

寄托天下

专注留学 · 飞跃梦想

留学考试攻略

之

Magoosh

word list A to I

By 寄托天下

前言

十六年来，寄托天下和每一位 GTer 一样坚持着自己的理想，希望为中国的有志青年提供一个中立、开放的出国留学交流平台。我们提倡 DIY，把备考和申请过程当成一次自我挑战和升华，更鼓励每一位孤独前行的 GTer 相互携手，温暖互助。在无数 GTers 的共同努力下，寄托论坛沉淀了丰富的留学考试申请的资源与信息。

作为一个有情怀的留学生活交流平台，寄托一直希望能够做些什么来回馈给支持我们的众多小伙伴们，因此留学史上第一套电子书——寄托电子书诞生啦！寄托整合了论坛上的优质资源，在小编与众多寄托版友共同努力下，推出了寄托电子书系列。该系列囊括不同国家留学申请的各个阶段，包括考试，申请，选校，签证，租房等等。希望能够帮助众多 GTers 以及其他留学小伙伴们在留学道路上少走弯路提高效率。

今日为大家推送我们的第二份考试攻略——Magoosh Word List（A to I）。

【第一版：06/24/2016】

本攻略的内容来自寄托版友 Arwen.Girl，转载请注明出处。

预祝各位童鞋在今后的留学生活中一切顺利，多姿多彩哈！

By 寄托天下



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目录

目录.....	1
A.....	3
B.....	17
C.....	24
D.....	37
E.....	48
F.....	59
G.....	64
H.....	68
I.....	72
Reference	84
特别鸣谢.....	85

Magoosh 作为美帝名校毕业生团队精心打造的杀 G 神器，在国内不断赢得好评，受到双满分大神 crazyrobin 等众多高分 G 神的强烈推荐。Magoosh 官网上没有公开的 word list，都是在线 app 的形式。本词汇表由寄托版友 Arwen.Girl 从官网上一条条手动复制下来的，并由寄托小编整理成方便阅读的 PDF 文档形式。有单词、解释和例句，个个是精华哟~~

另外，在 Magoosh 涨价后，因应广大童鞋的需求，与 Magoosh 沟通后，寄托决定再开一期团购！经过寄托超级版主 crazyrobin 的努力争取，这一次的团购，小伙伴们可以劲省 70 刀！也就是说，大家能以 79 刀的价格入手 Magoosh 了！！本次活动时间将开创先河，持续三周，即自 2016.6.25 起至 7.15 日止，报名参团的童鞋将获得 70 刀的优惠！若参与人数超过 200 人，更可立享 10 刀返现优惠，即最高可获得 80 刀的优惠哦！！有兴趣团购 Magoosh 的童鞋可移步论坛查看详细的团购流程啦~~

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Magoosh Word List (A to I)

A

3

aberrant

adjective: markedly different from an accepted norm

When the financial director started screaming and throwing food at his co-workers, the police had to come in to deal with his aberrant behavior.

aberration

noun: a deviation from what is normal or expected

Aberrations in climate have become the norm: rarely a week goes by without some meteorological phenomenon making headlines.

abjure

verb: formally reject or give up (as a belief)

While the church believed that Galileo abjured the heliocentric theory under threat of torture, he later wrote a book clearly supporting the theory.

aboveboard

adjective: open and honest

The mayor, despite his avuncular face plastered about the city, was hardly aboveboard – some concluded that it was his ingratiating smile that allowed him to engage in corrupt behavior and get away with it.

abrogate

verb: revoke formally

As part of the agreement between the labor union and the company, the workers abrogated their right to strike for four years in exchange for better health insurance.

abstain

verb: choose not to consume or take part in (particularly something enjoyable)

Considered a health nut, Jessica abstained from anything containing sugar--even chocolate.

abstruse

adjective: difficult to understand; incomprehensible

Physics textbooks can seem so abstruse to the uninitiated that readers feel as though they are looking at hieroglyphics.

abysmal

adjective: extremely bad

Coach Ramsey took his newest player off the field after watching a few painful minutes of her abysmal performance.

access

noun: the ability to go into (when somebody or something must allow you to enter)

Only students have access to the university library.

verb: to go into something when allowed to enter

There is a large amount of oil under the ice, but we have not been able to access it.

accolade

noun: an award or praise granted as a special honor

Jean Paul-Sartre was not a fan of accolades, and as such, he refused to accept the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1964.

acerbic

adjective: harsh in tone

Most movie critics are acerbic towards summer blockbusters, often referring to them as garbage.

acme

noun: the highest point of achievement

The new Cessna airplanes will be the acme of comfort, offering reclining seats and ample legroom.

acrimony

noun: bitterness and ill will

The acrimonious dispute between the president and vice-president sent a clear signal to voters: the health of the current administration was imperiled.

adamant

adjective: refusing to change one's mind

Civil rights icon Rosa Parks will forever be remembered for adamantly refusing to give up her seat

on a public bus--even after the bus driver insisted, she remained rooted in place.

adequate

adjective: good enough for what you need

A very light jacket will be adequate for Los Angeles's warm winter.

adjudicate

verb: to serve as a judge in a competition; to arrive at a judgment or conclusion

Only those with the most refined palates were able to adjudicate during the barbeque competition.

admonish

verb: to warn strongly, even to the point of reprimanding

Before the concert began, security personnel admonished the crowd not to come up on stage during the performance.

admonitory

adjective: serving to warn; expressing reproof or reproach especially as a corrective

At the assembly, the high school vice-principal gave the students an admonitory speech, warning them of the many risks and dangers of prom night.

advocate

verb: speak, plead, or argue in favor of

While the senator privately approved of gay marriage, he was unwilling to advocate for the cause in a public venue.

noun: a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea

Martin Luther King Jr. was a tireless advocate for the rights of African-Americans in the United States.

aesthete

noun: one who professes great sensitivity to the beauty of art and nature

A true aesthete, Marty would spend hours at the Guggenheim Museum, staring at the same Picasso.

aesthetic

adjective: concerned with the appreciation of beauty

The director, not known for his aesthetic sensibilities, decided not to use costumes at all, and put on the play in everyday clothing.

noun: a set of principles underlying and guiding the work of a particular artist or artistic movement.

The artist operated according to a peculiar aesthetic, not considering any photograph to be worth publishing unless it contained a marine mammal.

affable

adjective: likeable; easy to talk to

For all his surface affability, Marco was remarkably glum when he wasn't around other people.

6

affluent

adjective: wealthy

The center of the city had sadly become a pit of penury, while, only five miles away, multi-million dollar homes spoke of affluence.

afford

verb: provide with an opportunity

The summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro affords a panoramic view that encompasses both Tanzania and Kenya.

alacrity

noun: an eager willingness to do something

The first three weeks at his new job, Mark worked with such alacrity that upper management knew it would be giving him a promotion.

altruism

noun: the quality of unselfish concern for the welfare of others

Albert Schweitzer spent most of his life doing missionary work as a doctor in Africa, seeking no reward, apparently motivated only by altruism.

amalgam

noun: a mixture of multiple things The band's music was an amalgam of hip-hop, flamenco and jazz, blending the three styles with surprising results.

ambiguous

adjective: open to more than one interpretation

The coach told his team, "Move towards that side of the field"; because he did not point, his directions were ambiguous, and the team had no idea to which side he was referring.

ambivalent

adjective: mixed or conflicting emotions about something

Sam was ambivalent about studying for the exam because doing so ate up a lot of his time, yet he was able to improve his analytical skills.

ameliorate

verb: make something bad better "Three Cups of Tea" tells the story of western man who hopes to ameliorate poverty and the lack of education in Afghanistan.

7

amenable

adjective: easily persuaded

Even though she did not like the outdoors, Shirley was generally amenable and so her brother was able to persuade her to go camping.

amiable

adjective: friendly

Amy's name was very apt: she was so amiable that she was twice voted class president.

amok

adverb: in a frenzied or uncontrolled state

Wherever the bowl haircut teen-idol went, his legions of screaming fans ran through the streets amok, hoping for a glance at his boyish face.

amorphous

adjective: shapeless

His study plan for the GRE was at best amorphous; he would do questions from random pages in any one of seven test prep books.

amply

adverb: more than is adequate

The boat was amply supplied for its year at sea—no man would go hungry or thirst.

anachronism

noun: something that is inappropriate for the given time period (usually something old).

Dressed in 15th century clothing each day, Edward was a walking anachronism.

analogous

adjective: similar in some respects but otherwise different

In many ways, the Internet's transformative effect on society has been analogous to that of the printing press.

anathema

noun: a detested person; the source of somebody's hate

Hundreds of years ago, Galileo was anathema to the church; today the church is anathema to some on the left side of the political spectrum.

anemic

adjective: lacking energy and vigor

After three straight shows, the lead actress gave an anemic performance the fourth night, barely speaking loudly enough for those in the back rows to hear.

animosity

noun: intense hostility

The governor's animosity toward his rival was only inflamed when the latter spread false lies regarding the governor's first term.

anodyne

noun: something that soothes or relieves pain

Muzak, which is played in department stores, is intended to be an anodyne, but is often so cheesy and over-the-top that customers become irritated.

adjective: inoffensive

Wilbur enjoyed a spicy Mexican breakfast, but Jill preferred a far more anodyne meal in the mornings.

anomalous

adjective: not normal

According to those who do not believe in climate change, the extreme weather over the last five years is simply anomalous—daily temperatures should return to their old averages, they believe.

anomaly

noun: something that is not normal, standard, or expected

After finding an anomaly in the data, she knew that she would have to conduct her experiment again.

antedate

verb: precede in time

Harry was so unknowledgable that he was unaware the Egyptian pharaohs antedated the American Revolution.

antic

adjective: ludicrously odd

The clown's antic act was too extreme for the youngest children, who left the room in tears.

antipathy

noun: an intense feeling of dislike or aversion

Maria had an antipathy for tour groups, often bolting to the other side of the museum as soon as she saw a chaperone leading a group of wide-eyed tourists.

antiquated

adjective: old-fashioned; belonging to an earlier period in time

Aunt Betty had antiquated notions about marriage, believing that a man should court a woman for at least a year before receiving a kiss.

antithetical

adjective: sharply contrasted in character or purpose

His deep emotional involvement with these ideas is, in fact, antithetical to the disattachment Buddhism preaches.

apathetic

adjective: marked by a lack of interest

Mr. Thompson was so talented at teaching math that even normally apathetic students took interest.

apathy

noun: an absence of emotion or enthusiasm

Widespread apathy among voters led to a very small turnout on election day.

apex

noun: the highest point

The Ivy League is considered the apex of the secondary education system.

aphorism

noun: a short instructive saying about a general truth

Nietzsche was known for using aphorisms, sometimes encapsulating a complex philosophical thought in a mere sentence.

aphoristic

adjective: something that is concise and instructive of a general truth or principle

Sometimes I can't stand Nathan because he tries to impress everyone by being aphoristic, but he just states the obvious.

aplomb

noun: great coolness and composure under strain

Nancy acted with aplomb during dangerous situations--she once calmly climbed up an oak tree to save a cat.

10

apocryphal

adjective: being of questionable authenticity

The web is notorious for sandwiching apocryphal stories between actual news.

apogee

noun: the highest point

The apogee of the Viennese style of music, Mozart's music continues to mesmerize audiences well into the 21st century.

apostate

noun: a person who has abandoned a religious faith or cause

An apostate of the Republican Party, Sheldon has yet to become affiliated with any party and dubs himself an independent.

apothegm

noun: a short, pithy instructive saying

Winston Churchill is famous for many apothegms, but this might be his most famous: "It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried."

apotheosis

noun: exaltation to divine status; the highest point of development

As difficult as it is to imagine, the apotheosis of Mark Zuckerberg's career, many believe, is yet to come.

appease

verb: pacify by acceding to the demands of

Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister during WWII, tried to appease Hitler and in doing so sent a clear message: you can walk all over us.

appreciable

adjective: large enough to be noticed (usu. refers to an amount)

There is an appreciable difference between those who say they can get the job done and those who actually get the job done.

apprehension

noun: fearful expectation

Test day can be one of pure apprehension, as many students worry about their test scores.

approbatory

adjective: expressing praise or approval

Although it might not be her best work, Hunter's new novel has received generally approbatory reviews.

appropriate

verb: to give or take something by force

The government appropriated land that was occupied by squatters, sending them scurrying for another place to live.

verb: to allocate

The committee appropriated the funds to its various members.

appurtenant

adjective: supply added support

In hiking Mt. Everest, sherpas are appurtenant, helping climbers both carry gear and navigate treacherous paths.

arbitrary

adjective: based on a random, groundless decision

One of the arbitrary decrees in place during the emperor's rule is that all citizens pay him weekly homage at his palace.

arcane

adjective: requiring secret or mysterious knowledge

Most college fraternities are known for arcane rituals that those hoping to join the fraternity must learn.

arch

adjective: to be deliberately teasing

The baroness was arch, making playful asides to the townspeople; yet because they couldn't pick up on her dry humor, they thought her supercilious.

archaic

12

adjective: so old as to appear to belong to a different period

Hoping to sound intelligent, Mary spoke in archaic English that was right out of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*--needless to say, she didn't have many friends.

arduous

adjective: demanding considerable mental effort and skill; testing powers of endurance

In order to deal with the arduous cross-country journey, truck drivers often survive on a string of caffeinated drinks, staying awake for up to 30 hours at a time.

arrant

adjective: complete and wholly (usually modifying a noun with negative connotation)

An arrant fool, Lawrence surprised nobody when he lost all his money in a pyramid scheme that was every bit as transparent as it was corrupt.

arriviste

noun: a person who has recently reached a position of power; a social climber

The city center was aflutter with arrivistes who each tried to outdo one another with their ostentatious sports cars and chic evening dress.

arrogate

verb: seize and control without authority

Arriving at the small town, the outlaw arrogated the privileges of a lord, asking the frightened citizens to provide food, drink, and entertainment.

artful

adjective: exhibiting artistic skill;

Picasso is generally considered the most artful member of the Cubist movement.

adjective: clever in a cunning way

Bernie Madoff's artful Ponzi scheme stole billions of dollars from investors and is considered the largest financial fraud in U.S. history.

artifice

noun: cunning tricks used to deceive others

The mayoral candidates both spent much of the campaign accusing each other of artifices designed to mislead the voting public.

artless

adjective: without cunning or deceit

Despite the president's seemingly artless speeches, he was a skilled and ruthless negotiator.

artlessness

noun: the quality of innocence

I, personally, found the artlessness of her speech charming.

ascendancy

noun: the state that exists when one person or group has power over another

The ascendancy of the Carlsbad water polo team is clear—they have a decade of championships behind them.

ascetic

adjective: practicing self-denial

His ascetic life is the main reason he inspired so many followers, especially since he gave up wealth and power to live in poverty.

noun: one who practices great self-denial

Historically, ascetics like Ghandi are often considered wise men partially because of their restraint.

ascribe

verb: attribute or credit to

History ascribes The Odyssey and The Iliad to Homer, but scholars now debate whether he was a historical figure or a fictitious name.

askance

adverb: with a look of suspicion or disapproval

The old couple looked askance on the teenagers seated next to them, whispering to each other, "They've got rings through their noses and purple hair!"

asperity

noun: harshness of manner

The editor was known for his asperity, often sending severe letters of rejection to amateur writers.

assail

verb: attack in speech or writing

In the weekly paper, the editor assailed the governor for wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars in public projects that quickly failed.

14

assiduously

adverb: with care and persistence

The top college football program recruits new talent assiduously, only choosing those who were the top in their county.

assuage

verb: make something intense less severe

Her fear that the new college would be filled with unknown faces was assuaged when she recognized her childhood friend standing in line.

atavism

noun: a reappearance of an earlier characteristic; throwback

Much of the modern art movement was an atavism to a style of art found only in small villages through Africa and South America.

attenuate

verb: to weaken (in terms of intensity); to taper off/become thinner.

Her animosity towards Bob attenuated over the years, and she even went so far as to invite him to her party.

audacious

adjective: willing to be bold in social situations or to take risks

As all of the other campers cowered in their tents, Bill, armed only with a flashlight, audaciously tracked down the bear that had raided their food.

audacity

noun: aggressive boldness in social situations

She surprised her colleagues by having the audacity to publically criticize the findings of an distinguished scientist.

augment

verb: enlarge or increase; improve

Ideally, the restaurant's augmented menu will expand its clientele and increase its profits.

auspicious

adjective: favorable, the opposite of sinister

Despite an auspicious beginning, Mike's road trip became a series of mishaps, and he was soon stranded and penniless, leaning against his wrecked automobile.

15

austere

adjective: practicing self-denial

His lifestyle of revelry and luxurious excess could hardly be called austere.

adjective: unadorned in style or appearance

Late Soviet architecture, although remaining largely austere, moved into experimental territory that employed previously unused shapes and structures.

adjective: harsh in manner of temperament

The principal of my elementary school was a cold, austere woman; I could never understand why she chose to work with children.

autocratic

adjective: characteristic of an absolute ruler or absolute rule; having absolute sovereignty

The last true autocratic country is certainly North Korea; nowhere does a leader exercise the absolute control over all aspects of a people the way that Kim Jong-un does.

adjective: offensively self-assured or given to exercising usually unwarranted power

The manager was finally fired for his autocratic leadership, which often bordered on rude and offensive.

autonomously

adverb: In an autonomous or self-governing manner.

Many of the factory workers are worried about being replaced by machines and computers that will work completely autonomously.

avarice

noun: greed (one of the seven deadly sins)

The Spanish conquistadors were known for their avarice, plundering Incan land and stealing Incan gold.

avaricious

adjective: excessively greedy

Since avaricious desire is similar to gluttony or lust--sins of excess--it was listed as one of the seven deadly sins by the Catholic church.

avert

verb: turn away

Afraid to see the aftermath of the car crash, I averted my eyes as we drove by.

verb: ward off or prevent

The struggling videogame company put all of its finances into one final, desperate project to avert bankruptcy.

avid

adjective: marked by active interest and enthusiasm

Martin is an avid birdwatcher, often taking long hikes into remote mountains to see some rare eagle.

B

badger

verb: to pester

Badgered by his parents to find a job, the 30-year-old loafer instead joined a gang of itinerant musicians.

17

baleful

adjective: threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments

Movies often use storms or rain clouds as a baleful omen of evil events that will soon befall the main character.

balk

verb: refuse to comply

The students were willing to clean up the broken glass, but when the teacher asked them to mop the entire floor, they balked, citing reasons why they needed to leave.

banal

adjective: repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse

The professor used such banal expression that many students in the class either fell asleep from boredom or stayed awake to complete his sentences and humor friends.

banality

noun: a trite or obvious remark

Herbert regarded the minister's remark as a mere banality until Sharon pointed out profound implications to the seemingly obvious words.

banish

verb: expel from a community, residence, or location; drive away

The most difficult part of the fast was banishing thoughts of food.

base

adjective: the lowest, class were without any moral principles

She was not so base as to begrudge the beggar the unwanted crumbs from her dinner plate.

bastardization

noun: an act that debases or corrupts

The movie World War Z is a complete bastardization of the book with little more in common than zombies and a title.

beatific

adjective: blissfully happy

Often we imagine all monks to wear the beatific smile of the Buddha, but, like any of us, a monk can have a bad day and not look very happy.

becoming

adjective: appropriate, and matches nicely

Her dress was becoming and made her look even more beautiful.

beg

verb: to evade or dodge (a question)

By assuming that Charlie was headed to college—which he was not—Maggie begged the question when she asked him to which school he was headed in the Fall.

begrudge

verb: to envy someone for possessing or enjoying something

Sitting all alone in his room, Harvey begrudged the happiness of the other children playing outside his window.

verb: to give reluctantly

We never begrudge money spent on ourselves.

behooves

verb: to be one's duty or obligation

The teacher looked down at the student and said, "It would behoove you to be in class on time and complete your homework, so that you don't repeat freshman English for a third straight year."

belie

verb: to give a false representation to; misrepresent

The smile on her face belies the pain she must feel after the death of her husband.

belittle

verb: lessen the importance, dignity, or reputation of

A good teacher will never belittle his students, but will instead empower them.

bellicose

adjective: warlike; inclined to quarrel

Known for their bellicose ways, the Spartans were once the most feared people from Peloponnesus to Persia.

19

belligerent

adjective: characteristic of one eager to fight

Tom said that he was arguing the matter purely for philosophical reasons, but his belligerent tone indicated an underlying anger about the issue.

bemoan

verb: express discontent or a strong regret

While the CFO carefully explained all the reasons for the cuts in benefits, after the meeting employees bemoaned the cuts as further evidence that management was against them.

benighted

adjective: fallen into a state of ignorance

Far from being a period of utter benightedness, The Medieval Ages produced some great works of theological speculation.

benign

adjective: kind

I remember my grandfather's face was wrinkled, benign, and calm.

adjective: (medicine) not dangerous to health; not recurrent or progressive

The tumor located in your ear lobe seems to be benign and should not cause you any trouble.

bereft

adjective: unhappy in love; suffering from unrequited love

After 64 years of marriage, William was bereft after the death of his wife.

adjective: sorrowful through loss or deprivation

"You are not bereft if you haven't played on your Xbox in the past week," his mother said.

besiege

verb: harass, as with questions or requests; cause to feel distressed or worried

After discovering a priceless artifact in her backyard, Jane was besieged by phone calls, emails, and reporters all trying to buy, hold or see the rare piece of history.

besmirch

verb: damage the good name and reputation of someone

The prince's distasteful choice of words besmirched not only his own name, but the reputation of the entire royal family.

besotted

adjective: strongly affectionate towards

Even though her father did not approve, Juliet became besotted with the young Romeo.

adjective: very drunk

Never before have I seen my mom so besotted, and honestly, I hope it's the last time she drinks so much.

betray

verb: to reveal or make known something, usually unintentionally

With the gold medal at stake, the gymnast awaited his turn, his quivering lip betraying his intense emotions.

bilious

adjective: irritable; always angry

Rex was bilious all morning, and his face would only take on a look of contentedness when he'd had his morning cup of coffee.

blatant

adjective: without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious

Allen was often punished in school for blatantly disrespecting teachers.

bleak

adjective: having a depressing or gloomy outlook

Unremitting overcast skies tend to lead people to create bleak literature and lugubrious music — compare England's band Radiohead to any band from Southern California.

blinkered

adjective: to have a limited outlook or understanding

In gambling, the addict is easily blinkered by past successes and/or past failures, forgetting that the outcome of any one game is independent of the games that preceded it.

bolster

verb: support and strengthen

The case for the suspect's innocence was bolstered considerably by the fact that neither fingerprints nor DNA were found at the scene.

boon

noun: a desirable state

Modern technology has been a boon to the travel industry.

adjective: very close and convivial

He was a boon companion to many, and will be sadly missed.

boorish

adjective: ill-mannered and coarse or contemptible in behavior or appearance

Bukowski was known for being a boorish drunk and alienating close friends and family.

bowdlerize

verb: edit by omitting or modifying parts considered indelicate

To receive an R rating, the entire movie was bowdlerized because it contained so much violence and grotesque subject matter.

brazen

adjective: unrestrained by convention or propriety

Their large "donations" to the local police department gave the drug cartel the brazen confidence to do their business out in the open.

bridle

verb: the act of restraining power or action or limiting excess

New curfew laws have bridled people's tendency to go out at night.

verb: anger or take offense

The hostess bridled at the tactless dinner guests who insisted on eating before everybody had gotten their food.

bristle

verb: react in an offended or angry manner

As we discussed the painting, I noticed the artist's wife bristling at our criticisms, ready to defend her husband's work.

broadside

noun: a strong verbal attack

Political broadsides are usually strongest in the weeks leading up to a national election.

bromide

noun: a trite or obvious remark

Instead of sharing his umbrella, the cheeky stranger offered Martha the following bromide: "Looks like it's raining."

22

brook

verb: put up with something or somebody unpleasant

While she was at the chalkboard, the teacher did not brook any form of talking--even a tiny peep resulted in afternoon detention.

browbeat

verb: be bossy towards; discourage or frighten with threats or a domineering manner

During the interrogation, the suspect was browbeaten into signing a false confession.

brusquely

adverb: in a blunt, direct manner

Not one for social pleasantries, the Chief of Staff would brusquely ask his subordinates anything he wanted, even coffee.

buck

verb: resist

The profits at our firm bucked the general downturn that affected the real estate industry.

bucolic

adjective: relating to the pleasant aspects of the country

The noble families of England once owned vast expanses of beautiful, bucolic land.

bumbling

adjective: lacking physical movement skills, especially with the hands

Within a week of starting, the bumbling new waiter was unceremoniously fired.

burgeon

verb: grow and flourish

China's housing market is burgeoning, but some predict that the growth is merely a bubble and will

burst much like the U.S. real estate bubble of 2008.

buttress

verb: make stronger or defensible

China's economy has been buttressed by a global demand for the electronic parts the country manufactures.

23

byzantine

adjective: intricate and complex

Getting a driver's license is not simply a matter of taking a test; the regulations and procedures are so byzantine that many have found themselves at the mercy of the Department of Motor Vehicles.

C

cadaverous

adjective: emaciated; gaunt

Some actors take challenging roles in which they have to lose so much weight that they appear cadaverous.

24

callow

adjective: young and inexperienced

Both Los Angeles and New York are known for callow out-of-towners hoping to make it big.

calumny

noun: making of a false statement meant to injure a person's reputation

With the presidential primaries well under way, the air is thick with calumny, and the mud already waist-high.

canard

noun: a deliberately misleading fabrication

The public will always be fooled by the media's canards.

candid

adjective: a straightforward and honest look at something

Even with a perfect stranger, Charles was always candid and would rarely hold anything back.

candidness

noun: the quality of being honest and straightforward in attitude and speech

Although I was unhappy that the relationship ended, I appreciated her candidness about why she was ready to move on from the relationship.

capacity

noun: the amount or volume something can hold ability (especially mental)

The hotel is full to maximum capacity; there are no empty rooms.

Few birds have the capacity to recognize themselves when looking in a mirror; most act as though there is a second bird behind the glass.

capitulate

noun: to surrender (usually under agreed conditions)

Paul, losing 19-0 in a ping-pong match against his nimble friend, basically capitulated when he played the last two points with his eyes closed.

capricious

adjective: determined by chance or impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason

Nearly every month our capricious CEO had a new plan to turn the company around, and none of them worked because we never gave them the time they needed to succeed.

25

cardinal

adjective: of primary importance; fundamental

Most cultures consider gambling a cardinal sin and thus have outlawed its practice.

carping

adjective: persistently petty and unjustified criticism

What seemed like incessant nagging and carping about my behavior from my mother turned out to be wise and useful advice that has served me well.

castigate

verb: to reprimand harshly

Drill sergeants are known to castigate new recruits so mercilessly that the latter often break down during their first week in training.

cataclysm

noun: an event resulting in great loss and misfortune

The introduction of smallpox was a cataclysm for Native Americans, killing off more than half of their population.

catalyst

noun: something that speeds up an event

Rosa Park's refusal to give up her bus seat acted as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement, setting into motion historic changes for African-Americans.

catholic

adjective: of broad scope; universal

Jonah's friends said that Jonah's taste in music was eclectic; Jonah was quick to point out that not only was his taste eclectic but it was also catholic: he enjoyed music from countries as far-flung as

cavalier

adjective: given to haughty disregard of others

Percy dismissed the issue with a cavalier wave of his hand.

cede

verb: relinquish possession or control over

Eventually, all parents must cede control of their growing childrens' educations and allow their offspring some autonomy.

celerity

noun: speed, rapidity

We aim to respond to customers' questions with celerity and accuracy, with no longer than a 24 hour wait time.

censor

verb: to examine and remove objectionable material

Every fall, high school English teachers are inundated by requests to censor their curriculum by removing The Catcher in the Rye and Scarlet Letter from their reading lists.

noun: an official who censors material

The censor insisted that every reference to drugs should be removed from the manuscript.

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noun: an official who censors material

The censor insisted that every reference to drugs should be removed from the manuscript.

censure

verb: to express strong disapproval

After being caught in bed with a mistress, the mayor was quickly censured by the city council.

cerebral

adjective: involving intelligence rather than emotions or instinct

A cerebral analysis of most pop music finds it to be simple and childish, but that ignores the

point--the music's effect on the listener.

chagrin

noun: strong feelings of embarrassment

Much to the timid writer's chagrin, the audience chanted his name until he came back on the stage.

verb: cause to feel shame; hurt the pride of

She never cared what others said about her appearance but was chagrined by the smallest comment from her mother.

27

champion

verb: to fight for a cause

Martin Luther King Jr. championed civil rights fiercely throughout his short life.

charlatan

noun: a flamboyant deceiver; one who attracts customers with tricks or jokes

You may call him a "motivational speaker," but I call him a charlatan--he doesn't have any idea what he's really talking about.

chary

adjective: cautious, suspiciously reluctant to do something

Having received three speeding tickets in the last two months, Jack was chary of driving at all above the speed limit, even on a straight stretch of highway that looked empty for miles ahead.

chastise

verb: to reprimand harshly

Though chastised for eating the snacks for the party, Lawrence shrugged off his mother's harsh words, and continued to plow through jars of cookies and boxes of donuts.

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chauvinism

noun: fanatical patriotism; belief that one's group/cause is superior to all other groups/causes

Vegetarians argue that man is chauvinistic in his belief that animals do not consciously feel the pain we humans do.

chauvinist

noun: a person who believes in the superiority of their group

The chauvinist lives on both sides of the political spectrum, outright shunning anybody whose ideas are not consistent with his own.

check

verb: to limit (usually modifying the growth of something)

Deserted for six months, the property began to look more like a jungle and less like a residence—weeds grew unchecked in the front yard.

noun: the condition of being held back or limited

When government abuses are not kept in check, that government is likely to become autocratic.

checkered

adjective: one that is marked by disreputable happenings

One by one, the presidential candidates dropped out of the race, their respective checkered pasts—from embezzlement to infidelity—sabotaging their campaigns.

chimera

noun: something desired or wished for but is only an illusion and impossible to achieve

Many believe that a world free of war is a chimera—a dream that ignores humanity's violent tendencies.

chivalrous

adjective: being attentive to women like an ideal knight

Marco's chivalrous ways, like opening doors and pulling out chairs, was much appreciated by his date.

choleric

adjective: prone to outbursts of temper; easily angered

While a brilliant lecturer, Mr. Dawson came across as choleric and unapproachable—very rarely did students come to his office hours.

chortle

verb: to chuckle, laugh merrily

Walking past the bar, I could hear happy, chortling people and the blast of horns from a jazz band.

churlish

adjective: lacking manners or refinement

The manager was unnecessarily churlish to his subordinates, rarely deigning to say hello, but always quick with a sartorial jab if someone happened to be wearing anything even slightly mismatching.

circumscribe

verb: restrict or confine

Their tour of South America was circumscribed so that they saw only popular destinations and avoided the dangerous parts of cities.

circumvent

verb: cleverly find a way out of one's duties or obligations

One way of circumventing the GRE is to apply to a grad school that does not require GRE scores.

clemency

noun: leniency and compassion shown toward offenders by a person or agency charged with administering justice

In the final moments of the trial, during his closing speech, Phillips was nearly begging the judge for clemency.

coalesce

verb: fuse or cause to grow together

Over time, the various tribes coalesced into a single common culture with one universal language.

cogent

adjective: clear and persuasive

A cogent argument will change the minds of even the most skeptical audience.

cohesive

adjective: well integrated, forming a united whole

A well-written, cohesive essay will keep on topic at all times, never losing sight of the main argument.

collusion

noun: agreement on a secret plot

Many have argued that Lee Harvey Oswald, JFK's assassin, was in collusion with other criminals; others maintain that Oswald was a lone gunman.

colossal

adjective: so great in size or force or extent as to elicit awe

Few appreciate the colossal scale of the sun: if hollow, it could contain a million Earths.

commendable

adjective: worthy of high praise

The efforts of the firefighters running into the burning building were commendable.

30

commensurate

adjective: to be in proportion or corresponding in degree or amount

The convicted felon's life sentence was commensurate to the heinousness of his crime.

complacent

adjective: contented to a fault with oneself or one's actions After the water polo team won their sixth championship, they became complacent and didn't even make it to the playoffs the next year.

complaisant

adjective: showing a cheerful willingness to do favors for others

On her first day at the job, Annie was complaisant, fulfilling every request of her new employee and anticipating future requests.

complementary

adjective: enhancing each other's qualities (for two things or more).

The head waiter was careful to tell the amateur diners that red wine was complementary with beef, each bringing out subtle taste notes in the other.

complicit

adjective: Associated with or participating in an activity, especially one of a questionable nature.

While the grand jury cleared the senator of all criminal charges, in the public mind he was still complicit in the corruption.

compound

verb: make more intense, stronger, or more marked Her

headache was compounded by the construction crew outside, which had six jackhammers going at the same time.

concede

verb: acknowledge defeat

I concede. You win!

verb: admit (to a wrongdoing)

After a long, stern lecture from her father, Olivia conceded to having broken the window.

verb: give over; surrender or relinquish to the physical control of another

The Spanish were forced to concede much of the territory they had previously conquered.

31

conciliate

verb: to make peace with

His opponents believed his gesture to be conciliatory, yet as soon as they put down their weapons, he unsheathed a hidden sword.

concomitant

adjective: describing an event or situation that happens at the same time as or in connection with another

Concomitant with his desire for nature was a desire for the culture and energy of a big city.

conducive

adjective: making a situation or outcome more likely to happen

Studying in a quiet room is conducive to learning; studying in a noisy environment makes learning more difficult.

conflagration

noun: a very intense and uncontrolled fire

In the summer months, conflagrations are not uncommon in the southwest, do to the heat and lack of rain.

conflate

verb: mix together different elements or concepts

In her recent book, the author conflates several genres--the detective story, the teen thriller, and the vampire romance--to create a memorable read.

confound

verb: be confusing or perplexing to

Though Harry loved numbers, he found calculus confounding.

verb: mistake one thing for another

Americans often confound sweet potatoes with yams, and refer to both vegetables by the same name.

conniving

verb: taking part in immoral and unethical plots

The queen was so conniving that, with the help of the prince, she tried to overthrow the king.

consecrate

verb: to make holy or set apart for a high purpose

At the church of Notre Dame in France, the new High Altar was consecrated in 1182.

32

conspicuous

adjective: without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious

American basketball players are always conspicuous when they go abroad--not only are they American, but some are over seven feet tall.

constituent

noun: a citizen who is represented in a government by officials for whom he or she votes

The mayor's constituents are no longer happy with her performance and plan to vote for another candidate in the upcoming election.

noun: an abstract part of something

The constituents of the metal alloy are nickel, copper, and tin.

constraint

noun: something that limits or restricts

We don't have many resources, so we'll have to work with some very tight constraints.

construe

verb: interpreted in a particular way

The author's inability to take a side on the issue was construed by both his opponents and supporters as a sign of weakness.

consummate

adjective: having or revealing supreme mastery or skill

Tyler was the consummate musician: he was able to play the guitar, harmonica, and the drum at the same time.

verb: to make perfect and complete in every respect

The restoration of the ancient church was only consummated after a twenty years of labor.

contemptuous

adjective: scornful, looking down at others with a sneering attitude

Always on the forefront of fashion, Vanessa looked contemptuously at anyone wearing dated clothing.

contentious

adjective: likely to argue

Since old grandpa Harry became very contentious during the summer when only reruns were on T.V., the grandkids learned to hide from him at every opportunity.

contingent

noun: a gathering of persons representative of some larger group

A small contingent of those loyal to the king have gathered around the castle to defend it.

adjective: possible but not certain to occur

Whether the former world champions can win again this year is contingent upon none of its star players getting injured.

contrite

adjective: to be remorseful

Though he stole his little sister's licorice stick with malevolent glee, Chucky soon became contrite when his sister wouldn't stop crying.

contrition

noun: the feeling of remorse or guilt that comes from doing something bad

Those who show contrition during their prison terms--especially when under review by a parole board--often get shortened sentences.

contrive

verb: to pull off a plan or scheme, usually through skill or trickery

Despite a low GPA, he contrived to get into college, going so far as to write his own glowing letters of recommendation.

conundrum

noun: a difficult problem

Computers have helped solve some of the mathematical conundrums which have puzzled man for many centuries.

convivial

adjective: describing a lively atmosphere

The wedding reception was convivial; friends who hadn't seen each other for ages drank and ate together before heading to the dance floor.

convoluted

adjective: highly complex or intricate

Instead of solving the math problem in three simple steps, Kumar used a convoluted solution requiring fifteen steps.

34

copious

adjective: in abundant supply

In midsummer, there are copious popsicle stands at the beach; in the winter, there are none.

cornucopia

noun: an abundant supply of something good

The International Food Expo was a cornucopia of culinary delights: gourmet foods from every continent were under one roof.

corollary

noun: a practical consequence that follows naturally

A corollary of Hurricane Sandy, which ravaged the east coast of the U.S., is a push to build higher sea walls to protect against future hurricanes.

corroborate

verb: to confirm or lend support to (usually an idea or claim)

Her claim that frog populations were falling precipitously in Central America was corroborated by locals, who reported that many species of frogs had seemingly vanished overnight.

cosmopolitan

adjective: comprising many cultures; global in reach and outlook

There are few cities in the world as diverse and cosmopolitan as New York.

cosseted

verb: treat with excessive indulgence

The king and queen cosseted the young prince, giving him a prized miniature pony for his fifth birthday.

coterminous

adjective: being of equal extent or scope or duration

The border of the state is coterminous with geographic limits on travel; the east and north are surrounded by a nearly uncrossable river and the south by a desert.

countermand

verb: a contrary command cancelling or reversing a previous command

By the time the colonel countermanded his soldiers not to land in enemy territory, a few helicopters had already touched down amid heavy gunfire.

cow

verb: to intimidate

Do not be cowed by a 3,000-word vocabulary list: turn that list into a deck of flashcards!

craven

adjective: pathetically cowardly

Though the man could have at least alerted the police, he crouched cravenly in the corner as the old woman was mugged.

credence

noun: belief in something

He placed no credence in psychics, claiming that they offered no special powers beyond the ability to make people part with their money.

creditable

adjective: deserving of praise but not that amazing

Critics agreed the movie was creditable, but few gave it more than three out of five stars.

credulity

noun: tendency to believe readily

Virginia's wide-eyed credulity as a five-year old was replaced by suspicion after she learned that Santa Claus didn't really exist.

crestfallen

adjective: brought low in spirit

I asked Maria on a date and she refused without a moment's thought; I was crestfallen.

cryptic

adjective: mysterious or vague, usually intentionally

Since Sarah did not want her husband to guess the Christmas present she had bought him, she only answered cryptically when he would ask her questions about it.

crystallize

verb: cause to take on a definite and clear shape

Only after fifteen minutes of brainstorming did Samantha's ideas for the essay crystallize.

culminate

verb: reach the highest or most decisive point

Beethoven's musical genius culminated in the 9th Symphony, which many consider his greatest work.

culpability

noun: a state of guilt

Since John had left his banana peel at the top of the stairwell, he accepted culpability for Martha's broken leg.

cumbersome

adjective: difficult to handle or use especially because of size or weight

Only ten years ago, being an avid reader and a traveler meant carrying a cumbersome backpack stuffed with books--these days we need only an e-reader.

cupidity

noun: greed for money

Some believe people that amassing as much wealth as possible is the meaning to life—yet they often realize that cupidity brings anything but happiness.

curmudgeon

noun: a grouchy, surly person

Since Uncle Mike was the family curmudgeon, each Thanksgiving he was plied with copious amounts of wine, in the hope that he would become less grouchy.

D

dearth

noun: a lack or shortage

I am surprised by the dearth of fast food chains; this is America and I assumed they were on every street.

37

debase

verb: reduce the quality or value of something

The third-rate script so debased the film that not even the flawless acting could save it from being a flop.

debonair

adjective: having a sophisticated charm

James Bond is known for his good looks, high tech gadgets, and debonair manner.

debunk

verb: expose as false ideas and claims, especially while ridiculing

Richard Dawkins tries to debunk religious belief, but his ridicule tends to push people away from his points rather than convince them.

decimation

noun: destroying or killing a large part of the population

The decimation after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is incomprehensible.

decorous

adjective: characterized by good taste in manners and conduct

Sally's parties are decorous affairs, and instead of the usual beer and music, there is tea and intellectual conversation.

decorum

noun: propriety in manners and conduct

"You will obey the rules of decorum for this courtroom or spend the night in a jail cell," said the judge to the prosecutor.

decry

verb: express strong disapproval of

The entire audience erupted in shouts and curses, decrying the penalty card issued by the referee.

deferential

adjective: showing respect

If you ever have the chance to meet the president, stand up straight and be deferential.

38

defray

verb: to help pay the cost of, either in part or full

In order for Sean to attend the prestigious college, his generous uncle helped defray the excessive tuition with a monthly donation.

degrade

verb: reduce in worth or character, usually verbally

Jesse had mockingly pointed out all of Nancy's faults in front of their friends, publicly degrading the poor girl.

deign

verb: do something that one considers to be below one's dignity

The master of the house never deigned to answer questions from the servants.

delegate

verb: give an assignment to (a person)

Since the senior manager had to go on many international business trips, she was forced to delegate many of her responsibilities to two lower-level managers.

deleterious

adjective: harmful to living things

The BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was deleterious to the fishing industry in the southern states.

deliberate

verb: think about carefully; weigh the pros and cons of an issue

Emergency situations such as this call for immediate action and leave no room to deliberate over options.

delineate

verb: describe in detail

After a brief summary of proper swimming technique, the coach delineated the specifics of each stroke, spending 30 minutes alone on the backstroke.

demean

verb: to insult; to cause someone to lose dignity or respect

At first the soccer players bantered back and forth, but as soon as one of the players became demeaning, calling the other's mother a water buffalo, the ref whipped out a red card.

39

demonstrative

adjective: given to or marked by the open expression of emotion

When Sally told James that she wanted to break up with him, she expected he would react demonstratively, but he quietly nodded his head and left without saying a word.

demur

verb: to object or show reluctance

Wallace disliked the cold, so he demurred when his friends suggested they going skiing in the Alps.

demure

adjective: to be modest and shy

The portrait of her in a simple white blouse was sweet and demure.

denigrate

verb: charge falsely or with malicious intent; attack the good name and reputation of someone

Count Rumford denigrated the new theory of heat, demonstrating that it was wholly inadequate to explain the observations.

denote

verb: be a sign or indication of; have as a meaning

Even if the text is not visible, the red octagon denotes "stop" to all motorists in America.

denouement

noun: the final resolution of the many strands of a literary or dramatic work; the outcome of a complex sequence of events

At the denouement of the movie, all questions were answered, and the true identity of the robber was revealed.

derelict

adjective: (of a person) not doing one's duties

The teacher was derelict in her duties because she hadn't graded a single student paper in three weeks.

noun: (of a building) abandoned

At one time the waterfront factories were busy and productive, but now they stand derelict and will be torn down.

deride

verb: treat or speak of with contempt

The nun derided the students for trying to sneak insects and worms into the classroom.

derisive

adjective: abusing vocally; expressing contempt or ridicule

I was surprised by her derisive tone; usually, she is sweet, soft spoken, and congenial.

derivative

adjective: (or a creative product, e.g. music, writing, etc.) not original but drawing on the work of another person

Because the movies were utterly derivative of other popular movies, they did well at the box office.

derive

verb: come from; be connected by a relationship of blood, for example

Many words in the English language are derived from Latin, including the word "derive."

verb: reason by deduction; establish by deduction

From the multiple set of footprints in the living room, the investigator derived an important clue: Sheila was not alone in the room at the time of the murder.

derogative

adjective: expressed as worthless or in negative terms

Never before have we seen a debate between two political candidates that was so derogative and filthy.

desecrate

verb: to willfully violate or destroy a sacred place

After desecrating the pharaoh's tomb, the archaeologist soon fell victim to a horrible illness.

desiccated

adjective: uninteresting, lacking vitality

Few novelists over 80 are able to produce anything more than desiccated works--boring shadows of former books.

desideratum

noun: something desired as a necessity

The desideratum of the environmental group is that motorists should rely on carpooling.

41

despite

preposition: even with (when an event is surprising because of some difficulty)

We enjoyed our vacation despite the rain.

despot

noun: a cruel and oppressive dictator

The Emperor Claudius was regarded as a fair-minded leader; his successor, Nero, was an absolute despot.

destitute

adjective: poor enough to need help from others

Jean Valjean, is at first destitute, but through the grace of a priest, he makes something of his life.

adjective: completely wanting or lacking (usually "destitute of")

Now that the mine is closed, the town is destitute of any economic activity."

deter

verb: turn away from by persuasion

His mother tried to deter him from joining the army, but he was too intoxicated with the idea of war to listen.

verb: try to prevent; show opposition to

The government's primary job should involve deterring paths to war, not finding ways to start them.

detrimental

adjective: (sometimes followed by "to") causing harm or injury

Many know that smoking is detrimental to your health, but processed sugar in large quantities is equally bad.

devolve

verb: pass on or delegate to another

The company was full of managers known for devolving tasks to lower management, but never

doing much work themselves.

verb: grow worse (usually ""devolve into"")

The dialogue between the two academics devolved into a downright bitter argument.

diabolical

adjective: to be extremely wicked like the devil

The conspirators, willing to dispatch anyone who stood in their way, hatched a diabolical plan to take over the city.

42

diatribe

noun: a strong verbal attack against a person or institution

Steve's mom launched into a diatribe during the PTA meeting, contending that the school was little more than a daycare in which students stare at the wall and teachers stare at the chalkboard.

dictatorial

adjective: expecting unquestioning obedience; characteristic of an absolute ruler

The coach was dictatorial in his approach: no players could ever argue or question his approach.

didactic

adjective: instructive (especially excessively)

Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Illyich* is a didactic novel, instructing the reader on how to live a good life.

differentiate

verb: be a distinctive feature, attribute, or trait (sometimes in positive sense)

Mozart's long melodic lines differentiate his compositions from other works of late 18th century music.

verb: evolve so as to lead to a new species or develop in a way most suited to the environment

Animals on Madagascar differentiated from other similar animal species due to many years of isolation on the island.

diffident

adjective: showing modest reserve; lacking self-confidence

As a young girl she was diffident and reserved, but now as an adult, she is confident and assertive.

dilapidated

adjective: in terrible condition

The main house has been restored but the gazebo is still dilapidated and unusable.

dilatory

adjective: wasting time

Lawyers use dilatory tactics so that it takes years before the case is actually decided.

43

dilettante

noun: an amateur who engages in an activity without serious intentions and who pretends to have knowledge

Fred has no formal medical training; while he likes to claim authority on medical issues, he is little more than a dilettante.

diligent

adjective: characterized by care and perseverance in carrying out tasks

Michael was a diligent gardener, never leaving a leaf on the ground and regularly watering each plant.

diminutive

noun: to indicate smallness

He prefers to be called a diminutive of his name: "Bill" instead of "John William."

adjective: very small

When he put on his father's suit and shoes, his appearance was that of a diminutive youth.

disabuse

verb: to persuade somebody that his/her belief is not valid

As a child, I was quickly disabused of the notion that Santa Claus was a rotund benefactor of infinite largess—one night I saw my mother diligently wrapping presents and storing them under our Christmas tree.

disaffected

adjective: discontented as toward authority

After watching his superior take rations from the soliders, he quickly became disaffected and rebelled.

discord

noun: lack of agreement or harmony

Despite all their talented players, the team was filled with discord--some players refused to talk to others--and lost most of their games.

discreet

adjective: careful to protect one's speech or actions in order to avoid offense or gain an advantage

The professor thought that he was discreet, subtly wiping the stain off of his shirt, but as soon as he stepped off the podium a member of the audience pointed out the large ketchup stain.

discrete

adjective: constituting a separate entity or part

What was once known as Czechoslovakia has since split into two discrete, independent nations.

44

discriminate

verb: recognize or perceive the difference

Sarah couldn't discriminate between a good wine and a bad wine, so she avoided wine tastings.

discursive

adjective: (of e.g. speech and writing) tending to depart from the main point

Many readers find it tough to read Moby Dick since the author is discursive, often cutting the action short to spend 20 pages on the history of a whale.

disenfranchise

verb: deprive of voting rights

The U.S. Constitution disenfranchised women until 1920 when they were given the right to vote.

disheartened

adjective: made less hopeful or enthusiastic

After the visiting team scored nine times, the home team's fans were disheartened, some leaving the game early.

disingenuous

adjective: not straightforward; giving a false appearance of frankness

Many adults think that they can lie to children, but kids are smart and know when people are disingenuous.

disinterested

adjective: unbiased; neutral

The potential juror knew the defendant, and therefore could not serve on the jury, which must consist only of disinterested members.

disparate

adjective: two things are fundamentally different

With the advent of machines capable of looking inside the brain, fields as disparate as religion and biology have been brought together by scientists trying to understand what happens in the brain when people have a religious experience.

dispassionate

adjective: unaffected by strong emotion or prejudice

A good scientist should be dispassionate, focusing purely on what the evidence says, without personal attachment.

dispatch

noun: the property of being prompt and efficient

She finished her thesis with dispatch, amazing her advisors who couldn't believe she hadn't written 60 scholarly pages so quickly.

verb: dispose of rapidly and without delay and efficiently

As soon as the angry peasants stormed the castle, they caught the king and swiftly dispatched him.

dispensation

noun: an exemption from a rule or obligation

Since her father is a billionaire, she is given dispensation from many of the school's policies.

dissemble

verb: conceal one's true motives, usually through deceit

To get close to the senator, the assassin dissembled his intentions, convincing many people that he was a reporter for a well-known newspaper.

disseminate

verb: cause to become widely known

Before the effects of anaesthesia were disseminated, patients had to experience the full pain of a surgery.

dissipate

verb: squander or spend money frivolously

The recent graduates dissipated their earnings on trips to Las Vegas and cruises in Mexico.

verb: to disperse or scatter

Kathleen's perfume was overwhelming in the cramped apartment, but once we stepped outside the

smell dissipated and we could breathe once again.

dissolution

noun: a living full of debauchery and indulgence in sensual pleasure

Many Roman emperors were known for their dissolution, indulging in unspeakable desires of the flesh.

46

docile

adjective: easily handled or managed; willing to be taught or led or supervised or directed

Barnyard animals are considerably more docile than the wild animals.

dog

verb: to pursue relentlessly; to hound

Throughout his life, he was dogged by insecurities that inhibited personal growth.

dogmatic

adjective: highly opinionated, not accepting that your belief may not be correct

Bryan is dogmatic in his belief that the earth is flat, claiming that all pictures of a spherical earth are computer generated.

doleful

adjective: filled with or evoking sadness

No event is more doleful than the passing of my mother; she was a shining star in my life, and it brings me great sadness to think that she is now gone.

dolorous

adjective: showing sorrow

Chopin's ballades are filled with sharp changes in moods--a dolorous melody can give way to a lighthearted tempo.

doughty

adjective: brave; bold; courageous

I enjoy films in which a doughty group comes together to battle a force of evil.

dovetail

verb: fit together tightly, as if by means of a interlocking joint

Although Darwin's evolution and Mendel's genetics were developed in isolation from one another, they dovetail very well.

dupe

verb: to trick or swindle

Once again a get-rich-fast Internet scheme had duped Harold into submitting a \$5,000 check to a sham operation.

noun: a person who is easily tricked or swindled

The charlatan mistook the crowd for a bunch of dupes, but the crowd was quickly on to him and decried his bald-faced attempt to bilk them.

47

duplicity

noun: deceitfulness, pretending to want one thing but interested in something else

A life of espionage is one of duplicity: an agent must pretend to be a totally different person than who she or he actually is.

duress

noun: compulsory force or threat

The witness said he signed the contract under duress and argued that the court should cancel the agreement.

E

ebullient

adjective: joyously unrestrained

Can you blame him for his ebullient mood? He just graduated from medical school.

48

eccentric

adjective: highly unconventional or unusual (usually describes a person)

Mozart was well-known for his eccentricities, often speaking words backward to confuse those around him.

eclectic

adjective: comprised of a variety of styles

Joey was known for his eclectic tastes in music, one moment dancing to disco the next "air conducting" along to Beethoven's 9th symphony.

economical

adjective: avoiding waste, efficient

Journalists favor an economical style of writing, in which no unnecessary words are used and every sentence is as short as possible.

edifying

adjective: enlightening or uplifting so as to encourage intellectual or moral improvement

I recently read an article in the Times about whether good literature is edifying or not; specifically, does reading more make a person more moral.

effervescent

adjective: marked by high spirits or excitement

After the sales result, the manager was in an effervescent mood, letting several employees leave work early that day.

efficacious

adjective: producing the intended result

Since Maggie's cough syrup, which had expired five years back, was no longer efficacious, she coughed through the night.

effrontery

noun: audacious (even arrogant) behavior that you have no right to

The skateboarders acted with effrontery, skating through the church grounds and spray-painting signs warning trespassers.

egotist

noun: a conceited and self-centered person

An egotist, Natasha had few friends because of her inability to talk about anything except her dream of becoming the next American Idol.

egregious

adjective: standing out in negative way; shockingly bad

The dictator's abuse of human rights was so egregious that many world leaders demanded that he be tried in an international court for genocide.

eke

verb: To live off meager resources, to scrape by

Stranded in a cabin over the winter, Terry was able to eke out an existence on canned food.

elaborate

adjective: marked by complexity and richness of detail

Thomas, on returning from Morocco, replaced his dirty gray carpet with an elaborate one he'd brought back with him.

verb: explain in more detail

Most high school physics teachers find themselves elaborating the same point over and over again, since many concepts confuse students.

elegiac

adjective: expressing sorrow

Few can listen to the elegiac opening bars of the Moonlight sonata without feeling the urge to cry.

elicit

verb: call forth (emotions, feelings, and responses)

Just smiling--even if you are depressed--can elicit feelings of pleasure and happiness.

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elucidate

verb: make clearer and easier to understand

Youtube is great place to learn just about anything--an expert elucidates finer points so that even a complete novice can learn.

50

elude

verb: escape understanding

Even a basic understanding of physics can elude most high schools students.

elusive

adjective: difficult to capture or difficult to remember

Many first time skydivers say that describing the act of falling from the sky is elusive.

embellish

verb: make more attractive by adding ornament, colour, etc.; make more beautiful

McCartney would write relatively straightforward lyrics, and Lennon would embellish them with puns and poetic images.

embroiled

adjective: involved in argument or contention

These days we are never short of a D.C. politician embroiled in scandal—a welcome phenomenon for those who, having barely finished feasting on the sordid details of one imbroglio, can sink their teeth into a fresh one.

eminent

adjective: standing above others in quality or position

Shakespeare is an eminent author in the English language, but I find his writing uninteresting and melodramatic.

empathetic

adjective: showing understanding and ready comprehension of other peoples' states and emotions

Most discrimination and hatred is based on a lack of empathetic awareness of people that have the same aspirations and fears.

empiricism

noun: any method that derives knowledge from experience, used in experimental science as a way to gain insight and knowledge

Empiricism does not always lead to knowledge; an experience or experiment may raise more questions than it answers.

51

emulate

verb: strive to equal or match, especially by imitating; compete with successfully

To really become fluent in a new language, emulate the speech patterns and intonation of people who speak the language.

enamor

verb: attraction or feeling of love

She is completely enamored with Justin Bieber, and goes to all his concerts on the East coast.

encumber

verb: hold back

The costume encumbered all my movements and caused me to sweat profusely.

endemic

adjective: native; originating where it is found

Irish cuisine makes great use of potatoes, but ironically, the potato is not endemic to Ireland.

enervate

verb: to sap energy from

John preferred to avoid equatorial countries; the intense sun would always leave him enervated after he'd spent the day sightseeing.

engender

verb: give rise to

The restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles were so severe that they engendered deep hatred and resentment in the German people.

enjoin

verb: give instructions to or direct somebody to do something with authority

The government agency enjoined the chemical company to clean up the hazardous dump it had created over the years.

enmity

noun: a state of deep-seated ill-will

Charles' rude remark toward Sarah yesterday was due to his illness, not due to any real enmity toward Sarah.

enormity

noun: an act of extreme wickedness

The enormity of Pol Pot's regime is hard to capture in words--within months hundreds of thousands of Cambodians lost their lives.

enthrall

verb: hold spellbound

She was so enthralled by the movie that she never heard people screaming, "Fire! Fire!" in the neighboring theater.

entice

verb: get someone to do something through (often false or exaggerated) promises

Harold enticed his wife, Maude, to go on a vacation to Hawaii, with promises of luaus on the beach and all-you-can-eat seafood buffets.

entrenched

adjective: fixed firmly or securely

By the time we reach 60-years old, most of our habits are so entrenched that it is difficult for us to change.

enumerate

verb: determine the number or amount of

The survey enumerates the number of happy workers and the number of unhappy workers.

verb: specify individually, one by one

I sat and listened as she enumerated all of the things she did not like about the past three months.

ephemeral

adjective: lasting a very short time

The lifespan of a mayfly is ephemeral, lasting from a few hours to a couple of days.

epigram

noun: a witty saying

My favorite epigram from Mark Twain is "A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn no other way."

epiphany

noun: a sudden revelation or moment of insight

Gary one day had an epiphany that he was a people person; he promptly quit his factory job and began working as a salesman.

53

eponym

noun: the name derived from a person (real or imaginary); the person for whom something is named
Alexandria, Egypt is an eponym because it is named after Alexander the Great.

equitable

adjective: fair to all parties as dictated by reason and conscience

The equitable distribution of ice cream to a group of 5 year olds will ensure little to no fighting—at least until the ice cream is gone.

equivocal

adjective: confusing or ambiguous

The findings of the study were equivocal—the two researchers had different opinions on what the results signified.

equivocate

verb: to speak vaguely, usually with the intention to mislead or deceive

After Sharon brought the car home an hour after her curfew, she equivocated when her parents pointedly asked her where she had been.

eradicate

verb: to completely destroy

I tried eradicating the mosquitos in my apartment with a rolled up newspaper, but there were too many of them.

err

verb: to make an error

He erred in thinking that "indigent" and "indignant" were synonyms.

errant

adjective: to be wandering; not sticking to a circumscribed path

Unlike his peers, who spent their hours studying in the library, Matthew preferred errant walks through the university campus.

erratic

adjective: unpredictable; strange and unconventional

It came as no surprise to pundits that the President's attempt at re-election floundered; even during his term, support for his policies was erratic, with an approval rating jumping anywhere from 30 to 60 percent.

ersatz

adjective: not real or genuine; phony

The car dealer's ersatz laughter was immediately followed by a price quote, one that Shelley found highly inflated.

erudite

adjective: having or showing profound knowledge

Before the Internet, the library was typically where you would find erudite readers.

eschew

verb: avoid and stay away from deliberately; stay clear of

Politicians are the masters of eschewing morals; academics are the masters of eschewing clarity.

esoteric

adjective: confined to and understandable by only an enlightened inner circle

Map collecting is an esoteric hobby to most, but to geography geeks it is a highly enjoyable pastime.

espouse

verb: to adopt or support an idea or cause

As a college student, Charlie espoused Marxism, growing his beard out and railing against the evils of the free-market.

estimable

adjective: deserving of esteem and respect

After serving thirty years, in which he selflessly served the community, Judge Harper was one of the more estimable people in town.

ethereal

adjective: characterized by lightness and insubstantiality

Because she dances with an ethereal style, ballet critics have called her Madame Butterfly.

euphoria

noun: a feeling of great (usually exaggerated) elation

The euphoria of winning her first gold medal in the 100 meter dash overwhelmed Shelly-Ann Fraser and she wept tears of immense joy.

55

evanescent

adjective: tending to vanish like vapor

The storm flashed into existence above us and lasted only a short time—an evanescent turbulence of wind and cloud.

evasive

adjective: avoiding or escaping from difficulty or danger or commitment

His responses were clearly evasive; he obviously did not want to take on any responsibility or any new work.

adjective: deliberately vague or ambiguous

Every time I call the bank, I receive the same evasive answers about our mortgage and never get a clear response.

evenhanded

adjective: without partiality

Teachers often have trouble being evenhanded to all of their varied students.

exacerbate

verb: make worse

Her sleeplessness exacerbated her cold--when she woke up the next day, her sinuses were completely blocked.

exacting

adjective: requiring and demanding accuracy

Though his childhood piano teacher was so exacting, Max is thankful now, as a professional pianist.

exalt

verb: praise or glorify

The teenagers exalted the rock star, covering their bedrooms with posters of him.

exasperate

verb: to irritate intensely

As a child, I exasperated my mother with strings of never-ending questions.

56

excoriate

verb: to criticize very harshly

Entrusted with the prototype to his company's latest smartphone, Larry, during a late night karaoke bout, let the prototype slip into the hands of a rival company—the next day Larry was excoriated, and then fired.

excruciating

adjective: extremely painful

After the boulder rolled a couple of feet, pinning my friend's arm, he experienced excruciating pain.

execrate

verb: to curse and hiss at

Though the new sitcom did decently in the ratings, Nelson railed against the show, saying that it was nothing more than an execrable pastiche of tired cliché's and canned laughter.

exegesis

noun: critical explanation or analysis, especially of a text

The Bible is fertile ground for exegesis—over the past five centuries there have been as many interpretations as there are pages in the Old Testament.

exemplar

noun: something to be imitated

Lena's homework is on the wall because it is an exemplar of clean, neat, and thoughtful work.

exemplify

verb: be characteristic of

Lincoln exemplified the best of not only America, but also the potential greatness that exists within each person.

verb: clarify by giving an example of

Please present some case studies that exemplify the results that you claim in your paper.

exhort

verb: to strongly urge on; encourage

Nelson's parents exhorted him to study medicine, urging him to choose a respectable profession; intransigent, Nelson left home to become a graffiti artist.

57

exiguity

noun: the quality of being meager

After two months at sea, the exiguity of the ship's supplies forced them to search for fresh water and food.

exorbitant

adjective: greatly exceeding bounds of reason or moderation

Shelley made one exorbitant purchase after another, buying new clothes and taking vacations even though she earned a limited salary.

expansive

adjective: communicative, and prone to talking in a sociable manner

After a few sips of cognac, the octogenarian shed his irascible demeanor and became expansive, speaking fondly of the "good old days".

expound

verb: add details or explanation; clarify the meaning; state in depth

The CEO refused to expound on the decision to merge our department with another one, and so I quit.

expunge

verb: to eliminate completely

When I turned 18, all of the shoplifting and jaywalking charges were expunged from my criminal record.

expurgate

verb: to remove objectionable material

extant

adjective: still in existence (usually refers to documents).

Despite many bookstores closing, experts predict that some form of book dealing will still be extant generations from now.

extenuating

adjective: making less guilty or more forgivable

The jury was hardly moved by the man's plea that his loneliness was an extenuating factor in his crime of kidnapping a prized pooch.

58

extrapolate

verb: draw from specific cases for more general cases

By extrapolating from the data on the past three months, we can predict a 5% increase in traffic to our website.

F

facetious

adjective: cleverly amusing in tone

Facetious behavior will not be tolerated during sex education class; it's time for all of you to treat these matters like mature adults.

59

facile

adjective: arrived at without due care or effort; lacking depth

Many news shows provide facile explanations to complex politics, so I prefer to read the in-depth reporting of The New York Times.

faction

adjective: produced by, or characterized by internal dissension

The controversial bill proved factional, as dissension even within parties resulted.

factitious

adjective: artificial; not natural

The defendant's story was largely factitious and did not accord with eyewitness testimonies.

fallacious

adjective: of a belief that is based on faulty reasoning

fastidious

adjective: overly concerned with details; fussy

Whitney is fastidious about her shoes, arranging them on a shelf in a specific order, each pair evenly spaced.

fawn

verb: try to gain favor by extreme flattery

The media fawned over the handsome new CEO, praising his impeccable sense of style instead of asking more pointed questions.

feckless

adjective: lazy and irresponsible

Two years after graduation, Charlie still lived with his parents and had no job, becoming more

feckless with each passing day.

fecund

adjective: intellectually productive

The artist had entered a fecund period, producing three masterpieces in the span of two months.

fell

adjective: terribly evil

For fans of the Harry Potter series, the fell Lord Voldemort, who terrorized poor Harry for seven lengthy installments, has finally been vanquished by the forces of good—unless, that is, JK Rowling decides to come out of retirement.

ferret

verb: to search for something persistently

Ever the resourceful lexicographer, Fenton was able to ferret out the word origin of highly obscure words.

fete

verb: to celebrate a person

After World War II, war heroes were feted at first but quickly forgotten.

fickle

adjective: liable to sudden unpredictable change, esp. in affections or attachments

She was so fickle in her politics, it was hard to pinpoint her beliefs; one week she would embrace a side, and the next week she would denounce it.

finagle

verb: achieve something by means of trickery or devious methods

Steven was able to finagle one of the last seats on the train by convincing the conductor that his torn stub was actually a valid ticket.

firebrand

noun: someone who deliberately creates trouble

Freddie is a firebrand: every time he walks into the office, he winds up at the center of heated argument.

flag

verb: droop, sink, or settle from or as if from pressure or loss of tautness; become less intense

After the three crushing defeats in the last three games, the team's enthusiasm began to flag.

fledgling

adjective: young and inexperienced; describing any new participant in some activity

Murray has years of experience in family practice, but he is just a fledgling in surgery.

fleece

verb: to deceive

Many people have been fleeced by Internet scams and never received their money back.

flippant

adjective: showing inappropriate levity

Although Sam was trying to honor Mark's sense of humor, many found it quite flippant that he wore a comic nose and glasses mask to Mark's funeral.

flounder

verb: behave awkwardly; have difficulties

Sylvia has excelled at advanced calculus, but ironically, when she has deal with taxes, she flounders.

flummox

verb: be a mystery or bewildering to

Mary's behavior completely flummoxes me: I never have any idea what her motivations might be.

flush

adjective: to be in abundance

The exam's passage is flush with difficult words, words that you may have learned only yesterday.

flux

noun: a state of uncertainty about what should be done (usually following some important event)

Ever since Elvira resigned as the head of marketing, everything about our sales strategy has been in a state of flux.

foible

noun: a behavioral attribute that is distinctive and peculiar to an individual

When their new roommate sat staring at an oak tree for an hour, Marcia thought it indicated a mental problem, but Jeff assured her it was a harmless foible.

foment

verb: try to stir up public opinion

After having his pay cut, Phil spread vicious rumors about his boss, hoping to foment a general feeling of discontent.

foolhardy

adjective: marked by defiant disregard for danger or consequences

The police regularly face dangerous situations, so for a police officer not to wear his bullet-proof vest is foolhardy.

forlorn

adjective: marked by or showing hopelessness

After her third pet dog died, Marcia was simply forlorn: this time even the possibility of buying a new dog no longer held any joy.

forthcoming

adjective: available when required or as promised

The President announced that the senators were about to reach a compromise, and that he was eager to read the forthcoming details of the bill.

adjective: at ease in talking to others

As a husband, Larry was not forthcoming: if Jill didn't demand to know details, Larry would never share them with her.

forthright

adjective: characterized by directness in manner or speech; without subtlety or evasion

I did not expect the insurance agent to give us any straight answers, but I was pleasantly surprised by how forthright he was.

fortuitous

adjective: occurring by happy chance; having no cause or apparent cause

While the real objects are vastly different sizes in space, the sun and the moon seem to have the same fortuitous size in the sky.

fractious

adjective: irritable and is likely to cause disruption

We rarely invite my fractious Uncle over for dinner; he always complains about the food, and usually launches into a tirade on some touchy subject.

frivolous

adjective: not serious in content or attitude or behavior

Compared to Juliet's passionate concern for human rights, Jake's non-stop concern about football seems somewhat frivolous.

frugal

adjective: not spending much money (but spending wisely)

Monte was no miser, but was simply frugal, wisely spending the little that he earned.

63

frustrate

verb: hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of I thought

I would finish writing the paper by lunchtime, but a number of urgent interruptions served to frustrate my plan.

furtive

adjective: marked by quiet and caution and secrecy; taking pains to avoid being observed

While at work, George and his boss Regina felt the need to be as furtive as possible about their romantic relationship.

futile

adjective: producing no result or effect; unproductive of success

I thought I could repair the car myself, but after two days of work with no success, I have to admit that my efforts were futile.

G

gaffe

noun: a socially awkward or tactless act

In a famous gaffe, Vice President Quayle attempted to correct the spelling of a grade school student, only to find that the child was correct.

64

gainsay

verb: deny or contradict; speak against or oppose

I can't gainsay a single piece of evidence James has presented, but I still don't trust his conclusion.

gall

noun: the trait of being rude and impertinent

Even though Carly was only recently hired, she had the gall to question her boss's judgment in front of the office.

noun: feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will

In an act of gall, Leah sent compromising photos of her ex-boyfriend to all his co-workers and professional contacts.

galvanize

verb: to excite or inspire (someone) to action

At mile 23 of his first marathon, Kyle had all but given up, until he noticed his friends and family holding a banner that read, "Go Kyle"; galvanized, he broke into a gallop, finishing the last three miles in less than 20 minutes.

gambit

noun: a maneuver or risk in a game or conversation, designed to secure an advantage

Randy played a gambit, telling his boss that he would leave at the end of the week if he didn't get a raise.

garrulous

adjective: full of trivial conversation

Lynne was garrulous: once, she had a fifteen minute conversation with a stranger before she realized the woman didn't speak English.

gauche

adjective: lacking social polish

Sylvester says the most gauche things, such as telling a girl he liked that she was much prettier when she wore makeup.

genial

adjective: agreeable, conducive to comfort

Betty is a genial young woman: everyone she meets is put at ease by her elegance and grace.

genteel

adjective: marked by refinement in taste and manners

A live string quartet would provide a more genteel air to the wedding than would a folk singer.

germane

adjective: relevant and appropriate

The professor wanted to tell the jury in detail about his new book, but the lawyer said it wasn't germane to the charges in the cases.

gerrymander

verb: to manipulate voting districts in order to favor a particular political party

Years ago, savvy politicians had gerrymandered the city center to ensure their re-election.

glean

verb: collect information bit by bit

Herb has given us no formal statement about his background, but from various hints, I have gleaned that he grew up in difficult circumstances.

glib

adjective: (of a person) speaking with ease but without sincerity

I have found that the more glib the salesman, the worse the product.

glut

noun: an excessive supply

The Internet offers such a glut of news related stories that many find it difficult to know which story to read first.

verb: supply with an excess of

In the middle of economic crises, hiring managers find their inboxes glutted with resumes.

goad

verb: urge on with unpleasant comments

Doug did not want to enter the race, but Jim, through a steady stream of taunts, goaded him into signing up for it.

gossamer

adjective: characterized by unusual lightness and delicacy

The gossamer wings of a butterfly, which allow it to fly, are also a curse, so delicate that they are often damaged.

graft

noun: corruption, usually through bribery

In countries with rampant graft, getting a driver's license can require no more than paying an official.

grandiloquent

adjective: puffed up with vanity

The dictator was known for his grandiloquent speeches, puffing his chest out and using big, important-sounding words.

gregarious

adjective: to be likely to socialize with others

Often we think that great leaders are those who are gregarious, always in the middle of a large group of people; yet, as Mahatma Gandhi and many others have shown us, leaders can also be introverted.

grovel

verb: show submission or fear

Every time Susan comes to the office, Frank grovels as if she were about to fire.

guffaw

verb: laugh boisterously

Whenever the jester fell to the ground in mock pain, the king guffawed, exposing his yellow, fang-like teeth.

guileless

adjective: free of deceit

At first I thought my niece was guileless, but I then found myself buying her ice cream every time we passed a shop.

gumption

noun: resourcefulness and determination

Wallace Stegner lamented the lack of gumption in the U.S. during the sixties, claiming that no young person knew the value of work.

H

hackneyed

adjective: lacking significance through having been overused
Cheryl rolled her eyes when she heard the lecturer's hackneyed advice to "be true to yourself."

68

hagiographic

adjective: excessively flattering toward someone's life or work
Most accounts of Tiger Woods life were hagiographic, until, that is, his affairs made headlines.

hail

verb: enthusiastically acclaim or celebrate something
Many college superstar athletes are hailed as the next big thing, but then flop at the professional level.

halcyon

adjective: idyllically calm and peaceful; suggesting happy tranquillity; marked by peace and prosperity
The first decade after WWI was a halcyon period in America with new-found wealth and rapidly improving technology.

hamper

verb: prevent the progress or free movement of
As the rain water began to collect in pools on the highway, it began to hamper the flow of traffic.

hamstrung

verb: made ineffective or powerless
The FBI has made so many restrictions on the local police that they are absolutely hamstrung, unable to accomplish anything.

hamstrung

verb: made ineffective or powerless
The FBI has made so many restrictions on the local police that they are absolutely hamstrung, unable to accomplish anything.

haphazard

adjective: marked by great carelessness; dependent upon or characterized by chance

Many golf courses are designed with great care, but the greens on the county golf course seem entirely haphazard.

harangue

noun: a long pompous speech; a tirade;

Dinner at Billy's was more a punishment than a reward, since anyone who sat at the dinner table would have to listen to Billy's father's interminable harangues against the government.

verb: to deliver a long pompous speech or tirade

Tired of his parents haranguing him about his laziness and lack of initiative, Tyler finally moved out of home at the age of thirty-five.

harried

adjective: troubled persistently especially with petty annoyances

With a team of new hires to train, Martha was constantly harried with little questions and could not focus on her projects.

haughty

adjective: having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of those one views as unworthy

The haughty manager didn't believe that any of his subordinates could ever have an insight as brilliant his own.

hauteur

noun: overbearing pride evidenced by a superior manner toward inferiors

As soon as she won the lottery, Alice begin displaying a hauteur to her friends, calling them dirty-clothed peasants behind their backs.

hector

verb: to bully or intimidate

The boss's hectoring manner put off many employees, some of whom quit as soon as they found new jobs.

hedge

verb: to limit or qualify a statement; to avoid making a direct statement

When asked why he had decided to buy millions of shares at the very moment the tech companies stock soared, the CEO hedged, mentioning something vague about gut instinct.

hegemony

adjective: dominance over a certain area

Until the Spanish Armada was defeated in 1587, Spain had hegemony over the seas, controlling waters stretching as far as the Americas.

heretic

noun: a person who holds unorthodox opinions in any field (not merely religion)

Though everybody at the gym told Mikey to do cardio before weights, Mikey was a heretic and always did the reverse.

heyday

noun: the pinnacle or top of a time period or career

During the heyday of Prohibition, bootlegging had become such a lucrative business that many who had been opposed to the 18th Amendment began to fear it would be repealed.

histrionic

adjective: to be overly theatrical

Though she received a B- on the test, she had such a histrionic outburst that one would have thought that she'd been handed a death sentence.

hoary

adjective: ancient

Most workout gurus are young, fit people, whereas most yoga gurus are hoary men with long white beards.

hobble

verb: to hold back the progress of something

Bad weather has hobbled rescue efforts, making it difficult for crews to find bodies in the wreckage.

hodgepodge

noun: a confusing mixture or jumble

Those in attendance represented a hodgepodge of the city's denizens: chimney sweepers could be seen sitting elbow to elbow with stockbrokers.

hoodwink

verb: to deceive or trick someone

Someone tried to hoodwink Marty with an email telling him that his uncle had just passed away, and to collect the inheritance he should send his credit card information.

hound

verb: to pursue relentlessly

An implacable foe of corruption, Eliot Ness hounded out graft in all forms—he even helped nab Al Capone.

hubris

noun: overbearing pride or presumption

Bill Clinton was criticized for his hubris, since he believed he could get away with anything once in the White House.

humdrum

adjective: dull and lacking excitement

Having grown up in a humdrum suburb, Jacob relished life in New York City after moving.

I

iconoclast

noun: somebody who attacks cherished beliefs or institutions

Lady Gaga, in challenging what it means to be clothed, is an iconoclast for wearing a "meat dress" to a prominent awards show.

72

iconoclastic

adjective: defying tradition or convention

Jackson Pollack was an iconoclastic artist, totally breaking with tradition by splashing paint on a blank canvas.

idiosyncrasy

noun: a behavioral attribute that is distinctive and peculiar to an individual

Peggy's numerous idiosyncrasies include wearing mismatched shoes, laughing loudly to herself, and owning a pet armadillo.

ignoble

adjective: dishonorable

In the 1920s, the World Series was rigged--an ignoble act which baseball took decades to recover from.

ignominious

adjective: (used of conduct or character) deserving or bringing disgrace or shame

Since the politician preached ethics and morality, his texting of revealing photographs was ignominious, bringing shame on both himself and his party.

illicit

adjective: contrary to or forbidden by law

Though Al Capone was engaged in many illicit activities, he was finally arrested for income tax evasion, a relatively minor offense.

illustrious

adjective: widely known and esteemed; having or conferring glory

Einstein was possibly the most illustrious scientist in recent history.

imbibe

verb: to drink or absorb as if drinking

Plato imbibed Socrates' teachings to such an extent that he was able to write volumes of work that he directly attributed, sometimes word for word, to Socrates.

imbroglio

noun: a confusing and potentially embarrassing situation

The chef cook-off featured one gourmand who had the unfortunate distinction of mixing the wrong broths, creating an imbroglio that diners would not soon forget.

immaterial

adjective: not relevant

The judge found the defendant's comments immaterial to the trial, and summarily dismissed him from the witness stand.

immure

verb: to enclose, usually in walls

The modern supermarket experience makes many feel claustrophobic, as they are immured in walls upon walls of products.

immutable

adjective: not able to be changed

Taxes are one of the immutable laws of the land, so there is no use arguing about paying them.

impartial

adjective: free from undue bias or preconceived opinions

The judge was not impartial since he had been bribed by the witness's family.

impeccable

adjective: without fault or error

He was impeccably dressed in the latest fashion without a single crease or stain.

impecunious

adjective: lacking money; poor

In extremely trying times, even the moderately wealthy, after a few turns of ill-fortune, can become impecunious.

impede

verb: be a hindrance or obstacle to

Since the police sergeant had to train the pair of new hires, progress in his own case was impeded.

impending

adjective: close in time; about to occur

The impending doom of our world has been discussed and debated for 2000 years—maybe even longer.

74

imperious

adjective: having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of those one views as unworthy

Children are imperious with each other before they learn that earning someone's respect is better than demanding.

impermeable

adjective: does not allow fluids to pass through

The sand bags placed on the river formed an impermeable barrier, protecting the town from flooding.

impertinent

adjective: being disrespectful; improperly forward or bold

Dexter, distraught over losing his pet dachshund, Madeline, found the police officer's questions impertinent—after all, he thought, did she have to pry into such details as to what Madeline's favorite snack was?

impervious

adjective: not admitting of passage or capable of being affected

I am not impervious to your insults; they cause me great pain.

impetuous

adjective: characterized by undue haste and lack of thought or deliberation

Herbert is rarely impetuous, but on the spur of the moment, he spent thousands of dollars on a motorcycle today.

implacable

adjective: incapable of making less angry or hostile Win or lose, the coach was always implacable, never giving the athletes an easy practice or a break.

implausible

adjective: describing a statement that is not believable

The teacher found it implausible that the student was late to school because he had been kidnapped by outlaws on horseback.

implicate

verb: convey a meaning; imply

By saying that some of the guests were uncomfortable, the manager implicated to the hotel staff that it needed to be more diligent.

verb: to indicate in wrongdoing, usually a crime

The crime boss was implicated for a long list of crimes, ranging from murder to disturbing the peace.

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imponderable

adjective: impossible to estimate or figure out

According to many lawmakers, the huge variety of factors affecting society make devising an efficient healthcare system an imponderable task.

importuned

verb: beg persistently and urgently

After weeks of importuning the star to meet for a five-minute interview, the journalist finally got what she wanted.

impregnable

adjective: immune to attack; incapable of being tampered with

As a child, Amy would build pillow castles and pretend they were impregnable fortresses.

improvident

adjective: not given careful consideration

Marty was improvident, never putting money aside for the future but spending it on decorating the interior of his home.

imprudent

adjective: not wise

Hitler, like Napoleon, made the imprudent move of invading Russia in winter, suffering even more casualties than Napoleon had.

impudent

adjective: improperly forward or bold

In an impudent move, the defendant spoke out of order to say terribly insulting things to the judge.

impugn

verb: attack as false or wrong

Though many initially tried to impugn Darwin's theory, in scientific circles today, the idea is taken as truth.

impute

verb: attribute (responsibility or fault) to something

He imputed his subpar performance on the test to a combination of stress and poor sleep.

inadvertent

adjective: happening by chance or unexpectedly or unintentionally

Although Prohibition was rooted in noble ideals, the inadvertent and costly consequences of making alcohol illegal in the U.S. led to its repeal.

inanity

noun: total lack of meaning or ideas

Bill's poem was nothing more than a list of impressive sounding words, so there was no point in trying to take meaning from the inanity.

inarticulate

adjective: without or deprived of the use of speech or words

Although a brilliant economist, Professor Black was completely inarticulate, a terrible lecturer.

incense

verb: make furious

When Herb bought football tickets for a game on the day of their wedding anniversary, Jill was incensed.

incessant

adjective: uninterrupted in time and indefinitely long continuing

I don't mind small children in brief doses, but I think the incessant exposure that their parents have to them would quickly wear me down.

inchoate

adjective: only partly in existence; imperfectly formed

Inchoate ideas about the relation of humans to other animals had been discussed since the Middle Ages but the modern theory really began with Darwin.

incisive

adjective: having or demonstrating ability to recognize or draw fine distinctions

The lawyer had an incisive mind, able in a flash to dissect a hopelessly tangled issue and isolate the essential laws at play.

inclement

adjective: (of weather) unpleasant, stormy

After a week of inclement weather, we finally are able to go outside and enjoy the sun.

adjective: used of persons or behavior; showing no mercy

Marcus Aurelius, though a fair man, was inclement to Christians during his reign, persecuting them violently.

incongruous

adjective: lacking in harmony or compatibility or appropriateness

The vast economic inequality of modern society is incongruous with America's ideals.

incontrovertible

adjective: necessarily or demonstrably true; impossible to deny or disprove

Unless you can provide incontrovertible evidence, I will remain skeptical.

incorrigible

adjective: impervious to correction by punishment

Tom Sawyer seems like an incorrigible youth until Huck Finn enters the novel; even Sawyer can't match his fierce individual spirit.

incumbent

adjective: necessary (for someone) as a duty or responsibility

Middle managers at times make important decisions, but real responsibility for the financial well-being of the corporation is ultimately incumbent on the CEO.

indecorous

adjective: not in keeping with accepted standards of what is right or proper in polite society
Eating with elbows on the table is considered indecorous in refined circles.

78

indict

verb: to formally charge or accuse of wrong-doing
The bank robber was indicted on several major charges, including possession of a firearm.

indifference

noun: the trait of seeming not to care
In an effort to fight indifference, the president of the college introduced a new, stricter grading system.

indigenous

adjective: originating in a certain area
The plants and animals indigenous to Australia are notably different from those indigenous to the U.S—one look at a duckbill platypus and you know you're not dealing with an opossum.

indigent

adjective: poor; having very little
In the so-called Third World, many are indigent and only a privileged few have the resources to enjoy material luxuries.

noun: a poor or needy person
The indigents, huddled under the overpass, tried to start a small bonfire in the hope of staying warm.

indignant

adjective: feeling anger over a perceived injustice
When the cyclist swerved into traffic, it forced the driver to brake and elicited an indignant shout of "Hey, punk, watch where you're going!"

industrious

adjective: characterized by hard work and perseverance
Pete was an industrious student, completing every assignment thoroughly and on time.

ineffable

adjective: too sacred to be uttered; defying expression or description

While art critics can occasionally pinpoint a work's greatness, much of why a piece captures our imaginations is completely ineffable.

ineluctable

adjective: impossible to avoid or evade:

For those who smoke cigarettes for years, a major health crisis brought on by smoking is ineluctable.

inequity

noun: injustice by virtue of not conforming with rules or standards

After decades of racial inequity, the "separate but equal" doctrine was successfully overturned.

inexorable

adjective: impossible to stop or prevent

The rise of the computer was an inexorable shift in technology and culture.

infelicitous

adjective: inappropriate

During the executive meeting, the marketing director continued to make infelicitous comments about the CEO's gambling habit.

inflammatory

adjective: extremely controversial, incendiary

It only takes one person to leave an inflammatory comment on an Internet thread for that thread to blow up into pages upon pages of reader indignation.

ingenuity

noun: the power of creative imagination

Daedalus was famous for his ingenuity; he was able to fashion his son Icarus with a pair of wings, using wax to hold them together.

ingenuous

adjective: to be naïve and innocent

Two-years in Manhattan had changed Jenna from an ingenuous girl from the suburbs to a jaded urbanite, unlikely to fall for any ruse, regardless of how elaborate.

inimical

adjective: hostile (usually describes conditions or environments)

Venus, with a surface temperature that would turn rubber to liquid, is inimical to any form of life.

inimitable

adjective: defying imitation; matchless

Mozart's music follows a clear pattern that, anyone could imitate, but his music gives an overall sense of effortlessness that is inimitable.

80

inkling

noun: a slight suggestion or vague understanding

Lynne speaks four Romance languages, but she doesn't have an inkling about how East Asian languages are structured.

innocuous

adjective: harmless and doesn't produce any ill effects

Everyone found Nancy's banter innocuous—except for Mike, who felt like she was intentionally picking on him.

inscrutable

adjective: not easily understood; unfathomable

His speech was so dense and confusing that many in the audience found it inscrutable.

insidious

adjective: working in a subtle but destructive way

Plaque is insidious: we cannot see it, but each day it eats away at our enamel, causing cavities and other dental problems.

insipid

adjective: dull and uninteresting

The movie director was known for hiring beautiful actors in order to deflect attention away from the insipid scripts he would typically use.

insolent

adjective: rude and arrogant

Lilian could not help herself from being insolent, commenting that the Queen's shoes were showing too much toe.

insolvent

adjective: unable to pay one's bills; bankrupt

With credit card bills skyrocketing, a shockingly large number of Americans are truly insolvent.

insouciance

noun: lack of concern

Surprisingly, Hank had become a high-powered CEO; his high school friends remembered him as "Hanky Panky", who shrugged off each failed class with insouciance.

81

insufferable

adjective: intolerable, difficult to endure

Chester always tried to find some area in which he excelled above others; unsurprisingly, his co-workers found him insufferable and chose to exclude him from daily luncheons out.

intermittent

adjective: stopping and starting at irregular intervals

The intermittent thunder continued and the night was punctuated by cracks of lightning—a surreal sleepless night.

internecine

adjective: (of conflict) within a group or organization

The guerilla group, which had become so powerful as to own the state police, was finally destroyed by an internecine conflict.

intimate

verb: to suggest something subtly

At first Manfred's teachers intimated to his parents that he was not suited to skip a grade; when his parents protested, teachers explicitly told them that, notwithstanding the boy's precocity, he was simply too immature to jump to the 6th grade.

intimation

noun: an indirect suggestion

At first the hostess tried intimation, praising the benefits of cutlery; when Cecil continued eating with his hands, the hostess told him to use a fork at dinner.

intransigent

adjective: unwilling to change one's beliefs or course of action

Despite many calls for mercy, the judge remained intransigent, citing strict legal precedence.

intrepid

adjective: fearless

Captain Ahab was an intrepid captain whose reckless and fearless style ultimate leads to his downfall.

inundate

verb: to flood or overwhelm

The newsroom was inundated with false reports that only made it more difficult for the newscasters to provide an objective account of the bank robbery.

inure

verb: to make accustomed to something unpleasant

Three years of Manhattan living has inured her to the sound of wailing sirens; she could probably sleep through the apocalypse.

invective

noun: abusive or denunciatory language

The Internet has unleashed the invectives in many of us; many people post stinging criticism on the comments section underneath newspaper articles or YouTube videos.

inveterate

adjective: habitual

He is an inveterate smoker and has told his family and friends that there is no way he will ever quit.

invidious

adjective: likely to cause resentment

At a time when many others in the office were about to be laid off, many considered Cheryl's fine clothes that day an invidious display.

inviolable

adjective: never to be broken, infringed, or dishonored

To many the grass at Wimbledon is inviolable and only greater tennis players are able to enjoy a game there.

inviolate

adjective: must be kept sacred

While the literary critic subjected most of the classics to the harshest reviews, he regarded Cervantes as inviolate, and had nothing but praise for him.

involved

adjective: complicated, and difficult to comprehend

The physics lecture became so involved that the undergraduate's eyes glazed over.

irascible

adjective: quickly aroused to anger

If Arthur's dog is not fed adequately, he becomes highly irascible, even growling at his own shadow.

83

irk

verb: irritate or vex

My little sister has a way of irking and annoying me like no other person.

irrefutable

adjective: impossible to deny or disprove

The existence of life on earth is irrefutable; the existence of intelligent life on earth is still hotly debated.

irresolute

adjective: uncertain how to act or proceed

He stood irresolute at the split in the trail, not sure which route would lead back to the camp.

irrevocable

adjective: incapable of being retracted or revoked

Once you enter your plea to the court, it is irrevocable so think carefully about what you will say.

itinerant

adjective: traveling from place to place to work

Doctors used to be itinerant, traveling between patients' homes.

Reference

以下总结了本文所参考的攻略帖：

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