

aberrant: markedly different from an accepted norm

Ex: 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: a deviation from what is normal or expected

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

aboveboard: open and honest

Ex: 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

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

Ex: considered a health nut, jessica abstained from anything containing sugar--even chocolate.

abstruse: difficult to understand; incomprehensible

Ex: physics textbooks can seem so abstruse to the uninitiated that readers feel as though they are looking at hieroglyphics

abysmal: extremely bad

Ex: coach ramsey took his newest player off the field after watching a few painful minutes of her abysmal performance.

accolade: an award or praise granted as a special honor

Ex: jean paul-sartre was not a fan of accolades, and as such, he refused to accept the nobel prize for literature in 1964

acerbic: harsh in tone

Ex: most movie critics are acerbic towards summer blockbusters, often referring to them as garbage

acme: the highest point of achievement

Ex: the new cessna airplanes will be the acme of comfort, offering reclining seats and ample legroom

acrimony: bitterness and ill will

Ex: the acrimony between the president and vice-president sent a clear signal to voters: the health of the current administration was imperiled

adamant: refusing to be persuaded or to change one's mind

Ex: he is adamant that he is not going to resign

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

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

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

Ex: 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: 1. (verb) speak, plead, or argue in favor of;

2. (noun) a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea

Ex: 1. while the senator privately approved of gay marriage, he was unwilling to advocate for the cause in a public venue;

2. martin luther king jr. was a tireless advocate for the rights of african-americans in the united states

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

Ex: a true aesthete, marty would spend hours at the guggenheim museum, staring at the same picasso

aesthetic: 1. concerned with the appreciation of beauty;

2. a set of principles underlying and guiding the work of a particular artist or artistic movement;

Ex: 1. the director, not known for his aesthetic sensibilities, decided not to use costumes at all, and put on the play in everyday clothing;

2. the artist operated according to a peculiar aesthetic, not considering any photograph to be worth

publishing unless it contained a marine mammal;

affable: likeable; easy to talk to

Ex: for all his surface affability, marco was remarkably glum when he wasn't around other people

affluent: wealthy

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

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

Ex: albert schweitzer spent most of his life doing missionary work as a doctor in africa, seeking no reward, apparently motivated only by altruism

amalgam: a mixture of multiple things

Ex: the band's music was an amalgam of hip-hop, flamenco and jazz, blending the three styles with surprising results

ambiguous: open to more than one interpretation

Ex: 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: mixed or conflicting emotions about something

Ex: 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: make something bad better

Ex: "three cups of tea" tells the story of western man who hopes to ameliorate poverty and the lack of education in afghanistan.

amenable: easily persuaded

Ex: 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: friendly

Ex: amy's name was very apt: she was so amiable that she was twice voted class president

amok: in a frenzied or uncontrolled state

Ex: 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: shapeless

Ex: 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: more than is adequate

Ex: the boat was amply supplied for its year at sea—no man would go hungry or thirsty

analogous: similar in some respects otherwise different

Ex: in many ways, the internet's transformative effect on society has been analogous to that of the printing press.

animosity: intense hostility

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

anomalous: not normal

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

Ex: after finding an anomaly in the data, she knew that she would have to conduct her experiment again

antedate: precede in time

Ex: harry was so unknowledgable that he was unaware the egyptian pharaohs antedated the american revolution.

antipathy: an intense feeling of dislike or aversion

Ex: 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: old fashioned; belonging to an earlier period of time

Ex: 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: sharply contrasted in character or purpose

Ex: his deep emotional involvement with these ideas is, in fact, antithetical to the detachment buddhism preaches.

apathetic: marked by a lack of interest

Ex: mr. thompson was so talented at teaching math that even normally apathetic students took interest

apathy: an absence of emotion or enthusiasm

Ex: widespread apathy among voters led to a very small turnout on election day.

apex: the highest point

Ex: the ivy league is considered the apex of the higher education system

aphorism: a short instructive saying about a general truth

Ex: nietzsche was known for using aphorisms, sometimes encapsulating a complex philosophical thought in a mere sentence

aphoristic: something that is concise and instructive of the general truth or principle

Ex: sometimes i can't stand nathan because he tries to impress everyone by being aphoristic, but he just states the obvious.

apocryphal: being of questionable authenticity

Ex: the web is notorious for sandwiching apocryphal stories between actual news.

appease: pacify by acceding to the demands of

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

Ex: there is an appreciable difference between those who say they can get the job done and those who actually get the job done

apprehension: fearful expectation

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

arbitrary: based on a random, groundless decision

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

arcane: requiring secret or mysterious knowledge

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

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

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

Ex: 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

artful: 1. (adj) exhibiting artistic skill;

2. (adj) clever in a cunning way

Ex: 1. picasso is generally considered the most artful member of the cubist movement;

2. bernie madoff's artful ponzi scheme stole billions of dollars from investors and is considered the largest financial fraud in u.s. history

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

Ex: the ascendancy of the carlsbad water polo team is clear—they have a decade of championships behind them

ascetic: 1. (adj) practicing self-denial; (noun) one who practices great self-denial

Ex: 1. his ascetic life is the main reason he inspired so many followers, especially since he gave up wealth and power to live in poverty;

2. historically, ascetics like gandhi are often considered wise men partially because of their restraint

ascribe: attribute or credit to

Ex: he ascribed jane's short temper to her upset stomach

askance: with a look of suspicion or disapproval

Ex: 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!"

assail: attack in speech or writing

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

assuage: make something intense less severe

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

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

Ex: 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: aggressive boldness in social situations

Ex: mike was upset at the man who not only cut in front of him at the ticket counter but also had the audacity to cut in front of him at the bathroom line

augment: enlarge or increase; improve

Ex: ideally, the restaurant's augmented menu will expand its clientele and increase its profits.

auspicious: favorable, the opposite of sinister

Ex: 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.

austere: 1. (adj) practicing self-denial;

2. unadorned in style or appearance; 3. harsh in manner of temperament

Ex: 1. his lifestyle of revelry and luxurious excess could hardly be called austere;

2. late soviet architecture, although remaining largely austere, moved into experimental territory that employed previously unused shapes and structures; 3. the principal of my elementary school was a cold, austere woman; i could never understand why she chose to work with children

autonomously: acting independently; self-governing (of a country)

Ex: many of the factory workers are worried about being replaced by machines and computers that will work completely autonomously

avarice: greed (one of the seven deadly sins)

Ex: the spanish conquistadors were known for their avarice, plundering incan land and stealing incan gold\

avaricious: excessively greedy

Ex: 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: 1. (verb) turn away;

2. (verb) ward off or prevent

Ex: 1. afraid to see the aftermath of the car crash, i averted my eyes as we drove by;

2. the struggling video game company put all of its finances into one final, desperate project to avert bankruptcy

avid: marked by active interest and enthusiasm

Ex: martin is an avid birdwatcher, often taking long hikes into remote mountains to see some rare eagle

badger: to pester

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

balk: refusing to comply

Ex: 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: repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse

Ex: 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: a trite or obvious remark

Ex: herbert regarded the minister's remark as a mere banality until sharon pointed out profound implications to the seemingly obvious words.

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

Ex: the most difficult part of the fast was banishing thoughts of food.

beatific: blissfully happy

Ex: 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: appropriate, and matches nicely

Ex: her dress was becoming and made her look even more beautiful

begrudge: 1. envy someone for possessing or enjoying something;

2. to give reluctantly

Ex: 1. sitting all alone in his room, harvey begrudged the happiness of the other children playing outside his window;

2. we never begrudge money spent on ourselves

behoove: to be one's duty or obligation

Ex: it behoves the house to assure itself that there is no conceivable alternative

belie: to give a false representation to; misrepresent

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

belittle: lessen the importance, dignity or reputation of

Ex: a good teacher will never belittle his students, but will instead empower them.

bellicose: warlike; inclined to quarrel

Ex: known for their bellicose ways, the spartans were once the most feared people from peloponnesus to persia

belligerent: characteristic of one eager to fight

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

benign: 1. (adj) kind

2. (adj) (medicine) not dangerous to health; not recurrent or progressive

Ex: 1. i remember my grandfather's face was wrinkled, benign, and calm.

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

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

Ex: 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: damage the good name and reputation of someone

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

betray: to reveal or make known something, usually unintentionally

Ex: with the gold medal at stake, the gymnast awaited his turn, his quivering lip betraying his intense emotions

blatant: without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious

Ex: allen was often punished in school for blatantly disrespecting teachers

bleak: having a depressing or gloomy outlook

Ex: 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

bolster: support and strengthen

Ex: the case for the suspect's innocence was bolstered considerably by the fact that neither fingerprints nor dna were found at the scene

boon: 1. (noun) a desirable state

2. (adj) very close and convivial

Ex: 1. modern technology has been a boon to the travel industry;

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

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

Ex: bukowski was known for being a boorish drunk and alienating close friends and family

brazen: unrestrained by convention or propriety

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

brusquely: blunt or in a direct manner

Ex: not one for social pleasantries, the chief would brusquely ask his subordinates for anything he wanted, even coffee

buck: resist

Ex: the profits at our firm bucked the general downturn that affected the real estate industry

bucolic: relating to the pleasant aspects of the country

Ex: the noble families of england once owned vast expanses of beautiful, bucolic land

bumbling: lacking physical movement skills, especially with the hands

Ex: within a week of starting, the bumbling new waiter was unceremoniously fired.

burgeon: grow and flourish

Ex: 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: make stronger or defensible

Ex: china's economy has been buttressed by a global demand for the electronic parts the country manufactures

cadaverous: emaciated; gaunt

Ex: some actors take challenging roles in which they have to lose so much weight that they appear cadaverous

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

Ex: a bitter struggle marked by calumny and litigation

candid: straightforward and honest

Ex: even with a perfect stranger, Charles was always candid and would rarely hold anything back

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

Ex: although I was unhappy that the relationship ended, I appreciated her candidness about why she was ready to move on from the relationship

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

Ex: 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

cardinal: of primary importance; fundamental

Ex: most cultures consider gambling a cardinal sin and thus have outlawed its practice

carping: persistently petty and unjustified criticism

Ex: 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: to reprimand harshly

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

catalyst: something that speeds up an event

Ex: Rosa Parks'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.

cavalier: given to haughty disregard of others

Ex: Percy dismissed the issue with a cavalier wave of his hand

censor: 1. (verb) to examine and remove objectionable material

2. (noun) an official who censors material

Ex: 1. 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;

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

censure: to express strong disapproval

Ex: (formal) after being caught in bed with a mistress, the mayor was quickly censured by the city council.

cerebral: involving intelligence rather than emotions or instinct

Ex: 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.

champion: to fight for a cause

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

chastise: to reprimand harshly

Ex: 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

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

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

check: 1. (verb) to limit (usually modifying the growth of something);

2. (noun) the condition of being held back or limited

Ex: 1. 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;

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

checkered: marked by disreputable or unfortunate happenings

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

chivalrous: being attentive to women like an ideal knight

Ex: medieval tales are full of stories of chivalry, in which a young knight must commit deeds of heroism to win the hand of a fair maiden

chortle: to chuckle, laugh merrily, often in a breathy, muffled way

Ex: walking into the cafe, i could hear happy, chortling people and smell the rich aroma of roasted coffee beans

circumscribe: restrict or confine

Ex: their tour of south america was circumscribed so that they saw only popular destinations and avoided the dangerous parts of cities

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

Ex: one way of circumventing the gre is to apply to a grad school that does not require gre scores.

clemency: leniency or compassion shown towards offenders by a person or agency charged with administering justice

Ex: in the final moments of the trial, during his closing speech, phillips was nearly begging the judge for clemency.

coalesce: fuse or cause to grow together

Ex: over time, the various tribes coalesced into a single common culture with one universal language

cogent: clear and persuasive

Ex: a cogent argument will change the minds of even the most skeptical audience

cohesive: well integrated; forming a united whole

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

collusion: agreement on a secret plot

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

Ex: few appreciate the colossal scale of the sun: if hollow, it could contain a million earths.

commendable: worthy of high praise

Ex: the efforts of the firefighters running into the burning building were commendable

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

Ex: the convicted felon's life sentence was commensurate with the heinousness of his crime

complacent: showing smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements

Ex: after the water polo team won their sixth championship, they became complacent and didn't even make it to the playoffs the next year

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

Ex: 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

compound: make more intense, stronger or more marked'

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

concede: 1. (verb) acknowledge defeat;

2. (verb) admit (to a wrongdoing); 3. (verb) give over; surrender or relinquish to the physical control of another

Ex: 1. i concede. you win!;

2. after a long, stern lecture from her father, olivia conceded to having broken the window.; 3. the spanish were forced to concede much of the territory they had previously conquered;

conducive: making a situation or outcome more likely to happen

Ex: studying in a quiet room is conducive to learning; studying in a noisy environment makes learning more



difficult

confound: 1. (verb) to cause confusion;

2. (verb) mistake one thing for another

Ex: 1. though harry loved numbers, calculus confounded him.;

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

connive: taking part in immoral and unethical plots

Ex: with the help of prince, the queen connived to overthrow the king

consecrate: to make holy or set apart for a higher purpose

Ex: at the church of notre dame in france, the new high altar was consecrated in 118

2

conspicuous: without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious

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

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

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

constraint: something that limits or restricts

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

construe: interpreted in a particular way

Ex: 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: 1. (adj) having or revealing supreme mastery or skill;

2. (verb) to make perfect and complete in every respect

Ex: 1. tyler was the consummate musician: he was able to play the guitar, harmonica, and the drum at the same time

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

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

Ex: always on the forefront of fashion, vanessa looked contemptuously at anyone wearing dated clothing

contingent: 1. a gathering of persons representative of some larger group;

2. dependent on (usually used with upon)

Ex: 1. a small contingent of those loyal to the king have gathered around the castle to defend it.;

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

contrite: to be remorseful

Ex: though he stole his little sister's licorice stick with malevolent glee, chucky soon became contrite when his sister wouldn't stop crying.

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

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

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

Ex: despite a low gpa, he contrived to get into college, going so far as to write his own glowing letters of recommendation.

conundrum: a difficult problem

Ex: computers have helped solve some of the mathematical conundrums which have puzzled man for many centuries

convivial: describing a lively atmosphere

Ex: 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: highly complicated or intricate

Ex: instead of solving the math problem in three simple steps, kumar used a convoluted solution requiring fifteen steps.

cool: cool

Ex: cooling

copious: in abundant supply

Ex: in midsummer, there are copious popsicle stands at the beach; in the winter, there are none

cornucopia: an abundant supply of something good

Ex: the international food expo was a cornucopia of culinary delights: gourmet foods from every continent were under one roof.

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

Ex: 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: comprising many cultures; global in reach and outlook

Ex: there are few cities in the world as diverse and cosmopolitan as new york

craven: pathetically cowardly

Ex: though the man could have at least alerted the police, he crouched cravenly in the corner as the old woman was mugged

credence: belief in something

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

creditable: deserving a praise but not that amazing

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

credulity: tendency to believe readily

Ex: virginia's wide-eyed credulity as a five-year old was replaced by suspicion after she learned that santa claus didn't really exist

cryptic: mysterious or vague, usually intentionally

Ex: 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

culminate: reach the highest or most decisive point

Ex: my arguments with the boss got worse and worse, and finally culminated in my resignation

culpability: a state of guilt

Ex: since john had left his banana peel at the top of the stairwell, he accepted culpability for martha's broken leg

cumbersome: difficult to handle or use esp because of the size or weight

Ex: 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

dearth: a lack or shortage

Ex: i am surprised by the dearth of fast food chains; this is america and i assumed they were on every street

debase: reduce the quality or value of something

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

debunk: expose as false ideals and claims, esp while ridiculing

Ex: richard dawkins tries to debunk religious belief, but his ridicule tends to push people away from his points rather than convince them

decimation: destroying or killing a large part of the population

Ex: the decimation after atomic bombs were dropped on hiroshima and nagasaki is incomprehensible

decorous: characterized by good taste in manners and conduct

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

decorum: propriety in manners and conduct

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

deferential: showing respect

Ex: if you ever have the chance to meet the president, stand up straight and be deferential

degrade: reduce in worth or character, usually verbally

Ex: jesse had mockingly pointed out all of nancy's faults in front of their friends, publicly degrading the poor girl

delegate: entrust (a task or responsibility) to another person, typically one who is less senior than oneself.

Ex: 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: harmful to living things

Ex: the bp oil spill in the gulf of mexico was deleterious to the fishing industry in the southern states

deliberate: think about carefully; weight the pros and cons of an issue

Ex: emergency situations such as this call for immediate action and leave no room to deliberate over options

delineate: describe in detail

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

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

Ex: 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

demur: to object or show reluctance

Ex: wallace disliked the cold, so he demurred when his friends suggested they go skiing in the alps.

demure: to be modest and shy

Ex: the portrait of her in a simple white blouse was sweet and demure

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

Ex: count rumford denigrated the new theory of heat, demonstrating that it was wholly inadequate to explain the observations

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

Ex: even if the text is not visible, the red octagon denotes "stop" to all motorists in america.

deride: treat or speak of with contempt

Ex: he derided my singing as pathetic

derisive: abusing vocally; expressing contempt or ridicule

Ex: i was surprised by her derisive tone; usually, she is sweet, soft spoken, and congenial

derivative: not original but drawing strongly on something already in existence, especially in reference to a creative product (e.g. music, writing, poetry etc.).

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

derive: 1. come from; be connected by a relationship of blood, for example;

2. reason by deduction; establish by deduction

Ex: 1. many words in the english language are derived from latin, including the word "derive.";  
2. 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: expressed as worthless or in negative terms

Ex: never before have we seen a debate between two political candidates that was so derogative and filthy

desecrate: to willfully violate or destroy a sacred place

Ex: after desecrating the pharaoh's tomb, the archaeologist soon fell victim to a horrible illness

destitute: 1. (adj) poor enough to require help;

2. completely wanting(or lacking) usually destitute of

Ex: 1. he was at first destitute, but with help of achyuth he stood back up on his legs

2. pakistan is destitute of any economic activity

deter: 1. (verb) turn away from by persuasion;

2. (verb) try to prevent; show opposition to

Ex: 1. his mother tried to deter him from joining the army, but he was too intoxicated with the idea of war to listen;

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

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

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

devolve: 1. (verb) pass on or delegate to another;

2. (verb) grow worse (usually into)

Ex: 1. the company was full of managrs known for devolving tasks to lower management, but never doing much work themselves.;

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

diabolical: to be extremely wicked like the devil

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

dictatorial: expecting unquestioning obedience; characteristic of an absolute ruler

Ex: the coach was dictatorial in his approach: no players could ever argue or question his approach

didactic: instructive (especially excessively)

Ex: tolstoy's the death of ivan ilyich is a didactic novel, instructing the reader on how to live a good life.

differentiate: 1. (verb) be a distinctive feature, attribute, or trait (sometimes in positive sense);

2. evolve so as to lead to a new species or develop in a way most suited to the environment;

Ex: 1. mozart's long melodic lines differentiate his compositions from other works of late 18th century music.;

2. animals on madagascar differentiated from other similar animal species due to many years of isolation on the island.;

diffident: showing modest reserve; lacking self-confidence

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

dilapidated: in terrible condition; (of a building or object) in a state of disrepair or ruin as a result of age or neglect

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

dilatory: wasting time

Ex: lawyers use dilatory tactics so that it takes years before the case is actually decided

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

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

diligence: characterized by care and perseverance in carrying out tasks

Ex: michael was a diligent gardener, never leaving a leaf on the ground and regularly watering each plant

diligent: characterized by care and perseverance in carrying out tasks

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disaffected: discontented as toward authority

Ex: after watching his superior take rations from the soldiers, he quickly became disaffected and rebelled

discord: lack of agreement or harmony

Ex: 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: careful to protect one's speech or actions in order to avoid offense or draw attention

Ex: 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 heckler in the audience burst out, "you missed a spot"

discrete: constituting a separate entity or part

Ex: what was once known as czechoslovakia has since split into two discrete, independent nations

discriminate: recognize or perceive the difference

Ex: sarah couldn't discriminate between a good wine and a bad wine, so she avoided wine tastings

disenfranchise: deprive of voting rights

Ex: the u.s. constitution disenfranchised women until 1920 when they were given the right to vote

disheartened: made less hopeful or enthusiastic

Ex: after the visiting team scored nine times, the home team's fans were disheartened, some leaving the game early

disinterested: unbiased; neutral

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

disparate: two things are fundamentally different

Ex: 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: unaffected by strong emotion or prejudice

Ex: a good scientist should be dispassionate, focusing purely on what the evidence says, without personal attachment

dispatch: 1. (noun) the property of being efficient and prompt;

2. dispose of rapidly and without delay and efficiently

Ex: 1. she finished her thesis with dispatch, amazing her advisors who couldn't believe she had written 60 scholarly pages so quickly;

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

disseminate: cause to become widely known

Ex: before the effects of anesthesia were disseminated, patients had to experience the full pain of a surgery

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

Ex: barnyard animals are considerably more docile than the wild animals

dog: to pursue relentlessly; to hound

Ex: throughout his life, he was dogged by insecurities that inhibited personal growth

dogmatic: highly opinionated, not accepting that one's own beliefs may not be correct

Ex: bryan is dogmatic in his belief that the earth is flat, claiming that all pictures of a spherical earth are

computer generated

dupe: 1. (verb) to trick or swindle

2. (noun) a person who is easily tricked or swindled

Ex: 1. once again a get-rich-fast internet scheme had duped harold into submitting a \$5,000 check to a sham operation;

2. 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

duress: compulsory force or threat

Ex: the witness said he signed the contract under duress and argued that the court should cancel the agreement

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

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

eclectic: comprised of a variety of styles

Ex: 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: avoiding waste, efficient

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

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

Ex: 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.

efficacious: producing the intended result

Ex: since maggie's cough syrup, which had expired five years back, was no longer efficacious, she coughed through the night

egotist: a conceited and self-centered person

Ex: an egotist, natasha had few friends because of her inability to talk about anything except her dream of becoming the next american idol.

egregious: standing out in a negative way; shockingly bad

Ex: 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: to live off meager resources, to scrape by

Ex: he was able to eke out an existence on canned food

elaborate: 1. (adj) marked by complexity and richness of detail;

2. (verb) explain in more detail

Ex: 1. thomas, on returning from morocco, replaced his dirty gray carpet with an elaborate one he'd brought back with him

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

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

Ex: just smiling--even if you are depressed--can elicit feelings of pleasure and happiness

elucidate: make clearer and easier to understand

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

elude: (of an achievement or something desired)failed to be attained by(someone); escape understanding

Ex: some physics concepts might elude newbies

elusive: difficult to capture or difficult to remember

Ex: many first time skydivers say that describing the act of falling from the sky is elusive

embellish: make more beautiful or make more attractive by adding ornaments etc

Ex: lennon would embellish his lyrics with poetic images and puns

embroiled: involved in argument or contention

Ex: 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: standing above others in quality or position

Ex: shakespeare is an eminent author in the english language, but i find his writing uninteresting and melodramatic

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

Ex: most discrimination and hatred is based on a lack of empathetic awareness of people that have the same aspirations and fears

emulate: strive to equal or match es by imitating; compete with successfully

Ex: to really become fluent in a new language, emulate the speech patterns of people who speak the language.

endemic: native; originating where it is found

Ex: irish cuisine makes great use of potatoes, but ironically, the potato is not endemic to ireland

enervate: to sap energy from

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

engender: give rise to

Ex: the restrictions of the treaty of versailles were so severe that they engendered deep hatred and resentment in the german people

enmity: a state of deep-seated ill-will

Ex: the rude remark charles made toward sarah yesterday was due to his illness, not due to any real enmity toward sarah.

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

Ex: 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: fixed firmly or securely

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

enumerate: 1. (verb) determine the number or amount of;

2. specify individually, one by one;

Ex: 1. the survey enumerates the number of happy workers and the number of unhappy workers;

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

ephemeral: lasting a very short time

Ex: the lifespan of a mayfly is ephemeral, lasting from a few hours to a couple of days.

equivocal: confusing or ambiguous

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

eradicate: to completely destroy

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

err: to make an error

Ex: he erred in thinking that "indigent" and "indignant" were synonyms.

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

Ex: unlike his peers, who spent their hours studying in the library, matthew preferred errant walks through the university campus

erratic: unpredictable; strange and unconventional

Ex: 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.

erudite: having or showing profound knowledge

Ex: before the internet, the library was typically where you would find erudite readers

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

Ex: politicians are the masters of eschewing morals; academics are the masters of eschewing clarity

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

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

espouse: to adopt or support an idea or cause

Ex: as a college student, charlie espoused marxism, growing his beard out and railing against the evils of the free-market

euphoria: a feeling of great (usually exaggerated) elation

Ex: the euphoria of winning her first gold medal in the 100 meter dash overwhelmed shelly-ann fraser and she wept tears of immense joy.

evasive: 1. (adj) avoiding or escaping from difficulty or danger or commitment;

2. (adj) deliberately vague or ambiguous

Ex: 1. his responses were clearly evasive; he obviously did not want to take on any responsibility or any new work.;

2. every time i call the bank, i receive the same evasive answers about our mortgage and never get a clear response

evenhanded: fair and impartial in treatment or judgement

Ex: teachers often have trouble being evenhanded to all of their varied students

exacerbate: make worse

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

exacting: requiring and demanding accuracy

Ex: though his childhood piano teacher was so exacting, max is thankful now, as a professional pianist

exalt: praise or glorify

Ex: the teenagers exalted the rock star, covering their bedrooms with posters of him

exasperate: to irritate or frustrate intensely

Ex: as a child, i exasperated my mother with never ending stupid questions

excruciating: extremely painful

Ex: after the boulder rolled a couple of feet, pinning my friend's arm, he experienced excruciating pain  
after the boulder rolled a couple of feet, pinning my friend's arm, he experienced excruciating pain

exemplify: 1. (verb) to be a typical example of;

2. (verb) clarify by giving an example

Ex: a dish that exemplifies french cuisine; presented are some case studies that exemplify the results

exhort: to strongly urge on; encourage

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

exonerate: pronounce not guilty of criminal charges

Ex: the document clearly indicated that nick was out of the state at the time of the crime, and so served to



exonerate him of any charges

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

Ex: the ceo refused to expound on the decision to merge our department with another one, and so i quit

extant: still in existence (usually refers to documents)

Ex: despite many bookstores closing, experts predict that some form of book dealing will still be extant generations from now

extenuating: making less guilty or more forgivable

Ex: the jury was hardly moved by the man's plea that his loneliness was an extenuating factor in his crime of dognapping a prized pooch

facetious: cleverly amusing in tone

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

fallacious: of a belief that is based on faulty reasoning

Ex: the widespread belief that eskimos have forty different words for snow is fallacious, based on one false report.

fastidious: overly concerned with details; fussy

Ex: whitney is fastidious about her shoes, arranging them on a shelf in a specific order, each pair evenly spaced

fawn: try to gain favour by extreme flattery

Ex: the media fawned over the handsome new ceo, praising his impeccable sense of style instead of asking more pointed questions

ferret: to search for something persistently

Ex: ever the resourceful lexicographer, fenton was able to ferret out the word origin of highly obscure words

fete: to celebrate a person

Ex: after world war ii, war heroes were feted at first but quickly forgotten.

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

Ex: 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: achieve something by means of trickery or devious methods

Ex: 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.

fledgling: 1. (adj) young and inexperienced

2. (noun) any new participant in some activity

Ex: murray has years of experience in family practice, but he is just a fledgling in surgery

fleece: to deceive

Ex: many people have been fleeced by internet scams and never received their money back

flounder: behave awkwardly; have difficulties

Ex: sylvia has excelled at advanced calculus, but ironically, when she has to deal with taxes, she flounders

flush: to be in abundance

Ex: the exam's passage is flush with difficult words, words that you may have learned only yesterday

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

Ex: ever since elvira resigned as the head of marketing, everything about our sales strategy has been in a state of flux

foible: a behavioral attribute that is distinctive and peculiar to one individual

Ex: 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: try to stir up public opinion

Ex: after having his pay cut, phil spread vicious rumors about his boss, hoping to foment a general feeling of discontent

foolhardy: marked by defiant disregard for danger or consequences

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

forlorn: marked by or showing hopelessness

Ex: 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: 1. (adj) available when required or as promised;

2. (adj) at ease in talking to others

Ex: 1. 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.

2. as a husband, larry was not forthcoming: if jill didn't demand to know details, larry would never share them with her.

forthright: characterised by directness in manner or speech; without subtlety or evasion

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

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

Ex: though maria's neighbor ernie "bumped into" her at the farmer's market, the encounter wasn't nearly as fortuitous as maria was led to believe: ernie desperately wanted to ask maria out on a date and had been following her about town.

frivolous: not serious in content or attitude or behavior

Ex: compared to juliet's passionate concern for human rights, jake's non-stop concern about football seems somewhat frivolous

frugal: not spending much money (but spending wisely)

Ex: monte was no miser, but was simply frugal, wisely spending the little that he earned.

frustrate: hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of

Ex: i thought i would finish writing the paper by lunchtime, but a number of urgent interruptions served to frustrate my plan

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

Ex: while at work, george and his boss regina felt the need to be as furtive as possible about their romantic relationship

futile: producing no result or effect; unproductive of success

Ex: 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.

gainsay: deny or contradict; speak against or oppose

Ex: i can't gainsay a single piece of evidence james has presented, but i still don't trust his conclusion.

gall: 1. (noun) the trait of being rude and impertinent

2. (noun) feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will

Ex: 1. the speeding car had the gall to switch five lanes at once, run through a red light, and then cut off a police car before finally coming to a stop in front of a sea of flashing red lights;

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

galvanize: to excite or inspire (someone) to action

Ex: 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.

**garrulous:** full of trivial conversation

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

**gauche:** lacking social polish

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

**genial:** agreeable, conducive to comfort

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

**genteel:** marked by refinement in taste and manners

Ex: a live string quartet would provide a more genteel air to the wedding than would a folk singer

**germane:** relevant and appropriate

Ex: 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

**glean:** collect information bit by bit, often with difficulty

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

Ex: i have found that the more glib the salesman, the worse the product

**glut:** 1. (noun) an excessive supply;

2. (verb) supply with an excess of;

Ex: 1. the internet offers such a glut of news related stories that many find it difficult to know which story to read first.;

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

**goad:** (verb) provoke or annoy someone so as to stimulate an action or reaction

Ex: he was trying to goad her into a fight

**gossamer:** characterized by unusual lightness and delicacy

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

**gregarious:** to be likely to socialize with others

Ex: 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:** show submission or fear

Ex: every time susan comes to the office, frank grovels as if she were about to fire him

**guffaw:** laugh boisterously

Ex: whenever the jester fell to the ground in mock pain, the king guffawed, exposing his yellow, fang-like teeth

**guileless:** free of deceit

Ex: at first i thought my niece was guileless, but i then found myself buying her ice cream every time we passed a shop

**hackneyed:** lacking significance through having been overused

Ex: cheryl rolled her eyes when she heard the lecturer's hackneyed advice to "be true to yourself."

**hamper:** prevent the progress or free movement of

Ex: as the rain water began to collect in pools on the highway, it began to hamper the flow of traffic.

**hamstrung:** made ineffective or powerless

Ex: the fbi has made so many restrictions on the local police that they are absolutely hamstrung, unable to

accomplish anything

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

Ex: many golf courses are designed with great care, but the greens on the county golf course seem entirely haphazard

harangue: 1. (noun) a long pompous speech; a tirade;

2. (adj) to deliver a long pompous speech or tirade

Ex: 1. 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;

2. 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: troubled persistently especially with petty annoyances

Ex: with a team of new hires to train, martha was constantly harried with little questions and could not focus on her projects

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

Ex: the haughty manager didn't believe that any of his subordinates could ever have an insight as brilliant as his own

hegemony: dominance over a certain area

Ex: until the spanish armada was defeated in 1587, spain had hegemony over the seas, controlling waters stretching as far as the americas

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

Ex: though everybody at the gym told mikey to do cardio before weights, mikey was a heretic and always did the reverse.

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

Ex: 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

hodgepodge: a confusing mixture or jumble

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

hot: hottie

Ex: gottie

hound: to pursue relentlessly

Ex: an implacable foe of corruption, eliot ness hounded out graft in all forms—he even helped nab al capone

humdrum: dull and lacking excitement; boringly monotonous

Ex: having grown up in a humdrum suburb, jacob relished life in new york city after moving

iconoclast: somebody who attacks cherished beliefs or institutions

Ex: lady gaga, in challenging what it means to be clothed, is an iconoclast for wearing a "meat dress" to a prominent awards show

iconoclastic: defying tradition or convention

Ex: jackson pollock was an iconoclastic artist, totally breaking with tradition by splashing paint on a blank canvas

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

Ex: peggy's numerous idiosyncrasies include wearing mismatched shoes, laughing loudly to herself, and owning a pet aardvark.

ignoble: dishonorable

Ex: in 1919, the world series was rigged—an ignoble act which baseball took decades to recover from.

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

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

illicit: contrary to or forbidden by law

Ex: though al capone was engaged in many illicit activities, he was finally arrested for income tax evasion, a relatively minor offense

immaterial: not relevant

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

immutable: not able to be changed

Ex: taxes are one of the immutable laws of the land, so there is no use arguing about paying them

impartial: free from undue bias or preconceived opinions

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

impeccable: without fault or error

Ex: he was impeccably dressed in the latest fashion without a single crease or stain.

impede: be a hindrance or obstacle to

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

impending: close in time; about to occur

Ex: the impending doom of our world has been discussed and debated for 2000 years—maybe even longer

impermeable: does not allow fluids to pass through

Ex: the sand bags placed on the river formed an impermeable barrier, protecting the town from flooding

impertinent: being disrespectful; improperly forward or bold

Ex: 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?

implacable: incapable of making less angry or hostile

Ex: win or lose, the coach was always implacable, never giving the athletes an easy practice or a break

implausible: describing a statement that is not believable

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

implicate: 1. convey a meaning; imply;

2. to indicate in wrongdoing usually a crime

Ex: 1. by saying that some of the guests were uncomfortable, the manager implicated to the hotel staff that it needed to be more diligent;

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

imponderable: impossible to estimate or figure out

Ex: according to many lawmakers, the huge variety of factors affecting society make devising an efficient healthcare system an imponderable task

impregnable: immune to attack; incapable of being tampered with

Ex: as a child, amy would build pillow castles and pretend they were impregnable fortresses

imprudent: not wise

Ex: hitler, like napoleon, made the imprudent move of invading russia in winter, suffering even more casualties than napoleon had

impudent: improperly forward or bold

Ex: in an impudent move, the defendant spoke out of order to say terribly insulting things to the judge

inadvertent: happening by chance or unexpectedly or unintentionally

Ex: although prohibition was rooted in noble ideals, the inadvertent and costly consequences of making alcohol illegal in the u.s. led to its repeal

inarticulate: without or deprived of use of speech or words

Ex: although a brilliant economist, professor black was completely inarticulate, a terrible lecturer.

incense: make furious

Ex: when herb bought football tickets for a game on the day of their wedding anniversary, jill was incensed.

incessant: uninterrupted in time and indefinitely long continuing

Ex: 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

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

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

inclement: 1. (adj) (of weather) unpleasant, stormy

2. (adj) used of persons or behavior; showing no mercy

Ex: 1. after a week of inclement weather, we finally are able to go outside and enjoy the sun;

2. marcus aurelius, though a fair man, was inclement to christians during his reign, persecuting them violently

incongruous: lacking in harmony or compatibility or appropriateness

Ex: the vast economic inequality of modern society is incongruous with america's ideals

incorrigible: impervious to correction by punishment

Ex: tom sawyer seems like an incorrigible youth until huck finn enters the novel; even sawyer can't match his fierce individual spirit

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

Ex: the real responsibility for the financial well-being of the corporation is ultimately incumbent on the ceo.

indecorous: not in keeping with accepted standards of what is right or proper in polite society

Ex: eating with elbows on the table is considered indecorous in refined circles

indict: to formally charge or accuse of wrong-doing

Ex: the bankrobber was indicted on several major charges, including possession of a firearm

indifference: the trait of seeming not to care

Ex: in an effort to fight indifference, the president of the college introduced a new, stricter grading system

indigenous: originating in a certain area

Ex: 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

indignant: feeling anger over a perceived injustice

Ex: 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: characterized by hardwork and perseverance

Ex: pete was an industrious student, completing every assignment thoroughly and on time

inexorable: impossible to stop or prevent

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

inflammatory: extremely controversial, incendiary

Ex: 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: the power of creative imagination

Ex: 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: to be naïve and innocent

Ex: 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.

ingratiate: gain favor with somebody by deliberate efforts

Ex: even though tom didn't like his new boss, he decided to ingratiate himself to her in order to advance his career

inimical: hostile (usually describes conditions or environments)

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

inkling: a slight suggestion or a vague understanding

Ex: lynne speaks four romance languages, but she doesn't have an inkling about how east asian languages are structured

innocuous: harmless and doesn't produce any ill effects

Ex: everyone found nancy's banter innocuous—except for mike, who felt like she was intentionally picking on him

inscrutable: not easily understood; unfathomable

Ex: his speech was so dense and confusing that many in the audience found it inscrutable

insidious: working in a subtle but destructive way

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

insipid: dull and uninteresting; lacking flavour; weak or tasteless

Ex: 1. the movie director was known for hiring beautiful actors in order to deflect attention away from the insipid scripts he would typically use;  
2. mugs of insipid coffee

insolent: rude and arrogant

Ex: lilian could not help herself from being insolent, commenting that the queen's shoes were showing too much toe

insolvent: unable to pay one's bills; bankrupt

Ex: with credit card bills skyrocketing, a shockingly large number of americans are truly insolvent

intermittent: starting and stopping at irregular intervals

Ex: intermittent rain

intimate: to suggest something subtly

Ex: 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

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

Ex: despite many calls for mercy, the judge remained intransigent, citing strict legal precedence

intrepid: fearless

Ex: captain ahab was an intrepid captain whose reckless and fearless style ultimately lead to his downfall

inundate: to flood or overwhelm

Ex: 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

inveterate: habitual

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

involved: complicated, and difficult to comprehend

Ex: the physics lecture became so involved that the undergraduate's eyes glazed over

irascible: having or showing a tendency to be easily angered

Ex: if arthur's dog is not fed adequately, he becomes highly irascible, even growling at his own shadow

irk: irritate or annoy or vex

Ex: my little sister irks me like no one

irresolute: uncertain how to act or proceed

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

irrevocable: incapable of being retracted or revoked

Ex: once you enter your plea to the court, it is irrevocable so think carefully about what you will say

itinerant: traveling from place to place to work

Ex: doctors used to be itinerant, traveling between patients' homes

jargon: a characteristic language of a particular group

Ex: to those with little training in medicine, the jargon of doctors can be very difficult to understand

jingoism: fanatical patriotism

Ex: north korea maintains intense control over its population through a combination of jingoism and cult of personality

jocular: characterized by jokes and good humor

Ex: my uncle was always in a jocular mood at family gatherings, messing up people's hair and telling knock-knock jokes to anyone who would listen.

jovial: full of or showing high-spirited merriment

Ex: the presidential candidate and her supporters were jovial once it was clear that she had won.

jubilant: full of high-spirited delight because of triumph or success

Ex: my hardwork paid off, and i was jubilant to receive a perfect score on the gre

junta: an aggressive takeover by a group (usually military); the group that executes such a takeover

Ex: as dangerous of a threat as north korea is, some analysts believe that were a junta suddenly to gain power, it could be even more unpredictable and bellicose than the current leadership

juxtapose: place side by side for contrast

Ex: the appeal of her paintings comes from a classical style which is juxtaposed with modern themes

laborious: characterized by effort to the point of exhaustion; esp physical effort

Ex: the most laborious job i've had was working 20 hours a day as a fisherman in king salmon, alaska.

laconic: (describes a person, speech, or style of writing) using very few words

Ex: while martha always swooned over the hunky, laconic types in romantic comedies, her boyfriends inevitably were very talkative—and not very hunky.

lambast: criticize severely or angrily

Ex: showing no patience, the manager utterly lambasted the sales team that lost the big account.

languid: not inclined towards physical exertion or effort; slow and relaxed

Ex: as the sun beat down and the temperature climbed higher, we spent a languid week lying around the house

largess: extreme generosity and giving

Ex: uncle frank was known for his largess, so his nephew was sad when he did not receive a present for his birthday.

lassitude: extreme tiredness, either mental or physical

Ex: upon finishing a 6-hour standardized exam, dahlia emerged from the testing center overcome by



lassitude.

laudable: worthy of high praise

Ex: to say that gandhi's actions were laudable is the greatest understatement; he overthrew an empire without violence

leery: openly distrustful and unwilling to confide

Ex: without checking his references and talking to previous employers, i am leery of hiring the candidate

lethargic: lacking energy or enthusiasm

Ex: nothing can make a person more lethargic than a big turkey dinner

lionize: assign great social importance to

Ex: students in the u.s. learn to lionize jefferson, franklin, and washington because they are the founding fathers of the nation

lucid: (of language) transparently clear; easily understandable

Ex: though walters writes about physics and time travel, his writing is always lucid, so readers with little scientific training can understand difficult concepts

macabre: suggesting the horror of death and decay; gruesome

Ex: edgar allen poe was considered the master of the macabre; his stories vividly describe the moment leading up to—and often those moments after—a grisly death

magnanimous: noble and generous in spirit, especially towards a rival or someone less powerful

Ex: he was a great sportsman: in defeat he was complimentary and in victory he was magnanimous

maintain: to assert

Ex: the scientist maintained that the extinction of dinosaurs was most likely brought about by a drastic change in climate

maladroit: clumsy

Ex: as a child she was quite maladroit, but as an adult, she has become an adept dancer.

malady: a disease or sickness

Ex: the town was struck by a malady throughout the winter that left most people sick in bed for two weeks

malevolent: wishing or appearing to wish evil for others; arising from the intense ill-will or hatred

Ex: villains are known for their malevolent nature, oftentimes inflicting cruelty on others just for enjoyment

malleable: easily influenced

Ex: my little brother is so malleable that i can convince him to sneak cookies from the cupboard for me

malodorous: having an unpleasant smell

Ex: some thermally active fountains spew sulfur fumes--the air around them is sometimes so malodorous that many have to plug their noses

martial: suggesting war or military life

Ex: americans tend to remember abraham lincoln as kindly and wise, not at all martial, despite the fact that he was involved in the fiercest war america has even fought

maverick: someone who exhibits great independence in thought and action

Ex: officer kelly was a maverick, rarely following police protocols or adopting the conventions for speech common among his fellow officers

mawkish: overly sentimental to the point that it is disgusting

Ex: the film was incredibly mawkish, introducing highly likeable characters only to have them succumb to a devastating illness by the end of the movie

maxim: a short saying expressing a general truth

Ex: the maxim that actions speak louder than words

meander: to wander aimlessly

Ex: a casual observer might have thought that peter was meandering through the city, but that day he was actually seeking out those places where he and his long lost love had once visited.

melancholy: a deep long lasting sadness

Ex: hamlet is a figure of tremendous melancholy: he doesn't have a truly cheerful scene throughout the entire play

melee: a wild, confusing fight or struggle

Ex: after enduring daily taunts about my name, i became enraged and pummeled the schoolyard bully and his sycophantic friends in a brutal melee.

mendacity: the tendency to be untruthful

Ex: i can forgive her for her mendacity but only because she is a child and is seeing what she can get away with.

mercurial: (of a person) prone to unexpected and unpredictable changes in mood

Ex: the fact that ella's moods were as mercurial as the weather was problematic for her relationships—it didn't help that she lived in chicago.

mesmerize: to spellbind or enthrall

Ex: the plot and the characters were so well developed that many viewers were mesmerized, unable to move their eyes from the screen for even a single second

meticulous: marked by extreme care in treatment of details

Ex: the japanese noodle maker was meticulous in making his noodles and would never let another person take over the task

misanthrope: a hater of mankind

Ex: kevin is such a misanthrope that he refused to attend the christmas party, claiming that everyone's happiness was "fake" and "annoying."

misconstrue: interpret in the wrong way

Ex: the politician never trusted journalists because he thought that they would misconstrue his words and misrepresent his positions

miscreant: a person who breaks the law

Ex: "come back you miscreant!" yelled the woman who just had her purse stolen.

miser: a person who doesn't like to spend money (because they are greedy)

Ex: monte was no miser, but was simply frugal, wisely spending the little that he earned.

misogynist: a person who dislikes women in particular

Ex: many have accused hemingway of being a quiet misogynist, but recently unearthed letters argue against this belief

mitigate: 1. (verb) make less severe or harsh;

2. (verb) lessen the severity of an offense

Ex: 1. i can only spend so much time mitigating your disagreements with your wife, and at certain point, you need to do it on your own;

2. if it weren't for the mitigating circumstances, he would have certainly lost his job

mollify: to make someone angry less angry; placate

Ex: in the morning, janine was unable to mollify harry, if he happened to become angry, unless he'd had his cup of coffee

moment: significant and important value

Ex: despite the initial hullabaloo, the play was of no great moment in hampton's writing career, and within a few years the public quickly forgot his foray into theater arts

moot: open to argument or debate; undecidable in a meaningless or irrelevant way

Ex: since the board just terminated steve as the ceo, what the finance committee might have thought of

his proposed marketing plan for next year is now a moot point.

morose: ill-tempered and not inclined to talk; gloomy

Ex: after stanley found out he was no longer able to go on vacation with his friends, he sat in his room morosely

morph: to undergo dramatic change in a seamless and barely noticeable fashion

Ex: the earnestness of the daytime talk shows of the 1970's has morphed into something far more sensational and vulgar: today guests actually stand up and threaten to take swings at one another.

mundane: 1. (adj) repetitive and boring; not spiritual;

2. (adj) relating to the ordinary world

Ex: 1. nancy found doing dishes a thoroughly mundane task, although peter found a kind of zen pleasure in the chore;

2. though we think of the pope as someone always dealing in holy matters, he is also concerned with mundane events, such as deciding when to set his alarm each morning

munificent: very generous

Ex: uncle charley was known for his munificence, giving all seven of his nephews lavish christmas presents each year

muted: softened, subdued

Ex: helen preferred muted earth colors, such as green and brown, to the bright pinks and red her sister liked

myopic: lacking foresight or imagination

Ex: the company ultimately went out of business because the myopic managers couldn't predict the changes in their industry

myriad: a large indefinite number

Ex: there are a myriad of internet sites hawking pills that claim to boost energy for hours on end

negligible: so small as to be meaningless; insignificant

Ex: the gre tests cumulative knowledge, so if you cram the night before it is, at best, likely to only have a negligible impact on your score

nonplussed: unsure how to act or respond

Ex: shirley was totally nonplussed when the angry motorist cut her off and then stuck his finger out the window

nuance: a subtle difference in meaning or opinion or attitude

Ex: because of the nuances involved in this case, i hired an outside consultant to advise us and help.

obdurate: unable to be persuaded or moved emotionally; stubborn; unyielding.

Ex: no number of pleas and bribes would get him to change his obdurate attitude

obliging: showing a cheerful willingness to do favors for others

Ex: even after all his success, i found him to be accommodating and obliging, sharing with me his "secret tips" on how to gain wealth and make friends.

obscure: 1. (verb) make unclear;

2. (adj) known by only a few

Ex: 1. on the smith's drive through the grand canyon, mr. smith's big head obscured much of mrs. robinson's view, so that she only saw momentary patches of red rock;

2. many of the biggest movie stars were once obscure actors who got only bit roles in long forgotten films

obsequious: attentive in an ingratiating or servile manner; attempting to win favor from influential people by flattery

Ex: the obsequious waiter did not give the couple a moment's peace all through the meal, constantly returning to their table to refill their water glasses and to tell them what a handsome pair they made

obstinate: stubbornly persistent; stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or chosen course of action, despite attempts to persuade one to do so

Ex: her obstinate determination to work in a radio

opaque: not clearly understood or expressed

Ex: the meaning of the professor's new research was opaque to most people, so no one asked any questions

opulence: wealth as evidenced by sumptuous living

Ex: russian oligarchs are famous for their opulence, living in fancy homes and dining on expensive caviar

ornate: marked by elaborate rhetoric and elaborated with decorative details

Ex: the ornate victorian and edwardian homes spread throughout san francisco are my favorite part of the city

ostentatious: intended to attract notice and impress others; tawdry or vulgar

Ex: matt wanted to buy stone lions for front of the house, but cynthia convinced him that such a display would be too ostentatious for a modest house in an unassuming neighborhood

ostracize: exclude from a community or group

Ex: later in his life, leo tolstoy was ostracized from the russian orthodox church for his writings that contradicted church doctrine

panache: distinctive and showy elegance

Ex: jim, with his typical panache, came to the wedding reception with a top hat and cane.

paradoxical: seemingly contradictory but nonetheless possibly true

Ex: that light could be both a particle and a wave seems paradoxical, but nonetheless, it is true

parochial: narrowly restricted in scope or outlook

Ex: jasmine was sad to admit it, but her fledgling relationship with jacob did not work out because his culinary tastes were simply too parochial; "after all," she quipped on her blog, "he considered chef boyardee ethnic food."

parsimonious: extremely frugal; miserly

Ex: katie is so parsimonious that she only buys a pair of socks if all of her other socks have holes in them

pastoral: relating to the countryside in a pleasant sense

Ex: those who imagine america's countryside as a pastoral region are often disappointed to learn that much of rural u.s. is filled with cornfields extending as far as the eye can see.

patronize: treat condescendingly

Ex: she says she genuinely wanted to help me, but instead she patronized me, constantly pointing out how i was inferior to her

paucity: a lack of something

Ex: there is a paucity of jobs hiring today that require menial skills, since most such jobs have either been automated or outsourced.

pedantic: marked by a narrow focus on or display of learning especially its trivial aspects

Ex: professor thompson was regarded as an expert in his field, but his lectures were utterly pedantic, focused on rigorous details of the most trivial conventions in the field

pedestrian: lacking imagination

Ex: while nan was always engaged in philosophical speculation, her brother was occupied with far more pedestrian concerns: how to earn a salary and run a household

peevish: easily irritated or annoyed

Ex: our office manager is peevish, so the rest of us tip-toe around him, hoping not to set off another one of his fits

pejorative: expressing disapproval (usu. refers to a term)

Ex: most psychologists object to the pejorative term "shrink", believing that they expand the human mind, not limit it

perennial: lasting an indefinitely long time; eternal; everlasting

Ex: even at the old-timers games, stan musial would get the loudest cheer: he was a perennial favorite of the fans there

perfidy: an act of deliberate betrayal; a breach of a trust

Ex: sure, he was the best salesman in the company; but michael had abused the trust of the firm, sharing product secrets with a competitor, and for such perfidy he was terminated

pernicious: exceedingly harmful; working or spreading in a hidden and injurious way

Ex: the most successful viruses are pernicious: an infected person may feel perfectly healthy for several months while incubating and spreading the virus.

perpetuate: cause to continue

Ex: if you do not let him do things for himself, you are merely perpetuating bad habits that will be even harder to break in the future

perquisite: a right reserved exclusively by a particular group or person (esp a hereditary or official right)

Ex: even as the dishwasher at the french restaurant, josh quickly learned that he had the perquisite of being able to eat terrific food for half the price diners would pay

pertinent: having precise or logical relevance to the matter at hand

Ex: while the salaries of the players might draw attention in the media, such monetary figures are not pertinent to the question of who plays the best on the field

perturb: disturb in mind or cause to be worried or alarmed

Ex: he no longer lets the little trivialities perturb him

peruse: to read very carefully

Ex: instead of perusing important documents, people all too often rush to the bottom of the page and plaster their signatures at the bottom

petulant: easily irritated or annoyed

Ex: although the three year old was often described as mature for his age, he was petulant and whiny whenever his father forgot to remove the crust from his sandwiches

pine: to yearn for

Ex: standing forlornly by the window, she pined for her lost love

pinnacle: the highest point

Ex: he had reached the pinnacle of his career

piquant: having a pleasantly pungent taste or appetising flavour

Ex: the chef, with a mere flick of the salt shaker, turned the bland tomato soup into a piquant meal.

pithy: concise and full of meaning

Ex: i enjoy reading the daodejing for its pithy and insightful prose; it always gives me something to think about.

pittance: a small amount (of money)

Ex: vinny's uncle beamed smugly about how he'd offered his nephew fifty dollars for his harvard tuition; even twice the amount would have been a mere pittance

placate: cause to be more favorably inclined; gain the good will of

Ex: i was able to placate the angry mob of students by promising to bring cookies on monday

placid: not easily irritated

Ex: doug is normally placid, so we were all shocked to see him yelling at the television when the mets lost the game.

platitude: a trite or obvious remark

Ex: the professor argued that many statements regarded as wise in previous times, such as the golden rule, are now regarded as mere platitudes

plodding: (of movement) slow and laborious

Ex: charlie may seem to run at a plodding pace, but he is an ultramarathoner, meaning he runs distances of up to 100 miles, and can run for ten hours at a stretch

ploy: a clever plan to turn a situation to one's advantage

Ex: dennis arranged an elaborate ploy, involving 14 different people lying for him in different situations, so that it could appear that he was meeting mary completely by chance at the wedding reception.

poignant: emotionally touching

Ex: after the montagues and capulets discover the dead bodies of romeo and juliet, in the play's most poignant moment, the two griefstricken families agree to end their feud once and for all

polemic: a strong verbal or written attack on someone or something

Ex: the professor launched into a polemic, claiming that freudian theory was a pack of lies that absolutely destroyed european literary theory

posit: assume as fact

Ex: initially, einstein posited a repulsive force to balance gravity, but then rejected that idea as a blunder.

pragmatic: guided by practical experience and observation rather than theory

Ex: rather than make a philosophical appeal to the congressmen, the speaker decided to take a far more pragmatic approach, making small side-deals that would add votes to his bill.

precarious: fraught with danger

Ex: people smoke to relax and forget their cares, but ironically, in terms of health risks, smoking is far more precarious than either mountain-climbing or skydiving

precedent: an example that is used to justify similar occurrences at a later time

Ex: the principal explained that even though one student had done modelling work outside of school, the outfits that student wore in those photographs in no way established a precedent for what could be worn at school dances.

precipitous: done with very great haste and without due deliberation

Ex: instead of calling his financial advisor, harold acted precipitously, buying 4,000 shares of the latest "hot" stock, only to find out that the company had a history of inflating its year end numbers

preclude: keep from happening or arising; make impossible

Ex: the manager specified that all other gates be locked, to preclude the possibility of persons without tickets entering the arena undetected

precocious: characterized by or characteristic of exceptionally early development or maturity (especially in mental aptitude)

Ex: though only seven years old, she was a precocious chess prodigy, able to beat players twice her age.

predilection: a strong liking

Ex: monte had a predilection for the fine things in life: cuban cigars, 200 dollar bottles of wine, and trips to the french riviera.

preempt: take the place of or have precedence over

Ex: a governmental warning about an imminent terrorist attack would preempt ordinary network programming on television

preemptive: done before someone else can do it

Ex: just as martha was about to take the only cookie left on the table, noah preemptively swiped it

prescience: the power to foresee the future

Ex: baxter's warnings about investing in technology stocks seemed like an act of prescience after the whole market declined significantly

presumption: 1. an assumption that is taken for granted;

2. audacious (even arrogant) behavior that you have no right to;

Ex: 1. when mr. baker found out the family car was gone, he acted under the presumption that his rebellious son had taken the car, calling his son's phone and yelling at him; only later did mr. baker realize

that mrs. baker had simply gone out to get her nails done.;

2. the new neighbor quickly gained a reputation for her presumption; she had invited herself to several neighbors' homes, often stopping over at inopportune times and asking for a drink.

presumptuous: excessively forward; (of a person or their behaviour) failing to observe the limits of what is permitted or appropriate

Ex: many felt that barney was presumptuous in moving into the large office before the management even made any official announcement of his promotion

prevail: 1. be widespread in a particular area at a particular time; be current;

2. prove superior

Ex: 1. during the labor negotiations, an air of hostility prevailed in the office;

2. before the cricket match, australia was heavily favored, but india prevailed;

prevaricate: to speak in an evasive way

Ex: the cynic quipped, "there is not much variance in politicians; they all seem to prevaricate"

pristine: 1. (adj) unspoiled, untouched (usu. of nature)

2. (adj) immaculately clean and unused

Ex: 1. the glacial lake was pristine and we filled our canteens to drink deeply.;

2. drill sergeants are known for demanding pristine cabinets, uniforms, and beds, and often make new recruits clean and clean and clean until they meet the expected high standards.

prodigal: rashly or wastefully extravagant

Ex: successful professional athletes who do not fall prey to prodigality seem to be the exception—most live decadent lives

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

Ex: after the relatively small homerun totals in the "dead ball" era, babe ruth's homerun totals were truly

prodigious: every year, he set a new all-time record

profligate: 1. (adj) spending resources recklessly or wastefully;

2. (noun) someone who spends resources recklessly or wastefully

Ex: 1. the composer wagner, while living on a limited salary, was so profligate as to line all the walls of his apartment with pure silk;

2. most lottery winners go from being conservative, frugal types to outright profligates who blow millions on fast cars, lavish homes, and giant yachts

profuse: plentiful; pouring out in abundance

Ex: during mile

20 of the hawaii marathon, dwayne was sweating so profusely that he stopped to take off his shirt, and ran the remaining six miles wearing nothing more than skimpy shorts.

profusion: the property of being extremely abundant

Ex: when maria reported that she had been visited by jesus christ and had proof, a profusion of reporters and journalists descended on the town

prolific: intellectually productive

Ex: schubert was the most prolific composer, producing hundreds of hours of music before he died at the age of 31

propitious: presenting favorable circumstances; likely to result in or show signs of success

Ex: the child's heartbeat is still weak, but i am seeing many propitious signs and i think that she may be healing

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

Ex: ironically, the leading proponent of flat-earth theory flies all over the world in an effort to win more adherents.

provincial: characteristic of a limited perspective; not fashionable or sophisticated

Ex: maggie's enthusiasm about her high school teams seemed provincial to her college classmates, all of whom were following a nationally ranked college team

provisional: under terms not final or fully worked out or agreed upon

Ex: until the corporate office hands down a definitive decision on use of the extra offices, we will share their use in a provisional arrangement

pugnacious: eager to fight or argue; verbally combative

Ex: the comedian told one flat joke after another, and when the audience started booing, he pugnaciously spat back at them, "hey, you think this is easy – why don't you buffoons give it a shot?"

pundit: someone who has been admitted to membership in a scholarly field

Ex: steven pinker's credentials are unquestioned as a pundit; he has taught at mit and stanford, teaches at harvard, and has published a number of influential books on cognition, language, and psychology

qualify: to make less severe; to limit (a statement)

Ex: chris qualified his love for san francisco, adding he didn't like the weather there as much as he liked the weather in los angeles.

qualm: uneasiness about the fitness of the action

Ex: while he could articulate no clear reason why harkner's plan would fail, he nevertheless felt qualms about committing any resources to it

quandary: state of uncertainty or perplexity especially as requiring a choice between equally unfavorable options

Ex: steve certainly is in a quandary: if he doesn't call elaine, she will blame him for everything, but if he does call her, the evidence of where he currently is could cost him his job

querulous: habitually complaining

Ex: the querulous old woman was beginning to wear down even the happier members of the staff with her ceaseless complaining

quip: 1.(verb) to make a witty remark;

2.(noun) a witty saying

Ex: "flattery will get you nowhere" she quipped

quotidian: found in the ordinary course of events

Ex: phil gets so involved thinking about aristotle's arguments that he totally forgets quotidian concerns, such as exercising and eating regularly.

raffish: marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness

Ex: the men found him raffish, but the women adored his smart clothes and casual attitude

raft: a large number of something

Ex: despite a raft of city ordinances passed by an overzealous council, noise pollution continued unabated in the megalopolis.

rakish: marked by carefree unconventionality or disreputableness

Ex: as soon as he arrived in the city, the rakish young man bought some drugs and headed straight for the seedy parts of town

rankle: gnaw into; make resentful or angry

Ex: his constant whistling would rankle her, sometimes causing her to leave in a huff

rash: marked by defiant disregard for danger or consequences; imprudently incurring risk

Ex: susan criticized his actions as rash

ravenous: extremely hungry; devouring or craving food in great quantities

Ex: john didn't eat much at all during the week he had the flu, so now that he is regaining his health, it's not surprising that he has a ravenous appetite

rebuke: criticize severely or angrily; censure

Ex: the police chief rebuked the two officers whose irresponsible decisions almost led to the deaths of seven innocent by-standers

reconcile: make (one thing) compatible with (another)



Ex: peggy was unable to reconcile her kind friend jane with the cruel and merciless character jane played on television.

recondite: difficult to penetrate; incomprehensible to one of ordinary understanding or knowledge

Ex: i found ulysses recondite and never finished the book, waiting instead to read it with someone else so we could penetrate its meaning together

redress: an act of making something right

Ex: barry's redress for forgetting his wife's birthday two years in a row was surprising her with a trip to tahiti

refractory: stubbornly resistant to authority or control

Ex: used to studious high school students, martha was unprepared for the refractory kindergarteners who neither sat still nor listened to a single word she said.

refute: prove to be false or incorrect

Ex: no one could refute his theories or propositions, and that is why he was esteemed by all his colleagues in the philosophy department.

relegate: assign a lower position to

Ex: they aim to prevent women from being relegated to a secondary role

remiss: to be negligent in one's duty

Ex: remiss in his duty to keep the school functioning efficiently, the principal was relieved of his position after only three months.

renege: fail to fulfill a promise or obligation

Ex: we will no longer work with that vendor since it has reneged on nearly every agreement.

replete: completely stocked or furnished with something

Ex: only weeks after the hurricane made landfall, the local supermarket shelves were replete with goods, so quick was the disaster relief response

reproach: to express criticism towards

Ex: at first, sarah was going to yell at the boy, but she didn't want to reproach him for telling the truth about the situation

reprobate: a person without morals who is disapproved of

Ex: mr. smith's two boys couldn't be more different; one was a hard-working and principled, the other was the town reprobate, always having run-ins with the law

repudiate: reject as untrue or unfounded

Ex: many in the public believed the rumors of a ufo crash outside town, so the chief of police did everything he could to repudiate the rumors

rescind: cancel officially

Ex: the man's driver's license was rescinded after his tenth car accident, which meant he would never be allowed to legally drive again

reservation: an unstated doubt that prevents you from accepting something wholeheartedly

Ex: i was initially excited by the idea of a trip to washington, d.c. but now that i have read about the high crime statistics there, i have some reservations.

resignation: the acceptance of something unpleasant which cant be avoided

Ex: since jack could not think of a convincing reason why he had to miss the seminar, he attended it with a sense of resignation

resolve: reach a conclusion after a discussion or deliberation

Ex: after much thought, ted resolved not to travel abroad this summer because he didn't have much money in his bank account.

respite: a pause from doing something (as work)

Ex: every afternoon, the small company has a respite in which workers play foosball or board games.

restive: restless

Ex: the crowd grew restive as the comedian's opening jokes fell flat.

resurgent: rising again as to new life and vigor

Ex: the team sank to fourth place in june, but is now resurgent and about to win the division

reticent: disinclined to talk, not revealing one's thoughts

Ex: when asked about her father, helen lost her outward enthusiasm and became rather reticent

retiring: to be shy, and to be inclined to retract from company

Ex: nelson was always the first to leave soirees—rather than mill about with “fashionable” folk, he was retiring, and preferred the solitude of his garret.

retract: (verb) pull inwards towards the center; formally reject or disavow a previously held belief, usually under pressure

Ex: there is no way to retract an email once sent

reverent: feeling or showing profound respect or veneration

Ex: the professor could speak objectively about the other composers, but he always lectured about brahms with a particularly reverent air, unable to offer a single criticism of his compositions

rile: cause annoyance in; disturb esp by minor irritations

Ex: dan is usually calm and balanced, but it takes only one intense glare from sabrina to rile him

robust: sturdy and strong in form, constitution, or construction

Ex: chris preferred bland and mild beers, but bhavin preferred a beer with more robust flavor.

rudimentary: being in the earliest stages of development; being or involving basic facts or principles

Ex: i would love to be able to present a fully polished proposal to the board, but right now, our plans for the product are still in the most rudimentary stages.

rustic: characteristic of rural life; awkwardly simple and provincial

Ex: the vacation cabin had no electricity and no indoor plumbing, but despite these inconveniences, nigel adored its rustic charm

sanctimonious: making a show of being pious; holier-than-thou

Ex: even during the quiet sanctity of evening prayer, she held her chin high, a sanctimonious sneer forming on her face as she eyed those who were attending church for the first time

sanction: 1. give authority or permission to;

2. a legal penalty for a forbidden action

Ex: .....

sanguine: cheerful; optimistic

Ex: with the prospect of having to learn 3,000 words during the course of the summer, paul was anything but sanguine

savvy: 1. (noun) a perceptive understanding;

2. (verb) get meaning of something; 3. well-informed or perceptive

Ex: 1. he did not have the political savvy to win the election;

2. the student savvies the meaning of astrophysics with little effort

scintillating: describes someone who is brilliant and lively

Ex: richard feynman was renowned for his scintillating lectures—the arcana of quantum physics was made lucid as he wrote animatedly on the chalkboard

screed: an abusive rant (often tedious)

Ex: joey had difficulty hanging out with his former best friend perry, who, during his entire cup of coffee, enumerated all of the government's deficiencies--only to break ranks and launch into some screed against big business.

scrupulous: 1. (adj) characterized by extreme care and great effort

2. (adj) having a sense of right and wrong; principled

Ex: 1. because of his scrupulous nature, mary put him in charge of numbering and cataloging the entire collection of rare stamps;

2. everyone trusted what he said and followed his example because he was scrupulous and honest

sentimental: effusively or insincerely emotional, especially in art, music, and literature

Ex: i don't like romanticism for the same reason i don't like melodramatic acting and soap operas—overly sentimental.

serendipity: the instance in which an accidental, fortunate discovery is made

Ex: by pure serendipity, sarah discovered, at a flea market in peoria, a matching earring to replace the one that fell down the storm drain back home.

slapdash: carelessly and hastily put together

Ex: the office building had been constructed in a slapdash manner, so it did not surprise officials when, during a small earthquake, a large crack emerged on the façade of the building.

smattering: a slight or superficial understanding of a subject; a small amount of something

Ex: i know only a smattering of german, but helen is able to read german newspapers and converse with natives

smug: marked by excessive complacency or self-satisfaction

Ex: when phil was dating the model, he had a smug attitude that annoyed his friends

snide: expressive of contempt; derogatory or mocking in an indirect way

Ex: the chairman interpreted taylor's question about promotions as a snide remark, but in all innocence taylor was trying to figure out the company's process.

snub: refuse to acknowledge; reject outright and bluntly

Ex: wheeler was completely qualified for the committee, but the board snubbed him, choosing an obviously lesser qualified candidate instead.

soporific: inducing mental lethargy; sleep inducing

Ex: although the professor is brilliant, his bland monotone gives his lectures a soporific effect.

sordid: involving ignoble actions or motives; arousing moral distaste or contempt; foul and run down and repulsive

Ex: the nightly news simply announced that the senator had had an affair, but the tabloid published all the sordid details of the interaction.

specious: 1. (adj) based on pretense; deceptively pleasing;

2. (adj) plausible but false

Ex: 1. almost every image on tv is specious and not to be trusted;

2. he made a career out of specious arguments and fictional lab results, but lost his job and reputation when his lies were exposed by an article in the new york times

spendthrift: one who spends money extravagantly

Ex: taking weekly trips to vegas, megan was a spendthrift whose excesses eventually caught up to her

sporadic: recurring in scattered and irregular or unpredictable instances

Ex: the signals were at first sporadic, but now we detect a clear, consistent pattern of electromagnetic radiation emanating from deep space

spurious: plausible but false

Ex: when listening to a politician speak, it is hard to distinguish the spurious claims from the authentic ones.

spurn: reject with contempt

Ex: she spurned all his flattery and proposals, and so he walked off embarrassed and sad

squander: spend thoughtlessly; waste time money or an opportunity

Ex: fearing that his money would be squandered by his family, he gave all of it to charity when he died

staid: characterized by dignity and propriety

Ex: frank came from a staid environment, so he was shocked that his college roommate sold narcotics

start: to suddenly move in a particular direction

Ex: all alone in the mansion, henrietta started when she heard a sound

staunch: firm and dependable especially in loyalty

Ex: no longer a staunch supporter of the movement, todd now will openly question whether its goals are worthwhile

steadfast: marked by firm determination or resolution; not shakeable

Ex: a good captain needs to be steadfast, continuing to hold the wheel and stay the course even during the most violent storm

stem: to hold back or limit the flow or growth of something

Ex: to stem the tide of applications, the prestigious ivy requires that each applicant score at least 330 on the revised gre.

stipend: a regular allowance (of money)

Ex: he was hoping for a monthly allowance loan from the government, but after no such stipend was forthcoming he realized he would have to seek other means of paying for his college tuition)

stolid: having or revealing little emotion or sensibility; not easily aroused or excited

Ex: elephants may appear stolid to casual observers, but they actually have passionate emotional lives

stringent: demanding strict attention to rules and procedures

Ex: most of the students disliked the teacher because of his stringent homework policy, but many students would later thank him for demanding so much from them

stymie: hinder or prevent the progress or accomplishment of

Ex: the engineers found their plans stymied at every turn and were ultimately able to make almost no progress on the project

subsume: 1. (verb) contain or include;

2. (verb) consider (an instance of something) as part of a general rule or principle;

Ex: 1. the rogue wave quickly subsumed the pier and boardwalk, destroying everything in its path;

2. don quixote of la mancha subsumes all other modern novels, demonstrating modern literary devices and predating even the idea of a postmodern, metanarrative

subversive: in opposition to an established system or institution

Ex: the ruling political party has begun a campaign to shut down subversive websites that it deems as a threat to "national safety

sullen: showing a brooding ill humor

Ex: herbert took board games too seriously, often appearing sullen after losing

summit: 1. (noun) the peak or highest point

2. (noun) a meeting of high-level leaders

Ex: 1. after hiking for seven days, the climbers finally reached the summit of mount kilimanjaro;

2. since climate change policy has been mired in congressional fighting, this summit should help set the goals for president's next term

superfluous: 1. (adj) serving no useful purpose;

2. (adj) more than is needed, desired, or required

Ex: 1. how can we hope to stay open if we don't eliminate all superfluous spending, like catered meetings and free acupuncture tuesday?;

2. the third paragraph in your essay is superfluous and can be deleted

supplant: take the place or move into the position of

Ex: for many, a cell phone has supplanted a traditional phone; in fact, most 20-somethings don't even have a traditional phone anymore.

surly: inclined to anger or bad feelings with overtones of menace

Ex: every morning, bhavin was a surly, unhappy person, but once he ate breakfast, he became loving, laughing, and a joy to be around

sycophant: a person who tries to please someone in order to gain a personal advantage

Ex: the ceo was unaware of the damaging consequences of his choices, largely because he surrounded himself with sycophants who would never dare criticize him

taciturn: habitually reserved and uncommunicative

Ex: while the ceo enthusiastically shares his plans and agenda with all who will listen, the cfo is far more taciturn, rarely revealing his perspective

tact: consideration in dealing with others and avoid giving offense

Ex: in a tremendous display of tact, shelly was able to maintain a strong friendship with marcia, even though marcia's husband, frank, confessed to finding shelley more attractive than marcia

tantamount: being essentially equal to something

Ex: in many situations, remaining silent is tantamount to admitting guilt, so speak to prove your innocence

tarnish: make dirty or spotty as exposure to air; also used metaphorically

Ex: pete rose was one of the best baseball players of his generation, but his involvement with gambling on baseball games has tarnished his image in the eyes of many

tawdry: tastelessly showy; cheap and shoddy

Ex: carol expected to find new york city magical, the way so many movies had portrayed it, but she was surprised how often tawdry displays took the place of genuine elegance.

taxing: used to limit; exhaust

Ex: the hike to the summit of mt. whitney was so taxing that i could barely speak or stand up

telling: significant and revealing of another factor

Ex: her unbecoming dress was very telling when it came to her sense of fashion

telltale: revealing

Ex: the many telltale signs of chronic smoking include yellow teeth, and a persistent, hacking cough

temperance: the trait of avoiding excesses

Ex: welles wasn't known for his temperance--he usually ate enough for two and drank enough for three

tempered: moderated in effect

Ex: the wide-eyed optimism of her youth was now tempered after she had worked many years in the criminal justice system

tenacious: stubbornly unyielding

Ex: even the most tenacious advocates for gun ownership must admit some of the dangers that firearms present

tender: offer up something formally

Ex: the government was loath to tender more money in the fear that it might set off inflation

thoroughgoing: very thorough; complete

Ex: as a thoroughgoing bibliophile, one who had turned his house into a veritable library, he shocked his friends when he bought a kindle

thrifty: spending money wisely

Ex: he was economical, spending his money thriftily and on items considered essential

thwart: hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of

Ex: i wanted to spend a week in new york this autumn, but the high costs of travel and lodging thwarted my plans

timorous: timid by nature or revealing fear and nervousness

Ex: since this was her first time debating on stage and before an audience, di's voice was timorous and quiet for the first 10 minutes

tirade: an angry speech

Ex: in terms of political change, a tirade oftentimes does little more than make the person speaking red in the face

torpor: inactivity resulting from lethargy and lack of vigor or energy

Ex: after work, i was expecting my colleagues to be enthusiastic about the outing, but i found them in a state of complete torpor

tortuous: marked by repeated turns and bends; not straightforward

Ex: because the logic behind mcmahon's side of the debate was so tortuous, his audience came out either completely confused

tout: advertise in strongly positive terms; show off

Ex: at the conference, the ceo touted the extraordinary success of his company's research & development division.

tractable: readily reacting to suggestions and influences; easily managed (controlled or taught or molded)

Ex: compared to middle school students, who have an untamed wildness about them, high school students are somewhat more tractable.

transient: lasting a very short time

Ex: the unpredictable and transient nature of deja vu makes it a very difficult phenomenon to study properly

transitory: lasting a very short time

Ex: if we lived forever and life was not transitory, do you think we would appreciate life less or more?

travail: painful and laborious effort; hard work

Ex: while they experienced nothing but travails in refinishing the kitchen, they completed the master bedroom in less than a weekend

travesty: an absurd presentation of something; a mockery

Ex: what i expected to be an intelligent, nuanced historical documentary turned out to be a poorly-produced travesty of the form.

treacherous: 1. (adj) tending to betray;

2. (adj) dangerously unstable and unpredictable

Ex: 1. even though jesse james was an outlaw, his killer, robert ford, is remembered more for his treacherous actions than for eliminating a criminal and murderer.;

2. the bridge built from twine and vine is treacherous to walk across, and so i think i will stay put right here.

tribulation: something esp. an event that causes difficulty and suffering

Ex: as of

2013, nearly 1.5 million syrians have fled their country hoping to escape the tribulations of a civil war tearing their country to pieces

trite: repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse

Ex: many style guides recommend not using idioms in writing because these trite expressions are uninteresting and show a lack of imagination on the part of the writer

truncate: reduce the length of something

Ex: the soccer game was truncated when the monsoon rain began to fall

tumult: a state of chaos, noise and confusion

Ex: riots broke out just in front of our apartment building, and the tumult continued late into the night

uncanny: strange or mysterious esp. in unsettling way; suggesting the operation of supernatural influences; surpassing the ordinary or normal

Ex: reggie has an uncanny ability to connect with animals: feral cats will readily approach him, and sometimes even wild birds will land on his finger.

uncompromising: not making concessions

Ex: the relationship between bart and hilda ultimately failed because they were both so uncompromising, never wanting to change their opinions

unconscionable: unreasonable; unscrupulous; excessive

Ex: the lawyer's demands were so unconscionable that rather than pay an exorbitant sum or submit himself to any other inconveniences, the defendant decided to find a new lawyer

undermine: to weaken (usually paired with an abstract term)

Ex: the student undermined the teacher's authority by questioning the teacher's judgment on numerous occasions

underscore: give extra weight to (a communication)

Ex: while the hiking instructor agreed that carrying a first aid kit could be a good idea under certain circumstances, he underscored the importance of carrying enough water

underwrite: to support financially

Ex: the latest symphony broadcast was made possible with underwriting from the carnegie endowment

unequivocal: admitting of no doubt or misunderstanding; having only one meaning or interpretation and leading to only one conclusion

Ex: the president's first statement on the subject was vague and open to competing interpretations, so when he spoke to congress about the same subject later, he was careful to make his position completely unequivocal.

unnerve: to make nervous or upset

Ex: at one time unnerved by math problems, she began avidly "magoosh-ing", and soon became adept at even combinations and permutations questions.

unprecedented: have never been done or known before; novel

Ex: when america first created its national parks, the idea of setting aside the most beautiful land in a country was unprecedented in the history of mankind

unruly: (of persons) noisy and lacking in restraint or discipline; unwilling to submit to authority

Ex: walk in to any preschool and i am sure that you will find an unruly and chaotic scene—unless it's nap time

unscrupulous: without scruples or principles

Ex: in the courtroom, the lawyer was unscrupulous, using every manner of deceit and manipulation to secure a victory for himself

unseemly: not keeping with what is accepted or proper in a polite society; indecorous

Ex: he acted in an unseemly manner, insulting the hostess and then speaking ill of her deceased husband.

upbraid: to reproach; to scold

Ex: bob took a risk walking into the "students barbershop"—in the end he had to upbraid the apparently drunk barber for giving him an uneven bowl cut

urbane: showing a high degree of refinement and the assurance that comes from wide social experience

Ex: because of his service as an intelligence officer and his refined tastes, w. somerset maugham became the inspiration for the urbane and sophisticate spy james bond.

vacillate: be undecided about something; waver between conflicting positions or courses of action

Ex: some students vacillate between schools when deciding which to attend, while others focus only on one school

vacuous: devoid of intelligence, matter, or significance

Ex: to the journalist's pointed question, the senator gave a vacuous response, mixing a few of his overall campaign slogans with platitudes and completely avoiding the controversial subject of the question

vanquish: come out better in a race, competition or conflict

Ex: for years, argentina would dominate in world cup qualifying matches, only to be vanquished by one of the european countries during the late stages of the tournament.

variance: the quality of being different

Ex: the cynic quipped, "there is not much variance in politicians; they all seem to lie"

vehement: marked by extreme intensity of emotions or convictions

Ex: while the other employees responded to the bad news in a measured way, andrew responded in a vehement manner, tipping over his desk and shouting at the top of his lungs.

venality: the condition of being susceptible to bribes or corruption

Ex: even some of the most sacred sporting events are not immune to venality, as many of the officials have received substantial bribes to make biased calls

veneer: covering consisting of a thin superficial layer that hides the underlying substance

Ex: mark twain referred to the victorian period in america as the "gilded age", implying the ample moral corruption that lay beneath a mere veneer of respectability.

venerate: to respect deeply

Ex: the professor, despite his sleep-inducing lectures, was venerated amongst his colleagues, publishing more papers yearly than all of his peers combined

veracious: truthful

Ex: while we elect our leaders in the hope that every word they speak will be veracious, history has shown that such a hope is naive

vicarious: felt or undergone as if one were taking part in the experience or feelings of another

Ex: the advent of twitter is a celebrity stalker's dream, as he or she can—through hundreds of intimate "tweets"—vicariously live the life of a famous person

vie: compete for something

Ex: while the other teams in the division actively vie for the championship, this team seems content simply to go through the motions of playing

vilify: spread negative information about

Ex: todd was noble after the divorce, choosing to say only complimentary things about barbara, but barbara did not hesitate to vilify todd.

vindicate: to clear of accusation, blame, suspicion, or doubt with supporting arguments or proof

Ex: even seven tour de france wins cannot vindicate lance armstrong in the eyes of the public--that the athlete used performance enhancing drugs invalidates all those wins.

vindictive: to have a very strong desire for revenge

Ex: though the other girl had only lightly poked fun of vanessa's choice in attire, vanessa was so vindictive that she waited for an entire semester to get the perfect revenge.

virago: an ill-tempered or violent woman

Ex: poor billy was the victim of the virago's invective—she railed at him for a good 30-minutes about how he is the scum of the earth for speaking loudly on his cellphone in public

vociferous: conspicuously and offensively loud; given to vehement outcry

Ex: in giving marcia a particular vociferous response, paul caused people at every other table in the restaurant to turn around and look at them angrily

volubility: the quality of talking or writing easily and continuously

Ex: the professor's volubility knows no bounds; he could talk through a hurricane and elaborate a point from one st. patrick's day to the next

voracious: very hungry; approaching an activity with gusto

Ex: steven was a voracious reader, sometimes finishing two novels in the same day.

wanting: lacking

Ex: she did not think her vocabulary was wanting, yet there were so many words that inevitably she found a few she didn't know



wanton: without check or limitations; showing no moral restraints to one's anger, desire, appetites

Ex: due to wanton behavior and crude language, the drunk man was thrown out of the bar and asked to never return.

wax: to gradually increase in size or intensity

Ex: her enthusiasm for the diva's new album only waxed with each song; by the end of the album, it was her favorite cd yet

whimsical: determined by impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason

Ex: adults look to kids and envy their whimsical nature at times, wishing that they could act without reason and play without limitation

winsome: charming in a childlike or naive way

Ex: she was winsome by nature, and many people were drawn to this free and playful spirit

zenith: the highest point; culmination

Ex: at the zenith of his artistic career, elvis was outselling any other artist on the charts