard; a test of authenticity or quality

**TRANSCEND**  
To go beyond or above; to surpass

**TRANSGRESS**  
To violate (a law); to sin
The child's smile was transient; it disappeared as soon as the candy bar was gone.

A hotel's inhabitants are transients; they come and go and the population changes every night.

Transients can also be a noun. A transient person is sometimes called a transient. Hoboes, medicsants, and other homeless people are often called transients.

A very similar word is transitory, which means not lasting very long. A transient breeze might provide transitory relief from the heat. The breeze didn't stay very long; the relief didn't last very long.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

Trepidation (trEP uh DAY shun) n fear; apprehension; nervous trembling

The nursery school students were filled with trepidation when they saw the other children in their class dressed in their Halloween costumes.

The trepidation of the swimming team was readily apparent: their knees were knocking as they lined up along the edge of the pool.

To be fearless is to be inaprid. The inaprid captain sailed his ship around the world with only a handkerchief for a sail.

Turbitude (Tur puH tod) n shameful wickedness; depravity

Larry was sacked by his boss because of a flagrant act of turbitude: he slept with the boss's wife.

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**UNIQUE**

(yoo BIK wuh fek) adj unique; also difference

To be unique is to stand out from the crowd.

The uniqueness of this restaurant is its good food and friendly service.

Note carefully the pronunciation of this word.

UNCONSCIOUS (un KAHN shuh nuh buhl) adj not controlled by conscience; unconscious

Leaving a small child unattended all day long is an unconscious act.

Murdering every citizen of that town was unconscious. Bert should be ashamed of himself for doing it.

Don't confuse this word with unconscious.

**UNCOUTH**

(un KOH choo ohs) adjishly; unctuous

Said oil is literally uncouth. A used-car salesman might be figuratively uncouth—that is, oily in the sense of being slick, sneaky, and insincere.

**UNIFORM**

(yoo nuh foorm) adj consistent; unchanging; the same for everyone

Traffic laws are similar from one state to the next, but they aren't uniform; each state has its own variations.

The school did not have a uniform grading policy; each teacher was free to mark students according to any system that he or she thought appropriate.

Something that is uniform has uniformity (yoo nuh FOR mih tee).

Uniforms are suits of clothing that are uniform in appearance from one person to the next.

**UNREMITTING**

(un ruh MIT ing) adj unceasing; unabated; relentless

Superman waged an unremitting battle against vigilantes everywhere.

**UNWITTING**

(un WIT ing) adj unintentional; ignorant; not aware

When Lep agreed to hold the door of the bank, he became an unwitting accomplice to the bank robbery.

My theft was unwitting: I hadn't meant to steal the car, but had unintentionally driven it away from the automobile dealership and parked it in my garage.

On the camping trip, Josephine unwittingly stepped into a bear trap and remained stuck in it for several days.
URBANE (ur BAYN) adj; poised; sophisticated; refined
The British count was witty and urbane, all the hosts and hostesses wanted to have him at their parties.
The new magazine was far too urbane to appeal to a wide audience outside the big city.

URBANITY (ur BAN uh tee) n a quality more often acquired in an urban setting than in a rural one.

USURP (yoo SURP) v to seize wrongfully
The children believed that their mother’s new boyfriend had usurped their real father’s rightful place in their family.
The founder’s scheming young nephew usurped a position of power in the company.
The noun is usurpation (yoo sur PAY shun).

UTILITARIAN (yoo IL TAR ee un) adj stressing usefulness or utility above all other qualities; pragmatic
Jaron’s interior-decorating philosophy was strictly utilitarian; if an object wasn’t genuinely useful, he didn’t want it in his home.
Utilitarian can also be a noun. Jaron, just mentioned, could be called a utilitarian.

UTOPIA (yoo TOH pee uh) n an ideal society
A country where nobody had to work and Monday Night Football was on television every night would be Quintie’s idea of utopia.
The little town wasn’t just a nice place to live, as far as Ed was concerned; it was utopia.
A utopia is someone with unrealistic or impractical plans or expectations for society. Such plans or expectations are utopian plans or expectations.
The opposite of a utopia is a dystopia.

 QUARZ - OXALZ #63
Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. ubiquitous a. oily
2. unconscious b. poised and sophisticated
3. unctuous c. everywhere or once
4. uniform d. pragmatic
5. unmarried e. reveals wrongfully
6. unwritten f. unscrupulous
7. urban g. on an ideal society
8. usurp h. unintentional
9. utilitarian i. consistent
10. utopia j. unceasing

V

VACILLATE (VAS uh layt) v to be indecisive; to waver
We invited James to spend Thanksgiving with us, but he vacillated for so long about whether he would be able to come that we finally became annoyed and dissuaded him.
Tyler vacillated about buying a new car. He couldn’t decide whether to get one or not.
The act of vacillating is called vacillation.

VAPID (VAP id) adj without liveliness; dull; spiritless
An apathetic person just doesn’t care about anything, and everything he does is vapid.
The novelist’s prose was so vapid that Mary couldn’t get beyond the first page.

VEHEMENT (VEE uh munt) adj intense; forceful; violent
Shaking his fist and stomping his foot, Gerry was vehement in his demands.
The noun is vehemence.

VENAL (VEEN ul) adj capable of being bribed; willing to do anything for money; corrupt
The venal judge reversed his favorable ruling when the defendant refused to make good on his promised bribe.
The young man’s interest in helping the sick old woman was strictly venal: he figured that if he was kind to her, she would leave him a lot of money in her will.
A venal person is a person characterized by venality (venal NAL uh tee).
Don’t confuse this word with venial (VEE nee ul), which means trivial or pardonable. A peccadillo is a venial, harmless sin.

VENERATE (VEN uh roy) v to revere; to treat as something holy, especially because of great age
Lester venerated his grandfather; he worshiped the very ground the old man limped on.
The members of the curious religion venerated Elvis Presley and hoped that the pope would declare him a saint.
A person who is worthy of being venerated is said to be venerable.

VERACITY (VER uh see uh see) n truthfulness
The veracity of young George Washington is legendary, but it may be apocryphal.
Veracity is truthful.

VERBOSE (vur BOHSH) adj using too many words; not succinct; circumlocutory
Someone who is verbose uses too many words when fewer words
WORD SMART

VEXISIMILITUDE (vex uh sih MIHT uh too d) n. similarity to reality; the appearance of truth; looking like the real thing.
They used pine cones and old truck tires to make statues of Hollywood collectibles that were remarkable for their vexisimilitude.

VERNACULAR (vur NAHK yuh lar) n. everyday speech; slang; idiom.
Our teacher said that we should save our vernacular for the street; in the classroom we should use proper grammar.

VESTIGE (vess ihj) n. a remaining bit of something; a last trace.
The unhappy young man found vestiges of his fiancée in the rubble, but the explosion had effectively ended their romance.
An old uniform and a tattered scrapbook were the only vestiges of the old man’s career as a professional athlete.
Your appendix is a vestige; it used to have a function, but now this organ does nothing.

The adjective form of vestige is vestigial (vess STIJ al). The appendix is referred to as a vestigial organ. It is still in our bodies, although it no longer has a function. It is a mere vestige of some function our digestive systems no longer perform.

Note carefully the pronunciation of both parts of speech.

VEX (vex) v. to annoy; to pester; to confuse.
Mary's vexed me by poking me with a long, sharp stick.
Stuck in the bottom of a deep well, I found my situation extremely vexing.

The act of vexing, or the state of being vexed, is vexation. Both the person who vexes and the person who is vexed can be said to exhibit vexation.

A vexed issue is one that is troubling or puzzling.

VIA (VEE uh) adj. capable of living; workable.
When a doctor says that a patient is no longer viable, it’s time to begin planning a funeral.
A focus is said to be viable when it has developed to the point where it is capable of surviving outside the womb.

Harry’s plan for storing marshmallows in the dome of the Capitol just wasn’t viable.

Something that is viable has viability (vye uh BIL uh too).

VICARIOS (vik AIR ee os) adj. experienced, performed, or suffered through someone else; living through the experiences of another as though they were one’s own experiences.

To take vicarious pleasure in someone else’s success is to enjoy that person’s success as though it were your own.

THE WORDS

We all felt a vicarious thrill when the mayor’s daughter won fourth prize in the regional kick-boxing competition.

VICISISSITUDE (vih sihS ih too d) n. upheaval; natural change; change in fortune.
The vicissitudes of the stock market were too much for Penny; she decided to look for a job that would stay the same from one day to the next.
The vicissitudes of the local political machine were such that one could never-quite be certain whom one was supposed to bribe.

VILIFY (vil uh fly) v. to say vile things about; to defame.
The teacher was reprimanded for vilifying the slow student in front of the rest of the class.

Our taxi driver passed briefly on the way to the airport in order to verify the driver of the car that had nearly forced him off the road.
The political debate was less a debate than a vilification contest. At first the candidates took turns saying nasty things about one another, then they stopped taking turns.

QUATS-CXK x QUH-Z #84

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answer in the back of the book.

| 1. vacillate | a. annoy |
| 2. rapid | b. be indecisive |
| 3. vehement | c. defame |
| 4. venal | d. capable of living |
| 5. xenore | e. experienced through another |
| 6. veracity | f. dull |
| 7. verbus | g. upheaval |
| 8. vexisimilitude | h. reverse |
| 9. vernacular | i. lost trace |
| 10. vestige | j. similarity to reality |
| 11. vex | k. truthfulness |
| 12. viable | l. corrupt |
| 13. vicarious | m. wordly |
| 14. vicisissitude | n. thing |
| 15. vilify | o. intervene |

VINDICATE (VIN duh kate) v. to clear from all blame or suspicion; to justify.
Tony, having been accused of stealing money from the cash register, was vindicated when the store manager counted the money again and found that none was missing at all.

Her’s claim of innocence appeared to be vindicated when several
drowned inmates at the state mental hospital confessed to the crime or which she had been accused.
A person who has been vindicated is a person who has found vindication.

VINDICATIVE [vin DIK iv] adj seeking revenge
Jeremy apologized for denting the fender of my car, but I was feeling vindictive so I found a $30 million lawsuit against him.
Samantha's vindictive ex-husband drove all the way across the country just to punch her in the nose.
To feel vindictive is to be filled with vindictiveness.

VIRTUOSO [vur choo WOH soh] n a masterful musician; a masterful practitioner in some other field
The concert audience fell silent when the virtuoso stepped forward to play the sonata on his electric banjo.
As an artist, he was a virtuoso; as a husband, he was a chump.
Virtuoso can also be an adjective. A virtuosic performance is a performance worthy of a virtuoso.

VIRULENT [VIR uh lunt] adj extremely poisonous; malignant; full of hate
The virulent disease quickly swept through the community, leaving many people dead and many more people extremely ill.
The snake was a member of a particularly virulent breed; its bite could kill an elephant.
Jonathan is a virulent antisemite; he says that all Jews should sit down and shut up and do what he tells them to.
To be virulent is to be characterized by virulence. Virulent is related to virus, not to virile, which means mostly.

VISIONARY [VIH zh ee nee] n a dreamer; someone with impractical goals or ideas about the future
My uncle was a visionary, not a businessman; he spent too much time tinkering with his antigravity generator and not enough time working in his plumbing business.
The candidate was a visionary; he had a lot of big ideas but no realistic plan for putting them into practice.
Visionary can also be an adjective. A visionary proposal is an idealistic and usually impractical proposal.

VITRIATE [VIH ee oat] vi to make impure; to pollute
For years a zealous group of individuals has campaigned against the use of fluoride in water, claiming that it has poisoned our bodies as well as our morals.

VITRIOLIC [vi tree AHL ik] adj caustic; full of bitterness
Vitriol is another name for sulfuric acid. To be vitriolic is so say or do something so nasty that your words or actions burn like acid.
The review of the new book was so vitriolic that we all wondered whether the reviewer had some personal grudge against the author.
WANTON (WAHN 'ahn) adj. malicious; unjustifiable; unprovoked; egregious
Terrorists commit wanton acts on a helpless populace to make a point.
Wanton also means intemperate. A hedonist lives a wanton life in the relentless, unrelenting pursuit of pleasure; an ascetic does not.

WILFUL (WILL ful) adj. deliberate, obstinate; insistent on having one's way.
The mother insisted that the killing committed by her son had not been wilful, but the jury apparently believed that he had known what he was doing.
When her mother told her she couldn't have a cookie, the wilful little girl simply snatched the cookie jar and ran out of the room with it. She had stolen the cookies wilfully. Note carefully the spelling of this word.

WISTFUL (WIST ful) adj. yearning; sadly longing.
I felt wistful when I saw Herb's fancy new car, I wished that I had enough money to buy one for myself.
The boys who had been cut from the football team watched wistfully as the team put together an undefeated season and won the state championship.

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Q-U-I-C-K  \* Q-U-I-Z  \#6

Match each word in the first column with its definition in the second column. Check your answers in the back of the book.

1. wanton  a. yearning
2. wilful    b. deliberate
3. wistful   c. malicious

Z

ZEALOUS (ZEL us) adj. enthusiastically devoted to something; fervent.
The zealous young policeman made so many arrests that the city jail soon became overcrowded.
The dictator's followers were so zealous that if he had asked them all to jump off a cliff, most of them would have done so.
To be zealous is to be full of zeal or fervent enthusiasm. An overtly zealous person is a zealot.
The following final exam drills contain every word in the Word Smart core list. If you get a question wrong, try it again. Perhaps you were careless. If not, look up all the answer choices for that question and review the definitions.

Final Exam Drill #1: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. Because Stan had been preoccupied during his dynamite-juggling demonstration, the jury felt that he was not ________ for the destruction of the audience.
   a. decorous  
   b. decimated  
   c. indiscreet  
   d. culpable  
   e. indiscreet

2. Sally was sad because Mr. Reeves, our English teacher, filled the margins of her term paper with ________ remarks about her spelling, grammar, and writing style.
   a. fatuous  
   b. heretical  
   c. ineptible  
   d. prepossessing  
   e. derisory

3. The fans were ________ when the football team lost its fifth game in a row.
   a. irascible  
   b. dispondent  
   c. rapacious  
   d. stigmatized  
   e. precipitous

voices ruined the sound of the chorus.
   a. unremitting  
   b. paternal  
   c. wearon  
   d. incoerc  
   e. dissonant

5. The baby kittens were so ________ that the nursery school children were able to pick them up—carry them around by the scruff of their necks, and dress them up in doll clothes.
   a. aloofed  
   b. peripatetic  
   c. docile  
   d. agrarian  
   e. nefarious

Final Exam Drill #2: BUDDY CHECK
For each word below, match the word on the left with the word most similar in meaning on the right.

1. litigious  
2. artless  
3. taciturn  
4. refute  
5. perjure  
6. affer  
7. gauche  
8. efficacious  
9. chronic  
10. propitious

   a. ingenuous  
   b. quenous  
   c. auspicious  
   d. perennial  
   e. avow  
   f. reticent  
   g. impugn  
   h. rebut  
   i. inapt  
   j. solicitous

Final Exam Drill #3: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of two words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. address  
2. rigorous  
3. consecrate  
4. abstain  
5. inordinate  
6. labintithine  
7. acrid  
8. analogous  
9. decadent  
10. connoisseur

   infer  
   punctilious  
   revere  
   delegat  
   willful  
   profane  
   amoral  
   perfurcatory  
   degenerate  
   virtuous

   construe  
   integral  
   venerate  
   forbear  
   didactic  
   secular  
   sardonic  
   cursory  
   profligate  
   malleable

   extrapolate  
   painstaking  
   delineate  
   forgo  
   intransigent  
   atheistic  
   virulent  
   desultory  
   magnanimous  
   aesthete
Final Exam Drill #4: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

   incessant  spawned  subversion  compel  enormity  insipid  condone  appropriate  extricate  mediate

Final Exam Drill #5: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The applicant's credentials were ________, but I didn't like the color of his necktie so I didn't hire him.
   a. irreplaceable  b. aloof  c. domestic  d. vitriolic  e. histrionic
2. Walter's skin took on a(n) ________ cast after his exposure to the pool of radioactive waste.
   a. orful  b. squallid  c. luminous  d. nebulous  e. gorulous
3. The police spent seven months working on the crime case but were never able to determine the identity of the ________
   a. demagogue  b. dilettante  c. egotist  d. molefactor  e. patriarch

Final Exam Drill #6: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

   coup  injunction  unwitting  expatriate  anachronistic  morose  partial  archaisin  complicity  hermetic

Final Exam Drill #7: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

   renaissance  equivocal  martial  esoteric  replenish  onerous  eclectic  aloof  relinquish  histrionic
   blasphemy  cryptic  contentious  sacrosanct  foment  ponderous  scrupulous  reclusive  capillulate  avuncular
   decration  requisite  belligerent  recondite  antagonize  arbitrary  fastidious  elliptical  succumb  gesticulating
Final Exam Drill #9: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. dyss - chasm
2. substantive - ethereal
3. equatorial - tachyous
4. doctrinaire - dogmatic
5. colloquial - pedantic
6. encroach - transgress
7. amorphous - nebulous
8. domestic - endemic
9. cogent - incisive
10. lethargic - capricious

Final Exam Drill #9: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word or phrase that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. Ananda _____ her daughter for putting the cat in the washing machine.
   a. expropriated
   b. disfranchised
   c. coerced
   d. broached
   e. chastised

2. David's salary was ______ his very limited skills; he was paid nothing.
   a. as spurious as
   b. untenable despite
   c. vehement in view of
   d. commensurate with
   e. acerbic notwithstanding

3. After several decades of peace, the little country grew ______ about defense and let its army slowly drift away.
   a. dissolute
   b. partisan
   c. polytheistic
   d. adamant
   e. complacent

Final Exam Drill #10: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. hierarchy - infer
2. extrapolate - infer
3. mercantil - volatile
4. impeccable - culpable
5. corroborate - refute
6. expedient - utilization
7. censure - approbation
8. propriety - decorum
9. emulato - pause
10. mandato - touchstone

Final Exam Drill #11: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. ameliorato - exacerbate
2. condito - equivocation
3. caricature - parody
4. scurrilous - mendacious
5. ophidian - mentor
6. bane - panacea
7. facile - arduous
8. philistine - erudite
9. absolute - commensurate
10. kinetic - stagnant
Final Exam Drill #12: QD0 MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.
1. awry overt salient manifest
2. duplicity ascendency guile chicanery
3. curruption remorse cadence pamelance
4. temperance sobriety salubrity obtrusion
5. nominal amiable affable congenial
6. choleric querulous petulant equable
7. dormant latent nostalgic inert
8. austere bereft sagacious prudent
9. copious bourgeois profuse myriad
10. ascetic austere frugal pejorative

Final Exam Drill #13: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.
1. serenipitous hapless
2. lugubrious facetious
3. espouse oppose
4. qualitative pejorative
5. exigency periphery
6. harbingler precursor
7. profound desecrated
8. despondent autocratic
9. engender decimate
10. prurine unalloyed

Final Exam Drill #14: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.
1. Reginald was as clever as he was unscrupulous, and he knew what he could not obtain by legitimate means he could always obtain through
   a. chicanery
   b. burlesque
   c. nihilism
   d. stratagem
   e. theology

Final Exam Drill #15: BUDDY CHECK
For each question below, match the word on the left with the word most similar in meaning on the right.
1. opaque a. obscure
2. ostensible b. secular
3. avocational c. mellificent
4. mundane d. prudent
5. judicious e. venal
6. mercenary f. specious
7. ramification g. repugnous
8. saccharine h. repercussion
9. onothic i. dejection
10. paucity j. anachronism
Final Exam Drill #16: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

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<td>desiccated</td>
<td>admonish</td>
<td>prevail</td>
<td>adulation</td>
<td>blatant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Exam Drill #17: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. uniform | monolithic | existential | homogeneous | slander | libel |
2. flout    | malign     | temerity    | pivotal     | libel    | impetuosity |
3. futility | audacity   | impetuous   | polity      | impetuous | polity |
4. meager   | tenuous    | prodigal    | profligate  | tenuous | prodigal |
5. indulgent | solitary   | heterogeneous | ubiquitous | prodigal | ubiqitous |
6. disparate | incongruous | succint    | robust      | incongruous | succint |
7. apprehensive | diffident | potent | ostentatious | diffident | potent |
8. cogent | eminent    | contrived  | ostentatious | eminent | contrived |
9. fortuitous | affected | languor    | volition     | affected | languor |
10. annoy  | safety     | |             | safety     | |

Final Exam Drill #18: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. zealous | Catholic   | nefarious   | avarice     | atheist    |
2. aloof    | agnostic   | avarice    | atheist     | avarice    |
3. mitigate | apathetic  | aversive   | avarice     | avarice    |
4. agnostic | avarice    | aversive   | avarice     | avarice    |
5. clique   | avarice    | aversive   | avarice     | avarice    |
6. coalition | aversive | avarice   | avarice     | avarice    |
7. husbandry | aversive | avarice   | avarice     | avarice    |
8. condescend | aversive | avarice | avarice     | avarice    |
9. sloth    | aversive   | avarice   | avarice     | avarice    |
10. flout   | aversive   | avarice   | avarice     | avarice    |

Final Exam Drill #19: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The Sanderons viewed the flaming image of the devil, which hovered above their house for thirteen days, as a(__) of evil to come.
   a. shakon
   b. portent
   c. periphery
   d. infidelity
   e. aberration

2. There was nothing (__ ) about Herbst’s scientific theories; in fact, they were quite shallow.
   a. sentient
   b. vociferous
   c. peremptory
   d. profound
   e. naptastic

3. The ___ author turned out a new book every week of his adult life.
   a. prolific
   b. canine
   c. dialectical
   d. implicit
   e. contiguous

4. The ___ boys stubbornly refused to call off their rock fight, despite the pleadings of their mothers.
   a. recalitrant
   b. pacific
   c. equilibrarian
   d. exemplary
   e. fervent

5. Hall’s disappointed wife ___ him for being a lazy, foul-smelling, obnoxious slob.
   a. instigated
   b. reproached
   c. flanned
   d. desecrated
   e. belied
Final Exam Drill #20: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. profess
2. extrovert
3. hostile
4. caricature
5. debilitate
6. plebeian
7. depravity
8. infinitesimal
9. grandiloquent
10. fatality

Expected
intraspective
biased
touchstone
intervene
ferocious
deprehensive
grandiloquent

Final Exam Drill #21: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. avaricious
2. apperceive
3. reprehensible
4. transient
5. unyieldable
6. spoilt
7. exercising
8. abberation
9. fidelity
10. circumspect

Expected
avaricious
apperceive
transient
unyieldable
spoilt
abberation
fidelity
circumspect

Final Exam Drill #22: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. odie
2. rustic
3. circuitous
4. treat
5. imperial
6. redemption
7. revolting
8. dawd
9. apotheosis
10. inaugurate

Expected
circumvent
urban
oblique
beleaguered
servile
repentation
stymie
epitome
about
Final Exam Drill #24: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. preempt
2. hermitude
3. incipient
4. burgeon
5. belittle
6. die-un
7. luminous
8. mortified
9. precipitate
10. inscrutable

svamp
confluence
culminating
arbitrate
stymie
paradigm
incandescent
chagrined
prudent
obscure

Final Exam Drill #25: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. intrinsic
2. fortuitous
3. cliché
4. belligerent
5. inept
6. vitriolic
7. gravity
8. noxious
9. finesse
10. incorrigible

innate
gregarious
verisimilitude
indignant
hackneyed
animosities
austerity
obsequious
competence
incorrigible

omnipotent
convivial
maxim
pertinent
placid
placidus
vicissitude
pernicious
proficiency
recalcitrant

inherent
amicable
epigram
contentious
conducive
prolix
sobriety
deleterious
euphemism
diffident
obdurate

Final Exam Drill #26: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. catalyst
2. concord
3. discord
4. ingenuous
5. inflated
6. categorical
7. novel
8. panemony
9. permeate
10. tentative

coherence
dissension
consensus
urbane
beguiled
contingent
boreal
munificence
pervade
definitive

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Final Exam Drill #27: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The trees, vines, and other plants in the tropical forest were truly remarkable, but it was the exotic _______ that caught the zoologist’s attention.
   a. occluded
   b. compendium
   c. ocumen
   d. fauna
   e. surfait

2. Herb hated to pay extra for a fancy name, but he had discovered that he greatly preferred expensive brand-name products to the cheaper _______.
   a. generic
   b. hypothetical
   c. superfluous
   d. amorphous
   e. contentious

3. After several years of disappointing crops, the enormous harvest left the farmers confronting a(n) _______ of soybeans.
   a. alacrity
   b. blight
   c. glut
   d. chiasm
   e. debacle

4. The previously undefeated team found it difficult to cope with the _______ of defeat.
   a. attrition
   b. ignominy
   c. prerequisite
   d. pean chant
   e. neologism

5. The darkening sky indicated to all of us that a thunderstorm was _______.
   a. ambivalent
   b. imminent
   c. conciliatory
   d. inherent
   e. lugubrious
Final Exam Drill #28: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. hegemony heyday
2. tortuous nominal
3. deride venerate
4. deduce infer
5. supercilious servile
6. plocid nanoculant
7. reverence insolence
8. extraneous extrinsic
9. levity irony
10. onerous exacting

Final Exam Drill #29: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. comprise placate oppose nullify
2. bugule banisse cope delude
3. provident egregious flagrant unconscionable
4. adept adroit anecdotal dexterous
5. iconoclast insurgent maverick prodigy
6. cadence incalculative acumen acuity
7. gratuitous superficial saporous inordinate
8. incongruous untruth anomalous eccentric
9. vacillate incense foment instigate
10. aberaion vestige anomaly singularity

Final Exam Drill #30: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. mandate martyr
2. loud defame
3. halcyon complement
4. disdain supercilious
5. distinguish distend
6. eulogize censure
7. apocolypse covenant
8. segregate sequester
9. quixotic utopian
10. microcosm magnate

THE FINAL EXAM
Final Exam Drill #31: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The ________ person bowed deeply and said, "Yes, sir, of course, sir," whenever I requested anything.
a. verbose
b. incumbant
c. evanescent
d. malingerer
e. ossequious

2. Because he had never lost a tennis match, Luther believed himself to be ________ on the court.
a. oscillic
b. deleterious
c. omnipotent
d. inane
e. amorous

3. Our teacher was so ________ in his interpretation of the novel that it was difficult to believe he had taken any pleasure in reading it.
a. pedantic
b. laudable
c. intrepid
d. inveeterate
e. coherent

4. The prisoners were all ________ as they were led off to the firing squad, but they were shot all the same.
a. perfunctory
b. concise
c. virulent
d. proviac
e. penitent

5. The divisive issue ________ the community; half the residents seemed to be strongly for it, and half strongly against.
a. circumscribed
b. polarized
c. assuaged
d. costigated
e. disseminated
**Final Exam Drill #32: RELATIONSHIPS**
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

| 1. reverence | disdain |
| 2. conjure | incant |
| 3. profound | superficial |
| 4. protract | curtail |
| 5. fauna | glut |
| 6. depreciate | lament |
| 7. abridge | augment |
| 8. eccentric | orthodox |
| 9. iconoclast | maverick |
| 10. idiosyncratic | conventional |

**Final Exam Drill #33: ODD MAN OUT**
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

| 1. infamous | abhorrence | innocuous | nefarious |
| 2. assimilate | abols | mitigate | alleviate |
| 3.iacastic | unchaos | concise | terse |
| 4. relinquish | renounce | forsake | insult |
| 5. axiom | maxim | warrigate | precept |
| 6. virulent | tantamount | adverse | baneful |
| 7. catharsis | abhorrence | remorse | animosity |
| 8. idiosyncrasy | eccentricity | complacency | affliction |
| 9. antecedent | precursor | precedent | recrimination |
| 10. exonerate | patronize | excoriate | vindicate |

**Final Exam Drill #34: RELATIONSHIPS**
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

| 1. slothful | assiduous |
| 2. affluent | opulent |
| 3. consummate | rudimentary |
| 4. chastisement | amnesty |
| 5. scrofulous | cajoler |
| 6. implication | allusion |
| 7. quantitative | qualitative |
| 8. agenda | itinerary |
| 9. pragmatic | quixotic |
| 10. paradox | anomaly |

**Final Exam Drill #35: BUDDY CHECK**
For each question below, match the word on the left with the word most similar in meaning on the right.

| 1. torpid | a. subservient |
| 2. sublime | b. astuteness |
| 3. recapitulate | c. ingenuous |
| 4. occlude | d. subtlety |
| 5. repelate | e. provincial |
| 6. subordinate | f. inert |
| 7. parochial | g. transcendent |
| 8. credulous | h. reiterate |
| 9. recant | i. satiated |
| 10. nuance | j. repudiates |

**Final Exam Drill #36: RELATIONSHIPS**
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

| 1. colloquial | contiguos |
| 2. auspicious | portentious |
| 3. moribund | viable |
| 4. aristocratic | parochial |
| 5. perquisite | prerequisite |
| 6. stagnation | metamorphosis |
| 7. abjunct | ruggish |
| 8. turbid | sordidness |
| 9. cosmopolitan | urbaine |
| 10. denier | lampoon |

**Final Exam Drill #37: COMPLETIONS**
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The ______ spring weather was a great relief to all of us who had struggled through the long, harsh winter.
   a. abortive 
   b. volatile 
   c. temperate 
   d. pragmatic 
   e. intrinsic
2. I made an _______ effort to repair the leak, but my improvised patch didn’t hold and I soon realized that I would have to call a plumber.
   a. vindictive
   b. tentative
   c. pristine
   d. acid
   e. caustic

3. The adoring members of the tribe _______ their old king even though he was blind and senile.
   a. squandered
   b. extrapolated
   c. bequeathed
   d. execrable
   e. revoluted

4. The hikes were _______ by the billions of mosquitoes that descended upon them as they hit the trail.
   a. exulted
   b. vitiated
   c. palliated
   d. vexed
   e. promulgated

5. Seeing the pictures of our old home made us feel _______ and nostalgic.
   a. pale
   b. luxuriant
   c. wistful
   d. infamous
   e. impartial

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Final Exam Drill #38: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. ardent
   a. indifferent
   b. adherent
   2. poigniant
   3. poigniant
   4. inundate
   5. object
   6. proselytize
   7. latent
   8. burnout
   9. immutable
   10. perfidy

Final Exam Drill #39: ODD MAN OUT
Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. quixotic
   a. scintillating
   2. antipathy
   3. absolute
   4. static
   5. destitute
   6. altruist
   7. vexed
   8. comprehensive
   9. abstract
   10. discomfit

Final Exam Drill #40: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. plethora
   2. autonomy
   3. aggregate
   4. vocation
   5. extraneous
   6. implicit
   7. invasive
   8. acerbic
   9. instigation
   10. adulterated

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dearth
subjugation
augment
ovation
intrinsinc
inferred
eulogy
caricature
hyperbole
unaligned
Final Exam Drill #41: COMPLETIONS

For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. An ______ current of dissatisfaction among the soldiers indicated to the ambassador that revolution was becoming a possibility.
   a. recipient
   b. inert
   c. impervious
   d. implicable
   e. inept

2. The ______ surgeon sewed Lane’s finger to her forehead.
   a. bucolic
   b. urbane
   c. cosmopolitan
   d. infinitiesmal
   e. incompetent

3. Irene’s ______ cure for her husband’s snoring was a paper bag tied snugly around his head.
   a. agnostic
   b. congenital
   c. extrinsic
   d. ingenious
   e. diluent

4. Myron looked harmless, but there was nothing ______ about his plan to execute the human race.
   a. terse
   b. innocuous
   c. mendacious
   d. nominal
   e. preeminent

5. Attempting to bask in reflected glory, the candidate ______ the names of eleven past presidents in his speech to the convention of schoolteachers.
   a. absolved
   b. implicated
   c. litigated
   d. invoked
   e. allocated

Final Exam Drill #42: RELATIONSHIPS

For each question below, decide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S), in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. ambiance          milieu
   2. literal          figurative
   3. hypothetical     empirical
   4. subjugate        enfranchise
   5. effect           integral
   6. congenital       innate
   7. enslave          expedite
   8. peripheral       tangential
   9. unrep            abdicato
   10. consumebrate     absolve

Final Exam Drill #43: ODD MAN OUT

Each question below consists of four words. Three of them are related in meaning. Find the word that does not fit.

1. cacophony          antagonism
   2. discord          benefactor
   3. apathy           indifference
   4. amenability       tractable
   5. clandestine       surreptitious
   6. intrepid          brittle
   7. v ain             apoplectic
   8. putative         overt
   9. desultory         derisory
   10. conciliate        prescrib

Final Exam Drill #44: BUDDY CHECK

For each question below, match the word on the left with the word on the right that is most nearly in OPPOSITE of the right.

1. differential         a. irrelevant
   2. remonstrate         b. assiduous
   3. tacit               c. amorous
   4. Clement            d. explicit
   5. indulgent           e. acquisitive
   6. amiable             f. intemperate
   7. aloof               g. inveter
   8. lucid               h. antagonistic
   9. partition           i. enigmatic
   10. affinity           j. resolute
Final Exam Drill #45: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, divide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. artifex
2. abuse
3. repulse
4. exult
5. dissimulate
6. edify
7. pervasive
8. narcissist
9. precipitate
10. polemical

imagination
myopic
premise
laud
appreciate
obscure
ruminating
epicentric
stigmatizes
contentious

Final Exam Drill #46: COMPLICTIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The three-year-old was ______ in his refusal to taste the broccoli.
   a. recondite
   b. didactic
   c. fortuitous
   d. revolute
   e. genial

2. We ______ the fine print in the document but were unable to find the clause the lawyer had mentioned.
   a. scrutinized
   b. reconciling
   c. exculpated
   d. coiled
   e. accrued

3. A state in which one can see, hear, feel, smell, and taste little or nothing is known as ______ deprivation.
   a. aggrogio
   b. subjective
   c. sensory
   d. sensual
   e. sensuous

Final Exam Drill #47: RELATIONSHIPS
For each question below, divide whether the pair of words are roughly similar (S) in meaning, roughly opposite (O) in meaning, or unrelated (U) to each other.

1. cliché
2. molecule
3. justifiable
4. defame
5. idyllic
6. inexorable
7. despondent
8. levity
9. dogma
10. abullent

platitude
macroeconomic
contiguous
launder
bucolic
irrevocable
sanguine
zeal
braven
stoic

Final Exam Drill #48: COMPLETIONS
For each question below, choose the word that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

1. The gasoline spill had so thoroughly ______ the town’s main well that it was possible to run an automobile on tap water.
   a. exulted
   b. exalted
   c. engendered
   d. adulterated
   e. preempted
2. Mr. Jones ________ the teenagers after they had driven the stolen car into his living room and put a dent in his new color TV.
   a. admonished
   b. usurped
   c. avenged
   d. alleged
   e. professed

3. Henry’s legs were so severely injured in the roller-skating accident that he didn’t become fully ________ again until more than a year later.
   a. decedent
   b. exemplified
   c. querulous
   d. portentous
   e. ambulatory

4. The kitchen in the new house had an electronic vegetable peeler, an automatic dish scraper, a computerized meat slicer, and dozens of other futuristic ________
   a. proponents
   b. genres
   c. amenities
   d. mendicants
   e. protagonists

5. When Joe began collecting stamps, he hoped that the value of his collection would ________ rapidly; instead, the collection has slowly become worthless.
   a. qualify
   b. appreciate
   c. polarize
   d. belabor
   e. rebuke
Despite all the talk about "schooling aptitude" and "reasoning ability," the verbal Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is primarily a vocabulary test. If you don't know the words on the test, you won't earn a good score. It's as simple as that.

If you learn every word on the main word list in this book, you'll have a big advantage on the SAT. The bigger your vocabulary, the better you'll do. But not every word on the main list is the sort of word that is tested on the SAT. If you're getting ready to take the SAT or a similar standardized test, you should focus your attention on the words in the following list, which we call the Hit Parade.

The Hit Parade is a list of the words tested most frequently on the SAT, in order of their frequency on the SAT. We created the Hit Parade by using a computer to analyze all released SATs. Princeton Review students use the Hit Parade to get the maximum possible mileage out of their vocabularies and improve their verbal SAT scores. Not all Hit Parade words appear on our main word list, but all of them have appeared on recent SATs.

We've included short definitions to make it easier for you to learn the words. These definitions aren't always exactly like the ones you'll find in the dictionary or the main word list of this book; they're the definitions of the words as they are tested on the SAT.

Keep in mind that there are not only words you need to know for the SAT. They're just the words that have been tested most frequently in the past—the words that the Educational Testing Service's question writers tend to come back to over and over again. Also keep in mind that the words near the top of the list are more likely to turn up than the words near the bottom.

Some SATs are absolutely loaded with Hit Parade words; others don't contain as many. One of the most important things the Hit Parade will teach you is the level of the vocabulary on the test. Once you get a feel for this level, you'll be able to spot other possible SAT words in your reading.

After you finish the Hit Parade, you might want to memorize the GRE Hit Parade that follows. All the words in Word Smart, by the way, are SAT-type words.
complacent smug; self-satisfied; pleased with oneself; contented to a fault
guile cunning; duplicity
squander to waste
incessant unceasing; never-ending
laudable worthy of praise
deter to prevent; to stop; to keep from doing something
redundant repetitive; unnecessary; excessively wordy
infamous shamefully wicked; having (and deserving) an extremely bad reputation; disgraceful
provocative exciting; attracting attention
der-pravity moral corruption
gravity seriousness (secondary meaning)
banal unoriginal; ordinary
extol to praise
epheusy pleasant sound (the opposite is cacophony)
deride to ridicule; to laugh at contemptuously
insipid dull; banal
austere unadorned; stern; forbidding; without much money
expedite to make faster or easier
hersy an opinion violently opposed to established beliefs
novel new; original
philanthropy love of mankind; donating to charity
tentative experimental; temporary; uncertain
deference submission to another’s will; respect; courtesy
vacillate to be indecisive; to waver back and forth.
fervor passion
dissipate without passion; objective; neutral
pragmatic practical; down-to-earth; based on experience rather than theory
rigorous strict; harsh; severe
solemn serious; grave
alleviate to lessen; to relieve, usually temporarily or incompletely; to make bearable
negligence carelessness
compulsive standing out; obvious
advocate to speak in favor of; to support
ecstatic exhilarant; practicing self-denial
profound deep; insightful (the opposite of superficial)
ironic satiric; unexpected
dogmatic arrogantly assertive of unproven ideas; arrogantly claiming
condone to overlook; to permit to happen
dissent disagreement
volition will; conscious choice
voluntary willing; unfurled
didactic instructive; intended to instruct
desperate different; incompatible

disparage to belittle; to say uncomplimentary things about, usually in a somewhat in direct way
ephemeral short-lived; fleeting; not lasting
complain compliant yielding; submissive
prosaic dull; unimaginative; like prose
profuse flowing; extravagant
expedient providing an immediate advantage; serving one’s immediate self-interest
fastidious meticulous; demanding
belligerent combative; quarrelsome; wagging war
astute perceptive; intelligent
languish to become weak, listless, or depressed
censure to condemn severely for doing something bad
stagnation motionlessness; inactivity
mitigate to lessen the severity of something reprehensible worth of blame or censure
engender to create; to produce
exemplary outstanding; setting a great example
neutral unbiased; not taking sides; objective
relegate to banish; to send away
anecdote a brief, entertaining story
scanty inadequate; minimal
fallacious false
acclaim praise; applause; admiration
uniform consistent; unchanging; the same for everyone
incoherent jumbled; chaotic; impossible to understand
repress to hold down
articulate speaking clearly and well
solicit to ask for; to seek
reproach to scold
condescend to stoop to someone else’s level, usually in an offensive way; to patronize
orthodox conventional; adhering to established principles or doctrines, especially in religion; by the book
indolence laziness
congenial agreeably suitable; pleasant
preclude to prevent; to make impossible; to shut out
apprehensive worried; anxious
effectual detailed; careful, thorough
arrogant feeling superior to others; snooty
efface to erase; to rob away the features of
tactless untactful by nature
ameliorate to make better or more tolerable
acquiesce to give in; to agree
atrophy to waste away from lack of use
dubious doubtful; uncertain
flagrant shocking; outstandingly bad
concise brief and to the point; succinct
immutable unchangeable; permanent
static stationary; not changing or moving (not radio fuzzy)
crude/oblivious to change; glib
blasphemy irreverence; an insult to something held sacred; profanity
coalesce to come together as one; to fuse; to smile
lax careless; not diligent; relaxed
cryptic mysterious; mystifying
levity lightness; frivolity; unseriousness
ambivalent undecided; blowing hot and cold
innate existing since birth; inherent
sycophant one who suck s up to others
amiable friendly
asoteric hard to understand; understood by only a select few; peculiar
extraneous irrelevant; extra; unnecessary; unimportant
tellus boring
caustic like acid; corrosive
inadvertent lax; careless; without intention
exhaustive thorough; complete
incongruous not harmonious; not consistent; not appropriate
belittle to make to seem little
unprecedented happening for the first time; novel; never seen before
dignity to go off the subject
approach to soothe; to pacify by giving is to
frivolity not serious; not solemn; with levity
instigate to provoke; to stir up
sage wise; possessing wisdom derived from experience or learning
predecessor someone or something that came before another
jeopardy danger
tangible touchable; palpable
indulgent lenient; yielding in desire
reverse sadness; regret
pivotal crucial
scrupulous strict; careful; hesitant for ethical reasons
refute to disprove; to prove to be false
respite a rest; a period of relief
static indifferent (at least outwardly) to pleasure or pain; to joy or grief
fortunate to return fortune
volatile quick to evaporate; highly unstable; explosive
peripheral unimportant
hedonistic pleasure seeking indulgent
idiot a peculiar expression
benefactor a generous donor
breath breath
apocryphal of doubtful origin; false
virtuoso a masterful musician; a masterful practitioner in some other field
slander to defame; to speak maliciously of someone
animosity resentment; hostility; ill will
deplete to use up; to reduce; to lessen
emity friendship
stringent strict; restrictive
voluminous very large; spacious (this word has nothing to do with sound)
suspicious favorable; promising; pointing to a good result
fickle capricious; whimsical; unpredictable
laziness sluggishness; laziness; drowsiness; indolence
huckster bawd; overvalued; trite (a cliché is a huckster expression)
assum to accumulate
willful deliberate; abstinate; consistent on having one's way
basilion stronghold; fortress; fortified place
repudiate fear; apprehension nervous trembling
descrate to profane a holy place (the opposite is consecrate)
fortuitous accidental; occurring by chance
vehement urgent; passionate
atmosphere to soothe; to pacify; to ease the pain of; to relieve
profligacy extravagant; enormous
harbor sluggishness; inactivity; apathy
futile useless
superfluous hasty; patronizing
prudent careful; having foresight
verbosely wordy; overly talkative
pedestrian common; ordinary; banal (secondary meaning)
narcissist harm less; banal
fanatic one who is extremely devoted to a cause or idea
enhance to make better; to augment
retract to take back; to withdraw; to pull back
ambiguous unclear in meaning; confusing; capable of being interpreted in at least two similarly plausible ways
poultice crumples
resign to repeat; to take back formally
subtle not obvious; able to make fine distinctions; ingenious; crafty
zealous fervent; enthusiastically devoted to something
benign gentle; not harmful; kind; mild
compliant yielding; submissive
simulate to strive to equal or excel; usually through imitation
immovable too many to number or count; many
meander to wander slowly; like a winding river
authoritarian like a dictator
brown bulk muscle
contrite deeply apologetic; remorseful
exemplify to serve as an example of
facilitate to make easier
hypothetical uncertain; unproven
recalcitrant stubbornly defiant of authority or control
ambulatory able to walk; walking
diffident timid; lacking in self-confidence
drear to talk on and on in a dull way
gullible overly trusting; willing to believe anything
maimed damaged; bruised
nullify to make unimportant
parsimony stinginess
propriety propriety; good manners
reprenant to make yet or strong again
skeptical doubting (opposite of gullible)
tenacious tough; hard to defeat
animated nithe; moving
authentic real
bias prejudice; tendency; tilt
blithe carefree; cheerful
death a lack of; scarcity
devot to change the direction of; to utter the course of; to amuse
enthral to thrill
heed to listen to
hindrance an obstruction; an annoying interference or delay
irresistible irritating
merger a joining or marriage
nostalgia a sentimental longing for the past; homesickness
pretentious pompous; self-important; ETS-like
saccharine sweet; excessively or disgustingly sweet
stanza a section of a poem; verse
venerate to revere; to treat as something holy, especially because of
great age
villify to say vile things about; to defame
THE GRE HIT PARADE

The GRE (Graduate Record Examination) is the SAT for graduate school. Two of the sections on the GRE are verbal. How well you do in these sections is almost exclusively determined by your vocabulary. If you know a lot of words, you'll do fine; if you don’t, you'd better start learning some. Today, the GRE Hit Parade, like the SAT Hit Parade, includes those words most likely to appear on a GRE. We have listed them roughly in order of importance. All of these words appear frequently, but manifest is marginally more likely to appear than conventional, and so on.

These are not the only words that can appear on the GRE, but they are the most likely. This list is a start. If you know all of these words, get cracking on the other Word Smart definitions. (Many GRE Hit Parade words are also on the Word Smart core list.) It should go without saying that you need to know all the words on the SAT Hit Parade, too.

manifest visible; evident
conventional common; customary; unexceptional
partisan one who supports a particular person, cause, or idea
contentious argumentative; quarrelsome
lament to mourn
affusion an indirect reference to something else, especially something in literature; a hint
arbiter one who decides; a judge
inherent part of the essential nature of something; intrinsic
paradox a true statement or phenomenon that nonetheless seems to contradict itself; an untrue statement or phenomenon that nonetheless seems logical
cynic one who deeply distrusts human nature; one who believes people are motivated only by selfishness
exposition expounding or explaining; explanatory treatise
consensus unanimity or near unanimity; comprehensive covering or including everything
sagacious wise; possessing wisdom derived from experience or learning
precipitate to cause to happen abruptly
pervade to spread throughout
discourse to converse; to formally discuss a subject

- conjugate to summon or bring into being as if by magic
- sanction authorize or approve; ratify or confirm
- genial cheerful and pleasant; friendly; helpful
- indulgent lenient; yielding to desire
- inert inactive; sluggish; not reacting chemically
- levee an embankment designed to prevent the flooding of a river
- erratic unpredictable or wandering
- luminous giving off light; glowing; bright
- abstinent abstinence; voluntarily not doing something
- placid pleasantly calm; peaceful
- exuberant extremely joyful or vigorous; profuse in growth
- impede to hinder; to obstruct; to slow something down
- permeate to spread or seep through; to penetrate
- audacity boldness; reckless daring; impertinence
- indignant angry, especially as a result of something unjust or unworthy
- implicit implied rather than expressly stated
- renaissance renaissance a rebirth or revival
- superfusious extra; unnecessary
- litigate to try in court; to engage in legal proceedings
- vex to annoy; to pester; to confuse
- anomaly an aberration; an irregularity; a deviation
- bereave to deprive or leave destitute, especially through death
- connoisseur an expert, particularly in matters of art or taste
- corroborate to confirm; to back up with evidence
- frenetic frantic; frenzied
- polemic a powerful argument made in refutation of something
- synthesis the combining of parts to form a whole
- feasible able to be done
- forbear to refrain from; to abstain
- genre an artistic class or category
- vindicate to clear from all blame or suspicion
- conciliatory making peace; attempting to resolve a dispute through good will
- squallid filthy; repulsive; wretched; degraded
- inept clumsy; incompetent
- mandatory authoritative; ordered or commanded; necessary
- disseminate to scatter or spread widely
- aesthetic choosing the best from many sources; drawn from many sources
- idyllic charming in a rustic way; naturally peaceful
- pristine original; unspoiled; pure
- prodigy an extremely talented child; an extraordinary accomplishment or occurrence
- frugal economical; penny-pinching
- qualify to modify or restrict
- decorous in good taste; orderly
- infer to conclude; to deduce
- ostentatious excessively conspicuous; showing off
- pathology the science of diseases; any deviation from a healthy, normal condition
plumb to measure the depth of something; preposterous; doubtful; false; subjugate to; subdue and dominate; enslave; visionary a dreamer; someone with impractical goals or ideas about the future
reciprocal mutual; shared; interchangeable; unskillful to hide the seriousness of something with excuses or apologies; substantive having substance; real; essential; solid; substantial; surreptitious sneaky; secret; equivocal ambiguous; intentionally confusing; capable of being interpreted in more than one way; flippancy frivolously shallow and disrespectful; impervious not allowing anything to pass through; impenetrable; judicial exercising sound judgment; lexicom using few words, especially to the point of being rude; piquant pungent; satiric using sarcasm or irony; sullen gloomy or dismal; tacit implied; not spoken; tractable easily managed or controlled; obedient; impromptu without preparation; on the spur of the moment; parallel a comparison made between two things; sterile unimaginative; unfruitful; infertile; debauchery corruption by sensuality; immorality; wild living; deleterious harmful; disinterested unbiased; fecund fertile; productive; hermetic impervious to external influence; airtight; salubrious promoting health; foster to promote the growth or development of; transitory not staying for a long time; temporary; cacophony a harsh-sounding mixture of words, voices, or sounds; good to urge forcefully; to taunt someone into doing something; implement to carry out; ingenuous unworldly simple; candid; naive; malleable easy to shape or bend; pungent forceful; sharp or biting to the taste or smell; towar to linger on the taste or smell of something; correlate to find or show the relationship of two things; facetious humorous; not serious; clumsily humorous; kinship natural or family relationship; putative rude; creaky; ill-tempered; rampart a fortification; a bulwark or defense; tenacity boldness; recklessness; audacity; turbulent savagely brutal; aggressively hostile; invasive cutting right to the heart of the matter
observation something not typical; a deviation from the standard; obstinately spoiling or moderate, especially in eating and drinking; alertly cheerful readiness; liveliness or eagerness; allocate to distribute; assign; allot; arid extremely dry; unimaginative; dull; begat to cause or produce; to engender; conundrum a puzzle; riddle; debacle violent breakdown; sudden overthrow; sloganistic condescending; loose verse; expenditure an exceedingly large amount; garrulous extremely or talkative; wordy or diffuse; intransigent uncompromising; stubborn; maverick a nonconformist; a rebel; turpitude shameful wickedness or depravity; axiom a self-evident rule or truth; a widely accepted saying; beneficent doing good; capricious unpredictable; likely to change at any moment; circumlocution an indirect expression; use of words or evasive language; impugn to attack; especially to attack the truth or integrity of something; incursion a hustle invasion; invective insulting or abusive speech; placate to pacify; to appease; to soothe; temperment one’s disposition or character; antiseptic free from germs; exceptionally clean; live not strict or firm; careless or negligent; loose or slack; accede an award or honor; high praise; ambiguous hardworking; busy; diligent; break to bear or tolerate; to put up with something; desiccate to dry out; erudite scholarly; deeply learned; flag to weaken; to slow down; impudent bold; impertinent; helpful annoying; harmful; divergent differing in opinion; deviating; effluvium a disagreeable or noxious vapor; an exuding gas; evanescence vanishing or fading; scarcely perceptible; exigent demanding prompt action; urgent; exonerate to free completely from blame; flaccid to show off; to display ostentatiously; inprovident lacking prudent foresight; careless; intractable inescapable; unavoidable; mellifluous sweetly flowing; osset to swing back and forth; to fluctuate; osculate to convert into; to become rigid; probity integrity; uprightness; honesty; proselytize to convert someone from one religion or doctrine to another; to recruit converts to a religion or doctrine
WORD SMART

WORD ROOTS YOU SHOULD KNOW
We discussed the use of roots on pages 19-21. Here is a list of the most helpful roots to know. As we said earlier, learning roots helps you memorize words. We've concentrated on roots that will help you learn the Word Smart words, but the Root Parade will help you memorize hundreds of other words, too. / When you look up the definition of a word on this list, try to relate that definition to the root. Some students go through this list one root at a time. They look up all the words under one root and learn the definitions together. As always, whatever works for you is best.

You Don't Have to Memorize These Roots—
You Already Know Them!

To show you how each root relates to words you already know, each list includes at least one word or two. For example, the letters "spic" come from a Latin word meaning to look or see, as in the easy words conspicuous and spectacular. Recognizing that will help you memorize the definition of the difficult word auspicious, which is on the same list. And you thought you didn't know Latin!

You will notice that the same root can be spelled in different ways. We have included the most common spelling variations in the heading. Remember that roots tell us the common heritage of words thousands of years old, and over the centuries spelling variations occur.

A (without)
annah
atheist
atypical
anonymous
apathy
apophasis
atrophy
apartheid
anomaly
agnostic

AB/ASS
(aff, away from, apart, down)
abstract
abhor
abolish
abstract
abnormal
abdicant
abnegate
aboslution
abstruse
abrogate

AL/AL/ALTER (other, another)
alternative
allies
alibi
alien
alter ego
alienation
altruist
allegation
allegory

AM (love)
amateur
amatory
amorous
enamored
amity
paramour
inamorata
amenable
amicable

AMB (to go, to walk)
ambitious
ambit
amble
ambulance
ambulatory
ambulator
ambulance
amalgamate

AMB/AMPH (around)
amphitheater
ambit
ambience
ambient

AMB/AMPH
(both, more than one)
ambiguous
amphibian
amphibious
amphibious

ANIM (life, mind, soul, spirit)
unsanitary
animosity
equanimity
magnanimous
pallid

abscond
abjure
abominous
ablation
aboriate
absciss
abscant
AC/ACh (sharp, bitter)
acid
acock
acerbic
exacerbate
acid
acrimonious

ACT/AG (to do, to drive, to force, to lead)
act
agent
agile
agitate
exacting
litigate
prodigious
prodigal
prodigious
pedagogue
demagogue
synagogue
coagent
exigent

AD/AL (to, toward, near)
add
adjacent
addict
adorn
admirable
address
adhere
admit
administer
adore
advice
adjourn
adultery
advocate
allure
alley

249
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>WORD ROOTS YOU SHOULD KNOW</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEL/BELL (war)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebel</td>
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<tr>
<td>belligerent</td>
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<tr>
<td>bellicose</td>
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<tr>
<td>antebellum</td>
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<td><strong>BEN/BON (good)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td>beneficiary</td>
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<tr>
<td>beneficent</td>
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<tr>
<td>benefactor</td>
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<td>benial</td>
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<td>benevolent</td>
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<td>benediction</td>
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<td>bonus</td>
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<tr>
<td>bon vivant</td>
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<td>bona fide</td>
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<td><strong>BI (twice, doubly)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>binoculars</td>
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<tr>
<td>biannual</td>
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<tr>
<td>biennial</td>
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<tr>
<td>bigamy</td>
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<tr>
<td>bilateral</td>
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<tr>
<td>bilingual</td>
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<tr>
<td>bipartisan</td>
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<td><strong>BRI/BREV (brief, short)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>brief</td>
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<tr>
<td>abbreviate</td>
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<tr>
<td>abridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brevity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAD/CID (to fall, to happen by chance)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>accident</td>
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<tr>
<td>coincidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>decadent</td>
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<tr>
<td>cascade</td>
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<tr>
<td>recidivism</td>
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<tr>
<td>cadence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAND (to burn)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>candle</td>
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<tr>
<td>incandescent</td>
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<tr>
<td>candor</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CANT/CENT/CHANT (to sing)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>chant</td>
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<tr>
<td>enchant</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAP/CIP/CAPT (to take, to get)</strong></td>
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<td>capture</td>
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<tr>
<td>anticipate</td>
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<td>susceptible</td>
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<td>emancipate</td>
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<td>recipient</td>
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<td>incipient</td>
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<td>percipient</td>
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<td>precept</td>
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<td><strong>CARD/CORD/COUR (heart)</strong></td>
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<td>cardiac</td>
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<td>courage</td>
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<td>concordance</td>
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<td><strong>CARN (flesh)</strong></td>
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<td>carnivorous</td>
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<td>carnival</td>
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<td>carnage</td>
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<tr>
<td>reincarnation</td>
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<tr>
<td>incarnation</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ANTHEM</strong> (before)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ante</td>
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<tr>
<td>anterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antecedent</td>
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<tr>
<td>antedate</td>
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<tr>
<td>antebellum</td>
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<tr>
<td>antediluvian</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ANTHRO/ANDR (man, human)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>android</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>misanthrope</td>
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<tr>
<td>philanthropy</td>
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<tr>
<td>anthropomorphic</td>
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<tr>
<td>phalander</td>
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<tr>
<td>androgynous</td>
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<tr>
<td>anthropocentric</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>ANNU/ENNI (year)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>anniversary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biannual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biennial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centennial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>annuity</td>
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<tr>
<td>perennial</td>
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<tr>
<td>annals</td>
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<tr>
<td>millennium</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>ANTI (against)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>antidote</td>
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<tr>
<td>antiseptic</td>
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<tr>
<td>antipathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>anipodal</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APO (away)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apostle</td>
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<tr>
<td>apocalypse</td>
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<tr>
<td>apogee</td>
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<tr>
<td>apocryphal</td>
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<tr>
<td>apophasia</td>
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<td>apoplexy</td>
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<tr>
<td>apathy</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APT/EPT (skill, fitness, ability)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adapt</td>
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<tr>
<td>aptitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>apt</td>
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<tr>
<td>inept</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ARCH/ARCHI (chief, principal)</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>architect</td>
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<tr>
<td>archenemy</td>
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<tr>
<td>archetype</td>
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<tr>
<td>archipelago</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ARCHY (ruler)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>monarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>matriarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>patriarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>anarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>hierarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>oligarchy</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ART (skill, craft)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>art</td>
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<tr>
<td>artificial</td>
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<tr>
<td>artifice</td>
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<tr>
<td>artisan</td>
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<td>artful</td>
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<td>artless</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>AUC/AUG/AUX (to increase)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>suction</td>
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<tr>
<td>auxiliary</td>
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<tr>
<td>augment</td>
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<td>august</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>AUTO (self)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>automatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autopsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autocrat</td>
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<tr>
<td>autonomy</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BE (to be, to have a certain quality)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>belittle</td>
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<tr>
<td>belated</td>
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<td>bemoan</td>
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<td>befriended</td>
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<td>bequeath</td>
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<td>beset</td>
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<td>bemuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>precept</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CAP/CAPIT/CIPIT (head, headlong)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>capital</td>
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<tr>
<td>cape</td>
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<tr>
<td>captain</td>
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<tr>
<td>disciple</td>
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<tr>
<td>principle</td>
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<td>principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precipice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precipitate</td>
</tr>
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<td>precipitous</td>
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<tr>
<td>capitalise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capitalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precipitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>capitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>recapitulate</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>CARD/CORD/COUR (heart)</strong></th>
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<td>cardiac</td>
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<td>courage</td>
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<td>concord</td>
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<tr>
<td>accord</td>
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<tr>
<td>concordance</td>
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<tr>
<td>cordial</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>CARN (flesh)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>carnivorous</td>
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<tr>
<td>carnival</td>
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<tr>
<td>carnal</td>
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<tr>
<td>carnage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reincarnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incarnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAST/CHAST (cut)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>castigate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chastise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUST (to burn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caustic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holocaust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CED/CEED/CESS (to go, to yield, to stop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exceed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recess</td>
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<tr>
<td>concede</td>
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<tr>
<td>cede</td>
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<tr>
<td>access</td>
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<tr>
<td>predecessor</td>
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<td>antecedent</td>
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<td>recede</td>
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<tr>
<td>abscess</td>
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<tr>
<td>cessation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incessant</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENSOR/CENTRIC/CENTUR/CEPHALIC/EGON/EGON-centric (to separate, to judge, to distinguish, to decide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENT (to set in motion)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENT (to set in motion)</td>
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<tr>
<td>excite</td>
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<tr>
<td>incite</td>
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<tr>
<td>solicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solicitous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSPIRACY (to govern)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conspiracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conforese</td>
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<tr>
<td>conflation</td>
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<td>confluence</td>
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<td>concentration</td>
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<tr>
<td>chronicle</td>
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<td>chronology</td>
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<tr>
<td>chronometer</td>
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<tr>
<td>chronometer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIRC (to cut)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scissors</td>
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<tr>
<td>precise</td>
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<tr>
<td>excise</td>
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<tr>
<td>incision</td>
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<tr>
<td>initiate</td>
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<tr>
<td>concise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRYSTAL (crystal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRYPT (hidden)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRYPTIC (to grow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRYPTOGRAPHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUB/CUMB (to lie down)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cumulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULP (blame)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULPSE (to lie down)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culpable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culpate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURE (to cure, a course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURE (to make DC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incursion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>define</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deferential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pandemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to say, to tell, to use words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abdicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>condign</td>
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<tr>
<td>diffuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>didactic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOX (suffer, pain)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| DON/DOT/DOW (to give) | DONATE | DONOR | PARDON | CONDOLE | CONSOLE |
| DONATE | EQUITABLE | EQUITY | EQUITABLE | EQUITY | EQUITABLE |
| EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE |
| EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE | EQUITABLE |

| DUB (doubt) | Dubious | Dubious | Indubitable | DUC/DUCT (to lead) | UNDO | Undo | ODOR |
| DUBIOUS | DUBIOUS | DUBIOUS | DUBIOUS | DUCT | DUCT | DUCT | DUCT |
| DUC/DUCT | UNDO | UNDO | UNDO | UNDO |

| DUR (hard) | endure | Durable | Owe | DOUR | OBDURATE |
| ENDURE | DURABLE | OWE | DOOR | OBDURATE | OBDURATE |

| DYS (faulty) | Dysphoria | Dysphoria | Dysphoria | Dysphoria | Dysphoria |
| DYSFUNCTION | DYSFUNCTION | DYSFUNCTION | DYSFUNCTION | DYSFUNCTION | DYSFUNCTION |

| EPI (upon) | Epidemic | Epilogue | Epidermis | Epiphany | Epitaph |
| EPIDEMIC | EPIDEMIC | EPIDEMIC | EPIDEMIC | EPIDEMIC | EPIDEMIC |
| EUTANASIA | EUPHORIA | EUPHORIC | EUPHORIC | EUPHORIC | EUPHORIC |

| EQU (equal, even) | Equation | Adequate | EQU (equal, even) | Equation | Adequate |
| EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION |

| Equivalent | Equivalent | Equivalent | Equivalent | Equivalent | Equivalent |
| EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION | EQUATION |

| ERR (to wonder) | err | error | erratic | erroneous | errant |
| ERR | ERR | ERR | ERR | ERR | ERR |

| ESC (becoming) | Adolescent | Obsolescent | Iridescent | Luminous | Luminous |
| ESC | ESC | ESC | ESC | ESC | ESC |

| EU (good, well) | euphoria | euphemism | eulogy | eugenics | euthanasia |
| EU | EU | EU | EU | EU | EU |

| E/E/E/EX (out, out of, from, former, completely) | evade | exclude | extricate | exonerate | exeunt |
| EVADE | EXCLUDE | EXTRICATE | EXONERATE | EXEUNT | EXEUNT |

| Expire | Exalt |
PAN (all, everywhere)
pantomime
panacea
panegyric
pantheon
panopoly
pandemic
PAR (equal)
par
parity
partheid
disparity
disparate
dissolve
PARA (next to, beside)
parallel
paraphrase
parasite
paradox
parody
paragon
parable
paradigm
paramilitary
paranoid
paranormal
parapsychology
paraglal
PAS/PAT/PATH
(pain, suffering, disease)
apathy
sympathy
empathy
apathy
passionate
compassion
compatible
dissociation
impasive
pathos
pathology
sociopathy
psychopathy
PATER/PATR (father, support)
patron
patronize
paternal
paternalism
expertise
patrimony
patriarch
patrician
PO/POV/PAU/PU
(poor, little, poor)
poor
poverty
paucity
pauper
impoverish
purile
pastilimious
PED (child, education)
pedagogue
pediatrician
encyclopedia
PED/POD (foot)
pedal
pedestal
pedestrian
podiatric
expedite
expedient
impede
impediment
podium
antidotes
PEN/PUN
(to pay, to compensate)
penal
penalty
punitive
penance
penetrate
penis
penis
penis
perineum
penis
pernicious
perennial
peremptory
pertinent
PET/PIT (to go, to seek, to strive)
appetite
compete
petition
perplex
impetus
petulant
propitious
PHIL (love)
philosophy
philanthropy
philatelic
philology
bibliophile
PHONE (sound)
telephone
symphony
metaphone
euphony
cacophony
PLAC (to please)
placid
placebo
place
implacable
complacent
complains
PLE (to fill)
complete
deplete
complement
supplement
impliment
plenitude
replete
PLEX/PLC/Ply (to fold, to twist, to tense, to bend)
complex
complication
complicate
duplex
twist
twist
comply
implicate
explicit
duplicity
complicity
supplicate
accomplice
explicare
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORDS YOU SHOULD KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUG (to fight)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pugilism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pugnacious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impugn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repugnant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUNCT/PUNG/PON/POINT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to point, to prick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puncture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punctual</td>
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<tr>
<td>punctuate</td>
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<tr>
<td>punctual</td>
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<tr>
<td>poignet</td>
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<tr>
<td>poignant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expunging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expunge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREG/QUIS (to seek)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquire</td>
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<tr>
<td>acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exquisite</td>
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<td>acquisition</td>
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<tr>
<td>request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conquer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inquire</td>
</tr>
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<td>inquisitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>inspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quirky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>querulous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requisite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUI (quiet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disquiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tranquility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquiesce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiescent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RID/RIS (to laugh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ridicule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>derision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>risible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROG (to ask)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interrogate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrogant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prerogative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abroge</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>WORDS YOU SHOULD KNOW</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>surrogate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>derogatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrogant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAL/SUL/SALT/SALT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to leap, to jump)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somnolent</td>
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<tr>
<td>salient</td>
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<tr>
<td>resilient</td>
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<tr>
<td>insolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desultory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caustic</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACR/SANC/SEC/SACRED</td>
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<tr>
<td>sacrè</td>
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<tr>
<td>sacrifice</td>
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<tr>
<td>sanctify</td>
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<tr>
<td>sanction</td>
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<tr>
<td>executable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sacrament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sacrilege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI (to know)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>unconscionable</td>
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<tr>
<td>omniscient</td>
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<tr>
<td>prescient</td>
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<tr>
<td>conscientious</td>
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<tr>
<td>recusant</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCRIB/SCHRIB/SCHRIEB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scribble</td>
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<tr>
<td>describe</td>
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<tr>
<td>script</td>
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<td>postscript</td>
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<td>incriminate</td>
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<td>scribe</td>
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<td>transcript</td>
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<td>circumscribe</td>
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<td>manusciribne</td>
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<tr>
<td>scribble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tractable</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANS</strong> (across)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transcendent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translucent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VEN/VENT</strong> (to come, to move toward)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contravene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verdict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aver</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VERS/VER</strong> (to turn)</td>
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<td>Controversy</td>
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<td>Diverge</td>
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<td>Aversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veritable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VI</strong> (life)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vivid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivacity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VID/VIS</strong> (to see)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOC/VOK</strong> (to call)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equivocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation</td>
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</table>
COMMON USAGE ERRORS
Some of the most embarrassing language errors involve words so common and so apparently simple that almost no one would think of looking them up. The following list contains a number of the most frequently misused words and expressions in the language.

ALL RIGHT Not “alright.”

AMONG/BETWEEN Among is used with three or more; between is used with two.
The tin-can telephone line ran between the two houses. Among the twelve members of the committee were only three women. Mrs. Downs distributed the candy among the four of us. “Between you and I” is incorrect; between you and me is correct.

ANXIOUS This word properly means “filled with anxiety,” not “eager.” Don’t say you’re anxious for school to end unless the ending of school makes you feel fearful.

AS FAR AS...IS CONCERNED Not a very stylish expression, but if you use it, don’t leave out the is concerned. It is not correct to say, “As far as money, I’d like to be rich.” Instead, you should say, “As far as money is concerned, I’d like to be rich.”

AS/LIKE You can run like a fox, but you can’t run like a fox runs.
Like is used only with nouns, pronouns, and grammatical constructions that act like nouns. Joe runs like a fox. Joe runs as a fox runs. Joe runs the way a fox runs.

BIWEEKLY, ETC. Biweekly means either twice a week or once every two weeks, depending on who is using it. Likewise with bimonthly. If you need to be precise, avoid it (saying “twice a week” or “every other week,” instead). Forenightly means once every two weeks.

COMMON USAGE ERRORS

CAN/MAY Can denotes ability; may denotes permission. If you can do something, you are able to do it. If you may do something, you are permitted to do it.

CAPITAL/CAPITOL Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States. The building where Congress meets is the Capitol.

COMMON/MUTUAL Common means “shared”; mutual means “reciprocal.” If Tim and Tom have a common dislike, they both dislike the same thing (anchovies). If Tim and Tom have a mutual dislike, they dislike each other.

COMMONPLACE In careful usage, this word is an adjective meaning “ordinary” or “uninteresting.” It can also be used as a noun meaning a “trite or obvious observation” or a “cliche.” It should not be used sloppily as a substitute for the word “common.” To say that French food is the best in the world is a commonplace. It is common but neither interesting nor persuasive to say that French food is the best in the world.

COMPARE TO/COMPAR WITH To compare an apple to an orange is to say that an apple is like an orange. To compare an apple with an orange is to discuss the similarities and differences between the two fruits. Jeff compared his girlfriend’s voice to the sound of a cat howling in the night; that is, he said his girlfriend sounded like a cat howling in the night. I compared my grades with Bud’s and discovered that he had done better in every subject except math.

DIFFERENT FROM Different from is correct; “different than” is not. My dog is different from your dog.

EACH OTHER/ONE ANOTHER Each other is used with two; one another is used with three or more.
A husband and wife should love each other. The fifteen members of the group had to learn to get along with one another.

EQUALLY AS Nothing is ever “equally as” anything as anything else. Your car and Dave’s car might be equally fast. You should never say that the two cars are equally as fast. Nor should you say that your car is equally as fast as Dave’s. You should simply say that it is as fast.

FACT THAT/THAT You almost never need to use “the fact that”; that alone will suffice. Instead of saying, “I was appalled by the fact that he was going to the movies,” say, “I was appalled that he was going to the movies.”
FARTHER/FURTHER Further refers to actual, literal distance—the kind measured in inches and miles. Further refers to figurative distance. Use further if the distance can be measured; use farther if it cannot.

Paris is farther from New York than London is.

Paris is further from my thoughts than London is.

We hiked seven miles but then were incapable of hiking farther.

I made a nice outline for my thesis but never went any farther.

FEWER, LESS Fewer is used with things that can be counted, less with things that cannot. That is, fewer refers to number; less refers to quantity.

I have fewer sugar lumps than Henry does.

I have less sugar.

Despite what you hear on television, it is not correct to say that one soft drink contains “less calories” than another. It contains fewer calories (calories can be counted); it is less fattening.

FORMER, LATTER Former means the first of two; latter means the second of two. If you are referring to three or more things, you shouldn’t use former and latter.

It is incorrect to say, “The restaurant had hamburgers, hot dogs, and pizzas; we ordered the former.” Instead, say, “We ordered the first,” or “We ordered hamburgers.”

 REGARDLESS This is not a word. Say regardless or irrespective.

LAY/LIE The only way to “lay down on the beach” is to take small feathers and place them in the sand.

To lay is to place or set. Will the widow lay flowers by the grave? She already laid them; or she has already laid them. Who lies in the grave? Her former husband lies there. He lay there yesterday, too. In fact, he has lain there for several days.

PLURALS AND SINGULARS

The following words take plural verbs:

bowl
criteria
data
media
phenomena

The following words take singular verbs:
criterion
datum
each
either
every, everybody, everyone, etc.
medium

PRESENTLY Presently means “now,” not “now” or “currently.”

The mailman should be here presently; in fact, he should be here in about five minutes.

The mailman is here now.

STATIONARY-STATIONERY Stationary means not moving; stationery is not paper.

THAT/WHICH Most people confuse these two words. Many people who knew the difference have trouble remembering it. Here’s a simple rule that will almost always work: that can never have a comma in front of it; which always will.

There is the car that ran over my foot.

Ed’s car, which ran over my foot, is over there.

I like sandwiches that are dripping with mustard.

My sandwich, which was dripping with mustard, was the kind I like.

Which is used in place of that if it follows another that: “We were fond of that feeling of contentment which follows victory.”

WHETHER OR NOT You can almost always just say whether. “I can’t decide whether to go to the grocery store” uses fewer words to convey the same meaning as “I can’t decide whether or not to go to the grocery store.”
ABBREVIATIONS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABBREVIATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT  American College Testing Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAP  As soon as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assn.  Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assoc.  Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asst.  Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attn.  To the attention of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aux.  Auxiliary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWOL  Absent without leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A.  Bachelor of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.MOC  Big man on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S.  Bachelor of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BW  Black and white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C  Celsius, centigrade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c/o  In care of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cc  Cc; carbon copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEB  College Entrance Examination Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf.  [Latin—Confere; See also]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO  Commanding officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co.  Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COD  Cash on delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp.  Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA  Certified public accountant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRT  Cathode ray tube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA  District Attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Db  Decibels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.D.S.  Doctor of Dental Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dept.  Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI  Drill instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJ  Disk jockey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.D.M.  Doctor of Dental Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOA  Dead on arrival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.  [Latin—Example given]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EKG  Electrocardiogram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP  Extended-play record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esp  Extrasensory perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et al.  [Latin—Et alii] And others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et seq.  [Latin—Et sequentem] And following</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETA  Estimated time of arrival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.  [Latin—Et cetera] And so on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETS  Educational Testing Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F  Fahrenheit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.F.  Fred Flinstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fl.  And following pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYI  For your information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI  Government issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>govt.  Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.e.  [Latin—Hic est] That is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ibid  [Latin—Ibidem] In the same place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inc.  Incorporated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ  Intelligence quotient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV  Intraocular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k  [Latin—Kilo] Thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>km  Kilometer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP  Long-playing record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPG  Liquefied petroleum gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.  Master of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC  Master of Ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.D.  Doctor of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messrs.  [French—Messieurs] Gentlemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIA  Missing in action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm  Millimeter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS  Manuscript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S.  Master of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSS  Manuscripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVP  Most valuable player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>op. cit.  [Latin—Opera citato] In the work previously cited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.  Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.S.  [Latin—Postscriptum] Postscript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.A.  Postmaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.  Doctor of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POW  Prisoner of war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pp.  Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QED  [Latin—Quod erat demonstrandum] Which was to be demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R &amp; D  Research and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAM  Random access memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep.  Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSN  Red-swan-blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROM  Read-only memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROTC  Reserve Officers’ Training Corps</td>
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<td>RSVP [French—Repondez s’il vous plaît] Please reply</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAF  Achem</td>
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<td>SDF  Strategic Defense Initiative</td>
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</table>
IAMIC PENTAMETER A poetic metrical form in which each line of verse consists of ten syllables, of which only the even-numbered syllables are stressed.

IMAGISM An early-twentieth-century poetical movement characterized by the rejection of traditional poetic forms. The most prominent imagist was Ezra Pound.

IMPRESSIONISM A late-nineteenth-century French movement in painting that emphasized, among other things, to convey the effect of light more vividly than had previously been done. Claude Monet was among the most influential of the Impressionists.

LIBERAL ARTS A general course of study focusing on literature, art, history, philosophy, and related subjects rather than on specifically vocational instruction.

LUMINISM A nineteenth-century American art movement that grew out of Impressionism and that, like Impressionism, was greatly concerned with the portrayal of light.

METAPHOR A figure of speech involving the use of words associated with one thing in connection with another in order to point up some revealing similarity between the two. To refer to someone's nose as a beak is to use metaphor to say something unflattering about the person's nose.

MOSAIC An art form in which designs are produced by inlaying small tiles or pieces of stone, glass, or other materials.

OPERA A drama set to music, in which the dialogue is sung rather than spoken.

OVERTURE An introductory musical piece for an opera or other work of musical drama.

PROSODY The study of meter and other poetic structure.

RENAISSANCE The great blossoming of art, literature, science, and culture in general that transformed Europe between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries.

ROMAN À CLEF A novel in which the characters and events are disguised versions of real people and events.

ROMANTICISM An anticlassical literary and artistic movement that began in Europe in the late eighteenth century. William Wordsworth and John Keats were perhaps its preeminent Romantic poets.

SIMILE A figure of speech in which one thing is likened to something else. To call someone's nose a beak is to use a metaphor; to say that someone's nose is like a beak is to use a simile. A simile will always contain the word like or as.

LEARN THIS LINE, AND PEOPLE WILL THINK YOU PAID ATTENTION IN COLLEGE.

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM A twentieth-century movement in painting in which the artistic focus is more on the paint itself than on anything it portrays. Jackson Pollock's enormous drip paintings are examples of abstract expressionism.

ALLITERATION A poetic device involving the use of two or more words with the same initial consonant sounds. Big Bird is an alliterative name.

BAUHAUS A German school of art and architecture founded in 1919. Bauhaus style is characterized by harsh geometric form and great austerity of detail.

BLANK VERSE Unrhymed verse, especially iambic pentameter.

CHAMBER MUSIC Music written for and performed by small ensembles of players. The string quartet (two violins, viola, and cello) is the most influential form of chamber music ensemble.

CHIAROSCURO An artistic technique in which form is conveyed by light and dark only, not by color.

CONCERTO A musical composition for an orchestra and one or more soloists.

CUBISM An early-twentieth-century artistic movement involving, among other things, the fragmented portrayal of three-dimensional objects, and given its highest expression by Pablo Picasso.

DECONSTRUCTIONISM A recent movement in literary criticism whose popularity on college campuses markedly exceeds its usefulness in the analysis of literary texts.

FREE VERSE Unrhymed and unmetered (or irregularly rhymed and metered) verse.

FRESCO An artistic technique in which paint is applied to wet plaster, causing the painted image to become bound into the decorated surface.
SONATA  An instrumental musical composition consisting of several movements.

SONNET  A verse form consisting of fourteen lines of iambic pentameter rhymed in a strict scheme or, occasionally, unrhymed.

STILL LIFE  An artistic depiction of arranged objects.

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS  A literary technique in which an author attempts to reproduce in prose the unstructured rush of real human thought. James Joyce and William Faulkner were among the technique's more successful practitioners.

SURREALISM  A primarily French artistic and literary movement of the early twentieth century that attempted to incorporate imagery from dreams and the unconscious into works of art.

SYMPHONY  A major work for orchestra, usually consisting of several movements.
DAISY-WHEEL PRINTER A letter quality printer in which the characters are formed much as they are on a typewriter, and a noise printing element resembles a many-petaled flower.

DATA BASE A large collection of information that is manipulated by a computer.

DEBUG To eliminate bugs from a computer program.

DISK DRIVE A computer information-storage device analogous to a record player but operating at a much higher speed and with a much higher capacity.

DISK OPERATING SYSTEM A disk operating system, or DOS, is the set of fundamental programs that enables a computer to run other programs compatible with it.

DISKETTE A flexible computer storage medium analogous to a phonograph record. Also called a floppy disk. In the past, virtually all diskettes were 5 1/4 inches in diameter. Newer computer systems use 3 1/2-inch diskettes, called minidiskettes.

DOT-MATRIX PRINTER A less-than-letter quality printer that forms characters out of dozens of closely spaced dots.

DRAFT QUALITY PRINTER A printer whose output doesn't come very close to typewriter quality.

FORTRAN A relatively simple programming language.

HARD DISK A rigid computer storage medium that, like a diskette, is analogous to a phonograph record. Unlike a diskette, a hard disk is permanently installed inside a computer and has a vastly larger capacity.

HARDWARE The physical parts of a computer system.

I/O Input/output. Input is what you tell a computer; output is what the computer tells you.

INK-JET PRINTER A usually less-than-letter quality printer that forms characters by squirting ink onto the page.

INPUT DEVICE Any device through which a user enters information into a computer. The principal input device among microcomputers is the keyboard.

JOYSTICK An input device used primarily with computer games.

K One thousand. A computer whose memory has a capacity of 64K can store 64,000 bits of information. (Actually, for reasons too complicated to explain, 64K equals 65,536 bits.)

LAPTOP COMPUTER A portable computer small enough to be held comfortably on a user's lap.
LASER PRINTER A printer, containing an internal laser, that prints text in the same way a photocopier makes copies.

LETTER QUALITY PRINTER A printer that produces copy whose quality is as good as or better than that produced by a typewriter.

MACHINE LANGUAGE What computers think in. A programming language for professionals only.

MEMORY A computer’s capacity for storing information.

MICROCOMPUTER A personal computer. A step up from a microcomputer is a minicomputer. Another step up is a mainframe, which is a great big computer capable of doing the thinking for lots of smaller computers. Continuing advances in computer technology have blurred the differences between microcomputers and minicomputers and even between microcomputers and mainframes. Today’s personal computers are more powerful than all but the very largest computers of just a few years ago.

MICROPROCESSOR The central brain of the computer.

MODEM A “modulator/demodulator”—a device that enables one computer to communicate with another using ordinary telephone lines.

MONITOR A computer screen or cathode ray tube.

MOUSE A hand-held device for moving a computer cursor and entering simple information.

NEAR LETTER-QUALITY PRINTER A printer that comes close to achieving typewriter quality.

PASCAL A relatively simple programming language.

PERIPHERAL An accessory, such as a printer or modem, that is attached to a computer.

PORTABLE COMPUTER A computer small enough to be carried from one place to another. The smallest portable computers weren’t terribly portable by today’s standards.

PROGRAM The set of instructions that causes a computer to do something, such as manipulate a data base.

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE An organized system of commands that enables a computer to create programs.

RANDOM ACCESS MEMORY Known as RAM. This is the part of the computer’s memory that the user can add to and delete from.

READ-ONLY MEMORY Known as ROM. A permanent part of a computer’s memory, which the user can neither add to nor delete from.

SOFTWARE Computer programs.

SPREADSHEET A traditional accounting tool whose electronic counterpart is the basis for some of the most popular business programs.

WINCHESTER A hard disk drive.

WORD PROCESSING Using a computer to manipulate text. In the olden days, it was known as writing.
FINANCE
Reading the financial pages of the newspaper can be confusing if you don’t know the lingo. Here are some of the terms that crop up most often.

**ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE (APR)** A loan’s annual percentage rate is the loan’s true interest rate when all the costs of borrowing are taken into account. Before lending you $10,000 at a nominal interest rate of 12 percent, a bank may charge you a fee of several hundred dollars. The effective interest rate on the loan—in APR—would include the cost of paying this fee and would thus be somewhat higher than 12 percent.

**ASSET** An asset is something you own. A liability is something you owe.

**BANKRUPTCY** A procedure by which a deeply indebted person or company sacrifices most of all remaining assets in exchange for being relieved of the obligation to repay any remaining debt.

**BEAR MARKET** A falling stock market.

**BONDS** When you buy a bond you are, in effect, lending money to the city, company, or other entity that issued it. In return, the issuer pays you interest.

There are many different kinds of bonds. U.S. government bonds are bonds issued by the federal government. When you buy a government bond, you’re helping to finance the federal deficit. Municipal bonds are bonds issued by cities, counties, and states. They are often issued to finance specific projects, such as the construction of a highway or an athletic stadium. Corporate bonds are bonds issued by companies. Junk bonds are high-interest, high-risk bonds issued by relatively uncreditworthy borrowers.

**BOOK VALUE** A company’s book value is what the company would be worth if its assets (including office buildings and furniture) were all sold and its liabilities were all paid off.

**BULL MARKET** A rising stock market.

**CALL** An option to buy stock at a certain price within a certain period of time. A put is an option to sell stock at a certain price within a certain period of time. Puts and calls are not for amateurs.
MARGIN Buying stock on margin is buying stock in part with money borrowed from the stockbroker. Buying on margin is risky. If the price of the stock you bought on margin falls below a certain point, the broker will require you to put up more money. If you don't have the money, you may be forced to sell the stock immediately at a loss in order to cover your position.

MORTGAGE When you obtain a mortgage to buy a house, what you are really doing is persuading a bank to buy a house for you and let you live in it in exchange for your promise to pay back the bank, with interest, over a period of years. If you stop paying back the bank, the bank may take back the house. In other words, the bank lends you enough money to buy the house with the understanding that the bank gets the house if you don't pay back the loan. A traditional mortgage runs for thirty years at a fixed interest rate with fixed monthly payments, but there are many variations.

MUTUAL FUND A mutual fund is an investment pool in which a large number of investors put their money together with the hope of making more money than they would have if they had invested on their own. Mutual funds are run by professional managers who may or may not be better than the average person at picking good investments. Some mutual funds invest only in stocks; some invest only in bonds; some invest only in metals; some invest only in Japanese stocks; some invest in a little of everything; some invest in whatever looks good at the moment.

ODD LOT Less than 100 shares of a company's stock. Groups of shares in multiples of 100 are known as round lots. Brokers typically charge slightly higher commissions on transactions involving odd lots.

OPTION The opportunity to do something else (such as buy a certain number of shares at a certain price) at some time in the future.

OVER-THE-COUNTER STOCK An OTC stock is one that isn't traded on the New York Stock Exchange or one of several smaller stock exchanges. A stock exchange is a big marketplace where buyers and sellers (or, usually, their representatives) gather to do business within a framework of mutually agreed-upon rules and limitations. But not all stocks are bought and sold through stock exchanges. These stocks (typically those of smaller, less-established companies) are said to be bought and sold "over the counter." To buy or sell such a stock, you have to do business directly with someone who deals in it, or "makes a market" in it. Most stockbrokers of any size have over-the-counter departments that handle such transactions.

PRICE/EARNINGS RATIO A stock's P/E is the ratio between its price and the value of the company's earnings in the past year divided by the number of shares outstanding. If a stock sells for $20 a share and has earnings of $2 a share, its P/E is 10 and its share price is said to be "ten times earnings." In theory, if everything else is equal, a stock with a high P/E is a worse buy than a stock with a low P/E, but there are many exceptions.

PRIME RATE The interest rate that banks charge their biggest and best loan customers. Everybody else pays more. Many loan rates are keyed to the prime, which is why a change in the prime rate affects more than just the biggest and best loan customers.

PROXY Ownership of a share of stock entitles the shareholder to vote at the company's annual meeting. Shareholders who can't attend the meeting can still vote by sending in a proxy—essentially, an absentee ballot.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION The SEC is the government agency that oversees the trading of stocks, bonds, and other securities.

SELLING SHORT To sell a stock short is to sell it before you own it. Sounds impossible? It's not. Selling short is a way to make money on a stock when its price is going down. What you do, technically, is sell stock borrowed from your broker, then buy the same number of shares later, when the price has fallen. What happens if the price doesn't fall? You lose money.

STOCK SPLIT When a stock "splits two for one," shareholders are issued an additional share for every share they own at the time of the split. The effect is to halve the price per share, since each share is now worth half of what it was worth when there were only half as many. Companies generally split their stocks in order to knock the share price down to a level where the company hopes, it will be more attractive to investors.

Stock splits are sometimes referred to as stock dividends. But a stock dividend isn't really a dividend at all, since it doesn't have any value.

TAX SHELTER Any investment that permits the investor to protect income from taxation. Recent tax reform eliminated most of these. Tax shelters that sound too good to be true tend to be not only too good to be true but also illegal. There are still a lot of hustlers tax shelters, though. Buying a house is one: interest on mortgage payments is deductible, and the resulting tax savings amount to a federal housing subsidy for people wealthy enough to buy their own homes.

WARRANT An option to buy a certain amount of stock at a certain price within a certain period of time.

YIELD The annual income generated by an investment expressed as a percentage of its cost. If a stock has a yield of 4 percent, it pays dividends equal to 4 percent of purchase price of a share of its stock.
People in France buy their prescriptions at "drogisteries" and look forward to "le weekend"—useful words borrowed from English. We supplement English with many words and phrases borrowed directly from other languages. Here are some of the most useful foreign words and phrases. There is often more than one acceptable pronunciation, usually the foreign pronunciation and an American version.

**À propos** (ah pruh PWAH, ah puh PWAH) adj [French—"to the point; pertinent"
A comment is *à propos* (or *en procès*) if it is exactly appropriate for the situation.

**A d hoc** (ay duh HAHK) adj [Latin—"for this", for a particular purpose; only for the matter at hand]
An ad hoc committee is a committee established for a particular purpose, to deal with a particular problem.

**AfiCionaDo** (ah fee syow NAH doh, ah fey syow NAH doh) n [Spanish—"affectionate one"
A *aficionado* of football is a football fan. An *aficionado* of theater is a theater fan.

**Al fresco** (al FRES koh) adj [Italian—"in the fresh air"
An *à l’fresco* meal is a picnic.

**Au Courant** (oh koo RAWN) adj [French—"in the current"] up to date; informed
To be *au courant* is to know all the latest information.

**Bête Noire** (beh NWAH) n [French—"black beast"
Something or someone that you absolutely despise, or the only thing you will not eat.

**Carte Blanche** (kahrt blemch, kahr blemch) n [French—"blank card"
The power to do whatever one wants
To give someone carte blanche is to give that person the license to do anything.

**Déjà Vu** (duh YAH VAH) n [French—"already seen"
An illusory feeling of having seen or done something before.

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An illusory feeling of having seen or done something before.

**Fait accompli** (duh ah kohm PLEAH, fry ah kahm PLEAH) n [French—
"accomplished fact"
Something that is already done and that cannot be undone.

Our committee spent a long time debating whether it had the building painted, but the project was *fait accompli*; the chairman had already hired someone to do it.

**Faux Pas** (feh PAH) n [French—"false step"
An embarrassing social mistake.

Henry committed a faux pas when he told the hostess that her party had been boring.

**Idée Fixe** (ee dayh PEEKS) n [French—"fixed idea"
A fixed idea, an obsession.

An idée fixe is an idea that obsesses you or that you can’t get out of your mind.

**Joie de Vivre** (zhwah duh VAY vroh) n [French—"joy of living"
A deep and usually contagious enjoyment of life.

Henry’s joie de vivre made his office a pleasant place to work for everyone connected with it.

**Junta** (HOON too, JUN too) n [Spanish—"joined"
A small group that rules a country after its government is overthrown.

After the junta had driven out the president, the Latin American country was ruled by a junta of army officers.

**Laissez-faire** (lah say FAY, la sayh FAY) n [French—"let do"
A doctrine of noninterference by government in the economy; noninterference in general.

To believe in laissez-faire is to believe the government should exert no control over business. It’s also possible to adopt a laissez-faire attitude about other matters.

**Marjana** (mah NYAH nah) n [Spanish—"tomorrow"
A tomorrow.
MAEA CULPA (may ah KOOL puh, may ah KUL puh) n [Latin—"my fault"]
my fault
Mee culpa, mee culpa. I was the one who put the dog in the cat's bed.

NOLO CONTENDERE (noh loh kahn TEN duh ree) n [Latin—"I do not wish to contend"] no contest
A plea in a court case that is the equivalent of a guilty plea but that doesn't include an actual admission of guilt.

NON SEQUITUR (nohn SEK wi tor) n [Latin—"it does not follow"] a statement that does not follow logically from what has gone before
Bill's saying "Forty-three degrees" when Joe asked "May I have the butter?" was a non sequitur.

OUTRÉ (on TRAY) adj [French—"carried to excess"] eccentric; bizarre
An outré fashion is an unconventional, bizarre fashion.

QUID PRO QUO (kwid proh KWOH) n [Latin—"something for something"] something given or done in return for something else
The politician said he would do what we had asked him to do, but there was a quid pro quo: he said we had to bribe him first.

RAISON D'ÊTRE (ray zohn DET, ray zohn DET veh) n [French—"reason to be"] reason for being
Money was the greedy rich man's raison d'être.

RENDEZVOUS (RAHN day voo, RAHN duh voo) n [French—"present yourselves"] a meeting; a meeting place
The young couple met behind the bleachers for a discreet rendezvous.

SAVOIR-FAIRE (sav vahr FAYR) n [French—"to know how to do"] tact; ability arising from experience

SEMPER FIDEIS (sem pur FLAY lis) n [Latin—"always loyal"] always loyal
The motto of the United States Marine Corps.

SINE QUA NON (sye ne kwoh NAHN) n [Latin—"without which not"] something essential
Understanding is the sine qua non of a successful marriage.

STATUS QUO (stayt us KWOH, stat us KWOH) n [Latin—"state in which"] the current state of affairs
The status quo is the way things we now.

SUI GENERIS (soo ee JOH nee rees) adj [Latin—"of one's own kind"] unique;
in a class of one's own
To be sui generis is to be unlike anyone else.

TÊTE-À-TÊTE (tayt ah TAYT, let ah TET) n [French—"head to head"] a private conversation between two people
The two attorneys resolved their differences in a brief tête-à-tête before the trial began.
DNA An abbreviation for deoxyribonucleic acid, the substance that is the principal component of genes and, hence, chromosomes.

ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION Visible light, radio signals, microwaves, ultraviolet light, and X rays are all examples of electromagnetic radiation, which is energy radiated in waves from certain electrically charged elementary particles.

ELECTRON MICROSCOPE A device that uses streams of electrons to provide greatly magnified images of objects far too small to be seen by the human eye or even by ordinary optical microscopes.

ELEMENTARY PARTICLES The tiny particles that make up atoms and are thus the building blocks of all matter. Protons, neutrons, and electrons were once believed to be the only elementary particles, but it is now known that these particles are themselves made up of smaller particles and that the list of elementary particles is quite long. Among the newer additions to the list are quarks, muons, pions, gluons, positrons, and neutrinos.

ENDORPHIN Sometimes referred to as the body's own narcotics, endorphins are substances produced by the pituitary gland that can reduce pain, alter moods, and have other effects.

ENZYME Any of a large number of substances in organisms that speed up or make possible various biological processes.

GENE Genes are the building blocks of chromosomes. They are made of DNA and govern the inheritance of all biological structures and functions.

GENETIC ENGINEERING A relatively new science devoted to altering genes in order to produce organisms with more desirable characteristics, such as resistance to disease.

GREENHOUSE EFFECT The phenomenon whereby the earth's atmosphere (especially when altered by the addition of various pollutants) traps some of the heat of the sun and warms the surface of the earth.

HOLOGRAM A three-dimensional image produced by a photographic process called holography, which involves lasers.

HYDROCARBON Any of a large number of organic compounds composed of hydrogens and carbons. Butane, methane, and propane are three of the lighter hydrocarbons. Gasoline, kerosene, and asphalt are all mixtures of (mostly relatively heavy) hydrocarbons.

IN VITRO FERTILIZATION The fertilization of an egg outside the mother's body.

ISOTOPE An atom with the same number of protons as a second atom but a different number of neutrons is said to be an isotope of that second atom.

LASER A device that produces an extraordinarily intense beam of light. The word laser is an acronym for Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation.
LIGHT-YEAR The distance that light travels in a year, or approximately 5,878,000,000,000 miles.

NATURAL SELECTION The theory that species originate and become differentiated one from another as certain characteristics of organisms prove more valuable than others at enabling those organisms to reproduce. These valuable characteristics are in effect "selected" by nature for preservation in succeeding generations, while other characteristics disappear. Natural selection was a key element in Charles Darwin's monumental theory of evolution.

NEBULA An enormous cloud of dust and gas in outer space.

NUCLEAR ENERGY The vast energy locked in the infinitesimal nucleus of an atom. This energy can be released through fission (the splitting of certain atomic nuclei) and fusion (the combining of certain atomic nuclei). It is also released naturally in a few elements through a process of decomposition called radioactive. Fission, fusion, and radioactivity are all processes involving the conversion of small amounts of matter into enormous amounts of energy. The release of this energy is the basis of nuclear weapons (such as atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs) and nuclear reactors used in the production of electricity.

NUCLEAR WINTER A hypothetical chilling of the earth resulting from the contamination of the atmosphere by radioactive materials, dust, and other substances in the aftermath of a nuclear war.

OSMOSIS The equalization of fluid concentrations on both sides of a permeable membrane.

OZONE LAYER Ozone is a compound of oxygen. The ozone layer is a part of the atmosphere that, among other things, filters out radiation that is harmful to human beings. In recent years the ozone layer has been found to be decomposing at an alarming rate, owing in large part to the release into the atmosphere of certain man-made pollutants.

PASTEURIZATION A sterilization process in which foods are heated in order to kill harmful organisms in them. The process is named for Louis Pasteur, the nineteenth-century French scientist who developed it.

PERIODIC TABLE A chart depicting the known elements arranged according to certain characteristics. If you are a student, there is probably a periodic table in your chemistry classroom.

PHEROMONE Substances secreted by animals that influence the behavior of other animals, primarily through the sense of smell.

PHOTON The smallest unit of electromagnetic radiation.

PHOTOSYNTHEIS The process whereby green plants transform energy from the sun into food.

PLATE TECTONICS A revolutionary geological theory holding that the earth's crust consists of enormous moving plates that are constantly shifting position and, among other things, altering the shape and arrangement of the continents.

PULSAR Any of a number of less than thoroughly understood objects in outer space that emit regular pulses of radio waves.

QUASAR Any of a number of starlike objects believed to occupy the very farthest fringes of the universe.

RADIO TELESCOPE A large antenna capable of receiving the radio waves naturally emitted by stars and other objects in outer space. A radio telescope is a telescope capable of "seeing" forms of electromagnetic radiation not visible to the human eye or to an ordinary optical telescope.

RELATIVITY Albert Einstein's monumental theory, which holds, among a great many other things, that space and time are not separate entities but elements of a single continuum called space-time.

RNA An abbreviation for ribonucleic acid, a substance similar to DNA that is a crucial element in the synthesis of proteins.

SEISMOLOGY The study of earthquakes and other tremors (including man-made ones) in the earth's crust.

SOCIOBIOLOGY A relatively new scientific field, which holds that behavior evolves and is inherited in the same way that physical characteristics are.

SPEED OF LIGHT The speed at which light travels through a vacuum, or 186,282 miles per second.

SUPERCONDUCTIVITY The ability of certain substances to conduct electricity unusually readily. Superconductivity has usually been produced by cooling certain substances to temperatures approaching absolute zero. More recently, scientists have discovered materials that become superconductive at vastly warmer temperatures.

TEST-TUBE BABY see In vitro fertilization

THERMODYNAMICS A branch of science concerned with heat and the conversion of heat into other forms of energy.

VACCINE A substance that, when introduced into an organism, causes the organism to produce antibodies against, and hence immunity to, a particular disease.
### THE ANSWERS

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3. g  2. i  3. a  3. b
4. e  4. a  4. l  4. o
5. d  5. i  5. c  5. c
6. i  6. f  6. h  6. l
7. g  7. c  7. b  7. d
8. e  8. g  8. e  8. i
10. f  10. e  10. g  10. g

Quick Quiz #80  Quick Quiz #82  Quick Quiz #84  Quick Quiz #86
1. b  1. h  1. b  1. c
2. e  2. f  2. f  2. s
3. k  3. a  3. a  3. a
4. o  4. l  4. l  3. o
5. h  5. i  5. h  5. h
6. m  6. k  6. m  6. k
7. g  7. m  7. m  7. m
8. n  8. i  8. i  8. i
9. c  9. n  9. n  9. n
10. b  10. c  10. i  10. t

THE ANSWERS

Final Exam Drill #1  Final Exam Drill #5  Final Exam Drill #9
1. d  1. a  1. e
2. e  2. d  2. d
3. b  3. d  3. e
4. a  4. b  4. c
5. c  5. b  5. e

Final Exam Drill #2  Final Exam Drill #6  Final Exam Drill #10
1. b  1. O  1. U
2. a  2. U  2. S
4. h  4. S  4. O
5. g  5. O  5. O
7. i  7. O  7. O
8. j  8. S  8. S
10. c  10. S  10. U

Final Exam Drill #3  Final Exam Drill #7  Final Exam Drill #11
1. address 1. renaissance 1. O
2. integral 2. requisite 2. O
3. delineate 3. apprehensive 3. S
4. retort 4. sacrificial 4. O
5. didactic 5. replenish 5. U
6. labyrinthine 6. arbitrary 6. O
7. amoral 7. elastic 7. O
8. analogous 8. elliptical 8. O
10. malleable 10. avuncular 10. O

Final Exam Drill #4  Final Exam Drill #8  Final Exam Drill #12
1. O  1. S  1. awry
t. 2. S  2. awdancy 2. awdancy
4. S  4. S  4. ablution
5. O  5. O  5. nominal
7. S  7. S  7. equable
8. S  8. U  8. nostalgic
10. S  10. U  10. pectoral
Final Exam Drill #13
1. O
2. S
3. G
4. R
5. S
6. O
7. S
8. O
9. O
10. S

Final Exam Drill #14
1. a
2. c
3. b
4. e
5. c
6. S
7. U
8. S
9. S
10. U

Final Exam Drill #15
1. a
2. i
3. g
4. b
5. d
6. e
7. h
8. c
9. j
10. i

Final Exam Drill #16
1. U
2. S
3. S
4. S
5. S
6. O
7. S
8. U
9. O
10. U

Final Exam Drill #17
1. existential
2. sanguine
3. felicity
4. pivotal
5. satirical
6. ubiquitous
7. succinct
8. eminent
9. facical
10. vicarious

Final Exam Drill #18
1. U
2. S
3. S
4. S
5. U
6. S
7. U
8. S
9. S
10. U

Final Exam Drill #19
1. b
2. d
3. a
4. a
5. b

Final Exam Drill #20
1. S
2. O
3. U
4. S
5. S
6. O
7. S
8. S
9. S
10. O

Final Exam Drill #21
1. officious
2. scrutinize
3. reprehensible
4. founder
5. palpable
6. qualify
7. culinary
8. corollary
9. proximate
10. vicarious

Final Exam Drill #22
1. S
2. O
3. S
4. S
5. O
6. S
7. O
8. S
9. S
10. O

Final Exam Drill #23
1. d
2. d
3. b
4. a
5. a

Final Exam Drill #24
1. S
2. U
3. O
4. S
5. U
6. U
7. S
8. S
9. S
10. S

THE ANSWERS

Final Exam Drill #25
1. omnipotent
2. fortuitous
3. verisimilitude
4. pertinent
5. conducive
6. prolific
7. vicinostyle
8. obsequious
9. euphemism
10. diffident

Final Exam Drill #26
1. U
2. O
3. O
4. O
5. S
6. O
7. O
8. O
9. S
10. O

Final Exam Drill #27
1. d
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. b

Final Exam Drill #28
1. U
2. S
3. O
4. S
5. O
6. S
7. O
8. S
9. S
10. S

Final Exam Drill #29
1. comprise
2. bemuse
3. provident
4. amicable
5. prodigy
6. cadence
7. soporific
8. prance
9. vacillate
10. vestige

Final Exam Drill #30
1. U
2. O
3. U
4. S
5. S
6. O
7. S
8. S
9. S
10. U

Final Exam Drill #31
1. i
2. c
3. e
4. e
5. b

Final Exam Drill #32
1. U
2. S
3. O
4. S
5. O
6. S
7. O
8. S
9. S
10. O

Final Exam Drill #33
1. innocuous
2. assimilate
3. uncouth
4. valet
5. surrogate
6. tantamount
7. catharsis
8. complacency
9. reanimation
10. patronize
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