

aesthetic

Explain

1. adjective

Aesthetic is used to talk about beauty or art , and people's appreciation of beautiful things. **The aesthetic** of a work of art is its aesthetic quality.

- ...products chosen for their aesthetic appeal as well as their durability and quality.
- He responded very strongly to the aesthetic of this particular work.

access

accesses accessing accessed

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you have **access to** a building or other place, you are able or allowed to go into it.

- The facilities have been adapted to give access to wheelchair users.
- Scientists have only recently been able to gain access to the area.
- The Mortimer Hotel offers easy access to central London.

2. uncountable noun

If you have **access to** something such as information or equipment , you have the opportunity or right to see it or use it.

- ...a Code of Practice that would give patients right of access to their medical records.
- Consultant-led teams will have access to the latest equipment.

3. uncountable noun

If you have **access to** a person, you have the opportunity or right to see them or meet them.

- He was not allowed access to a lawyer.
- He had direct access to the Prime Minister.

4. verb

If you **access** something, especially information held on a computer, you succeed in finding or obtaining it.

- You've illegally accessed and misused confidential security files.

amateur

amateurs

Explain

1. countable noun

An **amateur** is someone who does something as a hobby and not as a job .

- Jerry is an amateur who dances because he feels like it.
- Taylor began his playing career as an amateur goalkeeper.

2. adjective

Amateur sports or activities are done by people as a hobby and not as a job.

- ...the local amateur dramatics society.
- At college he studied English and did amateur boxing.

adjective

adjectives

Explain

1. countable noun

An **adjective** is a word such as ' big ', ' dead ', or ' financial ' that describes a person or thing, or gives extra information about them. Adjectives usually come before nouns or after link verbs .

analytic

Explain

1. adjective
Analytic means the same as analytical .

april

Aprils

Explain

1. variable noun
April is the fourth month of the year in the Western calendar .
 - *The changes will be introduced in April.*
 - *They were married on 7 April 1927 at Paddington Register Office.*
 - *He announced that he will retire next April.*

approval

approvals

Explain

1. uncountable noun
If you win someone's **approval for** something that you ask for or suggest , they agree to it.
 - *...efforts to win congressional approval for an aid package for Moscow.*
 - *The chairman has also given his approval for an investigation into the case.*
 - *The proposed modifications met with widespread approval.*
2. variable noun
Approval is a formal or official statement that something is acceptable .
 - *The testing and approval of new drugs will be speeded up.*

3. uncountable noun
If someone or something has your **approval** , you like and admire them.
 - *His son had an obsessive drive to gain his father's approval.*
 - *The president's approval rating had risen.*
4. seal of approval

cautious

Explain

1. adjective
Someone who is **cautious** acts very carefully in order to avoid possible danger .
 - *The scientists are cautious about using enzyme therapy on humans.*
 - *He is a very cautious man.*
2. adjective
If you describe someone's attitude or reaction as **cautious** , you mean that it is limited or careful .
 - *He has been seen as a champion of a more cautious approach to economic reform.*

athlete

athletes

Explain

1. countable noun
An **athlete** is a person who does a sport, especially athletics , or track and field events.
 - *Many top athletes find it hard, if not impossible to find real life again after retiring.*
2. countable noun
You can refer to someone who is fit and athletic as an **athlete** .
 - *I was no athlete.*

breach

breaches breaching breached

Explain

1. verb

If you **breach** an agreement , a law, or a promise, you break it.

- *The newspaper breached the code of conduct on privacy.*
- *The film breached the criminal libel laws.*

2. variable noun

A **breach of** an agreement, a law, or a promise is an act of breaking it.

- *The congressman was accused of a breach of secrecy rules.*
- *...a 1billionbreachofcontractsuit.*

3. countable noun

A **breach in** a relationship is a serious disagreement which often results in the relationship ending .

- *Their actions threatened a serious breach in relations between the two countries.*
- *Little happens to heal the breach between the two warring factions.*

4. verb

If someone or something **breaches** a barrier , they make an opening in it, usually leaving it weakened or destroyed .

- *The limestone is sufficiently fissured for tree roots to have breached the roof of the cave.*
- *Fire may have breached the cargo tanks and set the oil ablaze.*

5. verb

If you **breach** someone's security or their defences, you manage to get through and attack an area that is heavily guarded and protected . **Breach** is also a noun .

- *The bomber had breached security by hurling his dynamite from a roof overlooking the building.*
- *...widespread breaches of security at Ministry of Defence bases.*

6. step into the breach

classmate

classmates

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **classmates** are students who are in the same class as you at school or college.

canal

canals

Explain

1. countable noun

A **canal** is a long, narrow stretch of water that has been made for boats to travel along or to bring water to a particular area.

- *...the Grand Union Canal.*
- *...Venetian canals and bridges.*

2. countable noun

A **canal** is a narrow tube inside your body for carrying food, air, or other substances.

- *...delaying the food's progress through the alimentary canal.*

copy

copies copying copied

Explain

1. countable noun

If you make a **copy of** something, you produce something that looks like the original thing.

- *The reporter apparently obtained a copy of Steve's resignation letter.*
- *Always keep a copy of everything in your own files.*

2. verb

If you **copy** something, you produce something that looks like the original thing.

- *She never participated in obtaining or copying any classified documents for anyone.*
- *...lawsuits against companies who have unlawfully copied computer programs.*
- *...top designers, whose work has been widely copied.*
- *He copied the chart from a book.*

3. verb

If you **copy** a piece of writing, you write it again exactly. **Copy out** means the same as copy.

- *He would allow John to copy his answers to difficult algebra questions.*
- *He copied the data into a notebook.*
- *We're copying from textbooks because we don't have enough to go round.*
- *He wrote the title on the blackboard, then copied out the text sentence by sentence.*
- *'Did he leave a phone number?'—'Oh, yes.' She copied it out for him.*

4. verb

If you **copy** a person or what they do, you try to do what they do or try to be like them, usually because you admire them or what they have done.

- *Children can be seen to copy the behaviour of others whom they admire or identify with.*

- *He can claim to have been defeated by opponents copying his own tactics.*
- *...the techniques she had copied from her tennis heroes.*

5. countable noun

A **copy of** a book, newspaper, or CD is one of many that are exactly the same.

- *I bought a copy of 'U.S.A. Today' from a street-corner machine.*

- *You can obtain a copy for 2 from New York Central Art Supply.*

6. uncountable noun

In journalism, **copy** is written material that is ready to be printed or read in a broadcast.

- *...his ability to write the most lyrical copy in the history of sports television.*
- *...advertising copy.*

7. uncountable noun

In journalism, **copy** is news or information that can be used in an article in a newspaper.

- *...journalists looking for good copy.*

consistent

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **consistent** always behaves in the same way, has the same attitudes towards people or things, or achieves the same level of success in something.

- *He has never been the most consistent of players anyway.*
- *...his consistent support of free trade.*

2. adjective

If one fact or idea is **consistent with** another, they do not contradict each other.

- *This result is consistent with the findings of Garnett Tobin.*

- *New goals are not always consistent with the existing policies.*

3. adjective

An argument or set of ideas that is **consistent** is one in which no part contradicts or conflicts with any other part.

- *These are clear consistent policies which we are putting into place.*

corridor

corridors

Explain

1. countable noun

A **corridor** is a long passage in a building, with doors and rooms on one or both sides.

2. countable noun

A **corridor** is a strip of land that connects one country to another or gives it a route to the sea through another country.

- *The republic lay in a narrow corridor of disputed land.*

eager

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **eager to** do or have something, you want to do or have it very much.

- *Robert was eager to talk about life in the Army.*
- *When my own son was five years old, I became eager for another baby.*
- *The low prices still pull in crowds of eager buyers.*

2. adjective

If you look or sound **eager**, you look or sound as if you expect something interesting or enjoyable to happen.

- *Arty sneered at the crowd of eager faces around him.*
- *Her voice was girlish and eager.*

critic

critics

Explain

1. countable noun

A **critic** is a person who writes about and expresses opinions about things such as books, films, music, or art.

- *The New York critics had praised her performance.*

2. countable noun

Someone who is a **critic** of a person or system disapproves of them and criticizes them publicly.

- *The newspaper has been the most consistent critic of the government.*
- *He became a fierce critic of the tobacco industry.*
- *Her critics accused her of caring only about success.*

enough

Explain

1. determiner

Enough means as much as you need or as much as is necessary. **Enough** is also an adverb. **Enough** is also a pronoun. **Enough** is also a quantifier. **Enough** is also an adjective.

- *They had enough cash for a one-way ticket.*

- *There aren't enough tents to shelter them all.*
- *I was old enough to work and earn money.*
- *Do you believe that sentences for criminals are tough enough at present?*
- *She graduated with high enough marks to apply for university.*
- *Although the U.K. says efforts are being made, they are not doing enough.*
- *All parents worry about whether their child is getting enough of the right foods.*
- *By autumn it hopes to have 200 new lines – proof enough of the growing market.*

2. pronoun

If you say that something is **enough**, you mean that you do not want it to continue any longer or get any worse. **Enough** is also a quantifier. **Enough** is also a determiner. **Enough** is also an adverb.

- *I met him only the once, and that was enough.*
- *I think I have said enough.*
- *You've got enough to think about for the moment.*
- *Ann had heard enough of this.*
- *He had messed up enough of these occasions to give rise to some anxieties.*
- *I've had enough problems with the police, I don't need this.*
- *Would you shut up, please! I'm having enough trouble with these children!*
- *I'm serious, things are difficult enough as they are.*

3. adverb

You can use **enough** to say that something is the case to a moderate or fairly large degree.

- *Winter is a common enough German surname.*

- *I got this phone call from a gentleman, who seemed sincere enough.*
- *The rest of the evening passed pleasantly enough.*

4. adverb

You use **enough** in expressions such as **strangely enough** and **interestingly enough** to indicate that you think a fact is strange or interesting.

- *Strangely enough, the last thing he thought of was his beloved Tanya.*
- *Her latest conquest is an Italian who, interestingly enough, doesn't speak a word of his native language.*

5. enough is enough

6. have had enough

7. enough said

8. that's enough

discipline

disciplines disciplining disciplined

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Discipline is the practice of making people obey rules or standards of behaviour, and punishing them when they do not.

- *Order and discipline have been placed in the hands of headmasters and governing bodies.*
- *...discipline problems in the classroom.*

2. uncountable noun

Discipline is the quality of being able to behave and work in a controlled way which involves obeying particular rules or standards.

- *It was that image of calm and discipline that appealed to voters.*

3. variable noun

If you refer to an activity or situation as a **discipline**, you mean that, in order to be successful in it, you need to behave in a strictly controlled way and obey particular rules or standards.

- *...inner disciplines like transcendental meditation.*
- *The discipline of studying music can help children develop good work habits.*

4. verb

If someone **is disciplined** for something that they have done wrong, they are punished for it.

- *The workman was disciplined by his company but not dismissed.*
- *Her husband had at last taken a share in disciplining the boy.*

5. verb

If you **discipline yourself** to do something, you train yourself to behave and work in a strictly controlled and regular way.

- *Out on the course you must discipline yourself to let go of detailed theory.*
- *I'm very good at disciplining myself.*

6. countable noun

A **discipline** is a particular area of study, especially a subject of study in a college or university.

- *You've got to make sure that people work together across disciplines.*
- *We're looking for people from a wide range of disciplines.*

fantastic

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **fantastic**, you are emphasizing that you think it is very good or that you like it a lot.

- *I have a fantastic social life.*

- *I thought she was fantastic.*

2. adjective

A **fantastic** amount or quantity is an extremely large one.

- *...fantastic amounts of money.*

3. adjective

You describe something as **fantastic** or **fantastical** when it seems strange and wonderful or unlikely.

- *Unlikely and fantastic legends grew up around a great many figures, both real and fictitious.*
- *The book has many fantastical aspects.*

dividend

dividends

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dividend** is the part of a company's profits which is paid to people who have shares in the company.

- *The first quarter dividend has been increased by nearly 4 per cent.*

2. to pay dividends

favorable

Explain

1. adjective

1. 2. 3.

- *a favorable impression*

engagement

engagements

Explain

1. countable noun

An **engagement** is an arrangement that you have made to do something at a particular time.

- *He had an engagement at a restaurant in Greek Street at eight.*
- *...business-related social engagements.*

2. countable noun

An **engagement** is an agreement that two people have made with each other to get married .

- *I've broken off my engagement to Arthur.*
- *Announcing our engagement was a relief.*

3. countable noun

You can refer to the period of time during which two people are engaged as their **engagement** .

- *I felt our engagement was quite an unhappy time.*

4. variable noun

A military **engagement** is an armed conflict between two enemies .

- *The constitution prohibits them from military engagement on foreign soil.*

fond

fonder fondest

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **fond of** someone, you feel affection for them.

- *I am very fond of Michael.*
- *She was especially fond of a little girl named Betsy.*

2. adjective

You use **fond** to describe people or their behaviour when they show affection.

- *...a fond father.*

- *He gave him a fond smile.*

3. adjective

If you are **fond of** something, you like it or you like doing it very much.

- *He was fond of marmalade.*
- *She is fond of collecting rare carpets.*

4. adjective

If you have **fond** memories of someone or something, you remember them with pleasure .

- *I have very fond memories of living in our village.*

5. adjective

You use **fond** to describe hopes, wishes, or beliefs which you think are foolish because they seem unlikely to be fulfilled.

- *My fond hope is that we will be ready by Christmastime.*

entry

entries

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you gain **entry to** a particular place, you are able to go in.

- *Bill was among the first to gain entry to Buckingham Palace when it opened to the public recently.*
- *Non-residents were refused entry into the region without authority from their own district.*
- *The point of entry into Zambia would be the Chirundu border post.*
- *Entry to the museum is free.*
- *...entry fees to places of scientific interest.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to someone's arrival in a place as their **entry** , especially when you think that they are trying to be noticed and admired .

- *He made his triumphal entry into Mexico City.*

3. uncountable noun

Someone's **entry into** a particular society or group is their joining of it.

- *...the minimum age for entry into a Brownie troop.*
- *...people who cannot gain entry to the owner-occupied housing sector.*

4. countable noun

An **entry** in a diary, account book, computer file , or reference book is a short piece of writing in it.

- *Violet's diary entry for 20 April 1917 records Brigit admitting to the affair.*
- *Many entries relate to the two world wars.*

5. countable noun

An **entry** for a competition is a piece of work, for example a story or drawing , or the answers to a set of questions , which you complete in order to take part in the competition.

- *The closing date for entries is 31st December.*

6. singular noun

Journalists sometimes use **entry** to refer to the total number of people taking part in an event or competition. For example, if a competition has an **entry** of twenty people, twenty people take part in it.

- *Prize-money of nearly £90,000 has attracted a record entry of 14 horses from Britain and Ireland.*
- *Our competition has attracted a huge entry.*

7. uncountable noun

Entry in a competition is the act of taking part in it.

- *Entry to this competition is by invitation only.*
- *...an entry form.*

8. countable noun

The **entry to** a place is the way into it, for example a door or gate.

full

fuller fullest

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **full** , it contains as much of a substance or as many objects as it can.

- *Once the container is full, it stays shut until you turn it clockwise.*
- *...a full tank of petrol.*

2. adjective

If a place or thing **is full of** things or people, it contains a large number of them.

- *The case was full of clothes.*
- *The streets are still full of debris from two nights of rioting.*
- *...a useful recipe leaflet full of ideas for using the new cream.*

3. adjective

If someone or something **is full of** a particular feeling or quality, they have a lot of it.

- *I feel full of confidence and so open to possibilities.*
- *Mom's face was full of pain.*
- *...an exquisite mousse, incredibly rich and full of flavour.*

4. adjective

You say that a place or vehicle is **full** when there is no space left in it for any more people or things.

- *The main car park was full when I left about 10.45.*
- *They stay here a few hours before being sent to refugee camps, which are now almost full.*
- *The bus was completely full, and lots of people were standing.*

5. adjective

If your hands or arms are **full**, you are carrying or holding as much as you can carry.

- *Sylvia entered, her arms full of packages.*
- *People would go into the store and come out with their arms full.*

6. adjective

If you feel **full**, you have eaten or drunk so much that you do not want anything else.

- *It's healthy to eat when I'm hungry and to stop when I'm full.*

7. adjective

You use **full** before a noun to indicate that you are referring to all the details, things, or people that it can possibly include.

- *Full details will be sent to you once your application has been accepted.*
- *May I have your full name?*
- *Is full employment any longer achievable?*

8. adjective

Full is used to describe a sound, light, or physical force which is being produced with the greatest possible power or intensity. **Full** is also an adverb.

- *From his study came the sound of Mahler, playing at full volume.*
- *Officials say the operation will be carried out in full daylight.*

- *Then abruptly he revved the engine to full power.*

- *...a two-seater Lotus, parked with its headlamps full on.*

9. adjective

You use **full** to emphasize the completeness, intensity, or extent of something.

- *We should conserve oil and gas by making full use of other energy sources.*
- *Television cameras are carrying the full horror of this war into homes around the world.*
- *The lane leading to the farm was in full view of the house windows.*
- *By the time the tests took place, the athletes had had a full 17 hours' notice.*

10. adjective

A **full** statement or report contains a lot of information and detail.

- *He gave a full account of his meeting with the President.*
- *...the enormous detail in this very full document.*

11. adjective

If you say that someone has or leads a **full** life, you approve of the fact that they are always busy and do a lot of different things.

- *You will be successful in whatever you do and you will have a very full and interesting life.*

12. adverb

You use **full** to emphasize the force or directness with which someone or something is hit or looked at.

- *The burning liquid hit him full in the right eye.*
- *She kissed him full on the mouth.*
- *She looked him full in the face as she spoke.*

13. adjective

You use **full** to refer to something which gives you all the rights, status, or importance for a particular position or activity, rather than just some of them.

- *How did the meeting go, did you get your full membership?*
- *Only those who have had full licences for five years may hire cars.*

14. adjective

A **full** flavour is strong and rich.

- *Italian plum tomatoes have a full flavour, and are best for cooking.*

15. adjective

If you describe a part of someone's body as **full**, you mean that it is rounded and rather large.

- *The Juno Collection specialises in large sizes for ladies with a fuller figure.*
- *...his strong chin, his full lips, his appealing mustache.*

16. adjective

A **full** skirt or sleeve is wide and has been made from a lot of fabric.

- *My wedding dress has a very full skirt.*

17. adjective

When there is a **full** moon, the moon appears as a bright, complete circle.

18. in full

19. to know full well

20. to the full

21. be full of oneself

evolution

evolutions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Evolution is a process of gradual change that takes place over many generations, during which species of animals, plants, or insects slowly change some of their physical characteristics.

- *...the evolution of plants and animals.*
- *...the theory of evolution by natural selection.*
- *...human evolution.*

2. variable noun

Evolution is a process of gradual development in a particular situation or thing over a period of time.

- *...a crucial period in the evolution of modern physics.*
- *...an accurate account of his country's evolution.*
- *His long life comprised a series of evolutions.*

guilty

guiltier guiltiest

Explain

1. adjective

If you feel **guilty**, you feel unhappy because you think that you have done something wrong or have failed to do something which you should have done.

- *I feel so guilty, leaving all this to you.*
- *When she saw me she looked guilty.*

2. adjective

Guilty is used of an action or fact that you feel guilty about.

- *Many may be keeping it a guilty secret.*
- *I leave with a guilty sense of relief.*

3. adjective

If someone is **guilty of** a crime or offence, they have committed that crime or offence.

- *They were found guilty of murder.*
- *He pleaded guilty to causing actual bodily harm.*

4. adjective

If someone is **guilty of** doing something wrong, they have done that thing.

- *He claimed Mr Brooke had been guilty of a 'gross error of judgment'.*
- *They will consider whether or not he has been guilty of serious professional misconduct.*

expedition

expeditions

Explain

1. countable noun

An **expedition** is an organized journey that is made for a particular purpose such as exploration.

- *...Byrd's 1928 expedition to Antarctica.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to a group of people who are going on an expedition as an **expedition**.

- *Forty-three members of the expedition were killed.*

3. countable noun

An **expedition** is a short journey or trip that you make for pleasure.

- *Caroline joined them on the shopping expeditions.*
- *...a fishing expedition.*

honorable

Explain

inclusive

Explain

1. adjective

If a price is **inclusive**, it includes all the charges connected with the goods or services offered. If a price is **inclusive of** postage and packing, it includes the charge for this. **Inclusive** is also an adverb.

- *...all prices are inclusive of delivery.*
- *...an inclusive price of £32.90.*
- *...a special introductory offer of £5,995 fully inclusive.*

2. adjective

After stating the first and last item in a set of things, you can add **inclusive** to make it clear that the items stated are included in the set.

- *Training will commence on 5 October, running from Tuesday to Saturday inclusive.*
- *...£10 for senior citizens and children (5 to 16 inclusive).*

3. adjective

If you describe a group or organization as **inclusive**, you mean that it allows all kinds of people to belong to it, rather than just one kind of person.

- *The academy is far more inclusive now than it used to be.*

formation

formations

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The formation of something is the starting or creation of it.

- *...the formation of a new government.*

2. uncountable noun

The formation of an idea , habit , relationship , or character is the process of developing and establishing it.

- *My profession had an important influence in the formation of my character and temperament.*

3. countable noun

If people or things are **in formation** , they are arranged in a particular pattern as they move.

- *He was flying in formation with seven other jets.*
- *The dancers step into a formation which represents the human being.*

4. countable noun

A rock or cloud **formation** is rock or cloud of a particular shape or structure.

- *...a vast rock formation shaped like a pillar.*
- *Enormous cloud formations formed a purple mass.*

independent

independents

Explain

1. adjective

If one thing or person is **independent of** another, they are separate and not connected, so the first one is not affected or influenced by the second.

- *Your questions should be independent of each other.*

- *We're going independent from the university and setting up our own group.*

- *Two independent studies have been carried out.*

2. adjective

If someone is **independent** , they do not need help or money from anyone else.

- *Phil was now much more independent of his parents.*

- *She would like to be financially independent.*

- *There were benefits to being a single independent woman.*

3. adjective

Independent countries and states are not ruled by other countries but have their own government.

- *...a fully independent state.*

- *Papua New Guinea became independent from Australia in 1975.*

4. adjective

An **independent** organization or other body is one that controls its own finances and operations , rather than being controlled by someone else.

- *...an independent television station.*

- *...the Office of Government Ethics, an independent agency.*

- *...a fully independent, not-for-profit organisation.*

5. adjective

An **independent** school does not receive money from the government or local council , but from the fees paid by its students ' parents or from charities .

- *He taught chemistry at a leading independent school.*

6. adjective

An **independent** inquiry or opinion is one that involves people who are not connected with a particular situation, and should therefore be fair .

- *The government ordered an independent inquiry into the affair.*
- *An independent opinion poll published today shows growing discontent with the government.*

7. adjective

An **independent** politician is one who does not represent any political party. An **independent** is an independent politician.

- *There's been a late surge of support for an independent candidate.*
- *...the most powerful independent politician in France.*
- *...Mr Brown has not ruled out the possibility of standing as an independent.*

fortune

fortunes

Explain

1. countable noun

You can refer to a large sum of money as a **fortune** or a small **fortune** to emphasize how large it is.

- *We had to eat out all the time. It ended up costing a fortune.*
- *He made a small fortune in the London property boom.*

2. countable noun

Someone who has a **fortune** has a very large amount of money.

- *He made his fortune in car sales.*

- *He inherited a multi-million-dollar fortune from his inventor mother.*

3. uncountable noun

Fortune or good **fortune** is good luck. Ill **fortune** is bad luck.

- *Government ministers are starting to wonder how long their good fortune can last.*

4. plural noun

If you talk about someone's **fortunes** or the **fortunes** of something, you are talking about the extent to which they are doing well or being successful .

- *The electoral fortunes of the party may decline.*
- *She kept up with the fortunes of the Reeves family.*
- *The company had to do something to reverse its sliding fortunes.*

5. uncountable noun

If you talk about the way someone or something is treated by **fortune** , you are referring to the good or bad luck that they have.

- *He is certainly being smiled on by fortune.*

6. tell your fortune

indicative

Explain

1. adjective

If one thing is **indicative of** another, it suggests what the other thing is likely to be.

- *The result was indicative of a strong retail market.*
- *Often physical appearance is indicative of how a person feels.*

2. singular noun

In grammar , a clause that is in **the indicative**

, or in **the indicative mood** , has a subject followed by a verb group. Examples are 'I'm hungry ' and 'She was followed'. Clauses of this kind are typically used to make statements.

image

images

Explain

1. countable noun

If you have an **image** of something or someone, you have a picture or idea of them in your mind.

- *The image of art theft as a gentleman's crime is outdated.*
- *The words 'Cote d'Azur' conjure up images of sunny days in Mediterranean cafes.*

2. countable noun

The **image** of a person, group, or organization is the way that they appear to other people.

- *Wellington controlled his image as carefully as any modern politician.*
- *The tobacco industry has been trying to improve its image.*

3. countable noun

An **image** is a picture of someone or something.

- *...photographic images of young children.*
- *A computer in the machine creates an image on the screen.*

4. countable noun

An **image** is a poetic description of something.

- *The natural images in the poem are meant to be suggestive of realities beyond themselves.*

5. be the image of sb

innocent

innocents

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **innocent** , they did not commit a crime which they have been accused of.

- *He was sure that the man was innocent of any crime.*
- *The police knew from day one that I was innocent.*

2. adjective

If someone is **innocent** , they have no experience or knowledge of the more complex or unpleasant aspects of life . An **innocent** is someone who is innocent.

- *They seemed so young and innocent.*
- *He's curiously innocent about what this means to other people.*
- *Ian was a hopeless innocent where women were concerned.*

3. adjective

Innocent people are those who are not involved in a crime or conflict , but are injured or killed as a result of it.

- *All those wounded were innocent victims.*
- *The war was killing innocent women and children.*

4. adjective

An **innocent** question , remark , or comment is not intended to offend or upset people, even if it does so.

- *It was a perfectly innocent question.*

joy

joys

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Joy is a feeling of great happiness.

- *Salter shouted with joy.*
- *...tears of joy.*

2. countable noun

A **joy** is something or someone that makes you feel happy or gives you great pleasure.

- *One of the joys of being alone is the freedom to do exactly as you choose.*
- *It was a joy to see her looking so well.*

3. uncountable noun

If you get no **joy**, you do not have success or luck in achieving what you are trying to do.

- *They expect no joy from the vote itself.*
- *If you don't get any joy, get in touch with your local councillor.*

4. to jump for joy

jealous

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **jealous**, they feel angry or bitter because they think that another person is trying to take a lover or friend, or a possession, away from them.

- *She got insanely jealous and there was a terrible fight.*

2. adjective

If you are **jealous of** another person's possessions or qualities, you feel angry or bitter because you do not have them.

- *She was jealous of his wealth.*
- *You're jealous because the record company rejected your idea.*

luck

lucks lucking lucked

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Luck or **good luck** is success or good things that happen to you, that do not come from your own abilities or efforts.

- *I knew I needed a bit of luck to win.*
- *The Sri Lankans have been having no luck with the weather.*
- *The goal, when it came, owed more to good luck than good planning.*

2. uncountable noun

Bad luck is lack of success or bad things that happen to you, that have not been caused by yourself or other people.

- *I had a lot of bad luck during the first half of this season.*
- *Randall's illness was only bad luck.*

3. any luck

4. bad luck

5. bring someone luck

6. down on one's luck

7. the luck of the draw

8. good luck

9. be in luck

10. be just sb's luck

11. be out of luck

12. no such luck

13. to push your luck

14. luck was on sb's side

15. to try your luck

16. with any luck

marvelous

Explain

1. adjective
1. 2. 3.

mechanic

mechanics

Explain

1. countable noun

A **mechanic** is someone whose job is to repair and maintain machines and engines , especially car engines.

- *If you smell gas fumes or burning, take the car to your mechanic.*
- *An elevator mechanic can work the machinery directly by turning this lever.*

2. plural noun

The mechanics of a process, system, or activity are the way in which it works or the way in which it is done.

- *What are the mechanics of this new process?*
- *The mechanics of the job, however, have changed little since then.*

3. uncountable noun

Mechanics is the part of physics that deals with the natural forces that act on moving or stationary objects.

- *...the other great theory of 20th-century physics, quantum mechanics.*
- *He has not studied mechanics or engineering.*

okay

okays okaying okayed

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **okay** , you find it satisfactory or acceptable . **Okay** is also an adverb .

- *...a shooting range where it's OK to use weapons.*
- *Is it okay if I come by myself?*
- *I guess for a fashionable restaurant like this the prices are OK.*
- *We seemed to manage okay for the first year or so after David was born.*

2. adjective

If you say that someone is **okay** , you mean that they are safe and well .

- *Check that the baby's okay.*
- *'Don't worry about me,' I said. 'I'll be okay.'*

3. convention

You can say ' **Okay** ' to show that you agree to something.

- *'Just tell him Sir Kenneth would like to talk to him.'—'OK.'*
- *'Shall I give you a ring on Friday?'—'Yeah okay.'*

4. convention

You can say ' **Okay?** ' to check whether the person you are talking to understands what you have said and accepts it.

- *Add them together, divide by five, and you've got the average. Okay?*
- *We'll get together next week, OK?*

5. convention

You can use **okay** to indicate that you want to start talking about something else or doing something else.

- *OK. Now, let's talk some business.*

- *Tim jumped to his feet. 'Okay, let's go.'*

6. convention

You can use **okay** to stop someone arguing with you by showing that you accept the point they are making, though you do not necessarily regard it as very important .

- *Okay, there is a slight difference.*
- *Okay, so I'm forty-two.*

7. verb

If someone in authority **okays** something, they officially agree to it or allow it to happen . **Okay** is also a noun .

- *His doctor wouldn't OK the trip.*
- *We are all wondering why the government is suddenly okaying a brand new school on the island.*
- *He gave the okay to issue a new press release.*
- *We are ready to start flying to Britain as soon as we get the okay.*

monument

monuments

Explain

1. countable noun

A **monument** is a large structure, usually made of stone , which is built to remind people of an event in history or of a famous person.

2. countable noun

A **monument** is something such as a castle or bridge which was built a very long time ago and is regarded as an important part of a country's history.

- *...the ancient monuments of England*

3. countable noun

If you describe something as a **monument to** someone's qualities, you mean that it is a very good example of the results or effects of those qualities.

- *By his international achievements he leaves a fitting monument to his beliefs.*

proud

prouder proudest

Explain

1. adjective

If you feel **proud** , you feel pleased about something good that you possess or have done , or about something good that a person close to you has done.

- *I felt proud of his efforts.*
- *They are proud that she is doing well at school.*
- *I am proud to be a Canadian.*
- *Derek is now the proud father of a bouncing baby girl.*

2. adjective

Your **proudest** moments or achievements are the ones that you are most proud of.

- *This must have been one of the proudest moments of his busy and hard working life.*

3. adjective

Someone who is **proud** has respect for themselves and does not want to lose the respect that other people have for them.

- *He was too proud to ask his family for help and support.*
- *We are a proud people. We are not used to begging or taking things.*

4. adjective
Someone who is **proud** feels that they are better or more important than other people.

- *She was said to be proud and arrogant.*

5. adjective
If one object **stands proud of** another object that it is attached to or next to, it extends beyond it.

- *The handles stand proud of the doors of the car.*

6. do sb proud

motion

motions motioning motioned

Explain

1. uncountable noun
Motion is the activity or process of continually changing position or moving from one place to another.

- *...the laws governing light, sound, and motion.*
- *One group of muscles sets the next group in motion.*
- *The wind from the car's motion whipped her hair around her head.*

2. countable noun
A **motion** is an action, gesture, or movement.

- *Cover each part of the body with long sweeping strokes or circular motions.*
- *He made a neat chopping motion with his hand.*

3. countable noun
A **motion** is a formal proposal or statement in a meeting, debate, or trial , which is discussed and then voted on or decided on.

- *The conference is now debating the motion and will vote on it shortly.*
- *Opposition parties are likely to bring a no-confidence motion against the government.*
- *He is eligible now to file a motion for a new trial.*

4. verb
If you **motion** to someone, you move your hand or head as a way of telling them to do something or telling them where to go .

- *She motioned for the locked front doors to be opened.*
- *He stood aside and motioned Don to the door.*
- *I motioned him to join us.*
- *He motioned to her to go behind the screen.*

5. countable noun
Some people, especially doctors or nurses , use **motion** as a polite way of referring to a person's act of defecation or the faeces produced.

- *Try to make sure your bowel motions are regular and that you avoid any constipation.*

6. go through the motions
7. go through the motions
8. in motion
9. set the wheels in motion

ready

readier readiest readies readying readied

Explain

1. adjective
If someone is **ready** , they are properly prepared for something. If something is **ready** , it has been properly prepared and is now able to be used.

- *It took her a long time to get ready for church.*
 - *The parts are packed and ready for shipping.*
 - *Are you ready to board, Mr Daly?*
 - *In a few days time the sprouts will be ready to eat.*
 - *Tomorrow he would tell his pilot to get the aircraft ready.*
 - *It's eight-fifteen, dear, and your breakfast's ready.*
2. adjective
If you are **ready for** something or **ready to** do something, you have enough experience to do it or you are old enough and sensible enough to do it.
- *She says she's not ready for motherhood.*
 - *You'll have no trouble getting him into a nursery when you feel he's ready to go.*
3. adjective
If you are **ready to** do something, you are willing to do it.
- *They were ready to die for their beliefs.*
 - *She was always ready to give interviews.*
4. adjective
If you are **ready for** something, you need it or want it.
- *I don't know about you, but I'm ready for bed.*
 - *After five days in the heat of Bangkok, we were ready for the beach.*
5. adjective
To be **ready to** do something means to be about to do it or likely to do it.
- *She looked ready to cry.*
 - *Just as we were ready to sit down to dinner, a little boy came running in.*
- *He says it's like a volcano ready to erupt.*
6. adjective
You use **ready** to describe things that are able to be used very quickly and easily .
- *I didn't have a ready answer for this dilemma.*
 - *'But not quite yet,' he says quickly, with that ready smile of his.*
 - *...a ready supply of well-trained and well-motivated workers.*
7. adjective
Ready money is in the form of notes and coins rather than cheques or credit cards , and so it can be used immediately . Ready money is sometimes referred to as **the readies** .
- *I'm afraid I don't have enough ready cash.*
 - *She was a bit short of the readies.*
8. verb
When you **ready** something, you prepare it for a particular purpose .
- *John's soldiers were readying themselves for the final assault.*
 - *Cameramen readied tripods.*
9. combining form
Ready combines with past participles to indicate that something has already been done , and that therefore you do not have to do it yourself.
- *You can buy ready-printed forms for wills at stationery shops.*
 - *If you buy the fish ready filleted, make sure the flesh is firm and springy.*
10. at the ready
11. ready and waiting
12. ready when you are
- movement**
- movements**

Explain

1. countable noun

A **movement** is a group of people who share the same beliefs , ideas , or aims .

- *It's part of a broader Hindu nationalist movement that's gaining strength throughout the country.*
- *...the women's movement.*

2. variable noun

Movement involves changing position or going from one place to another.

- *They actually monitor the movement of the fish going up river.*
- *...the plan for free movement of people, goods, capital and services across internal Community borders.*
- *There was movement behind the window in the back door.*
- *A man was directing the movements of a large removal van.*
- *Her hand movements are becoming more animated.*

3. variable noun

A **movement** is a planned change in position that an army makes during a battle or military exercise .

- *There are reports of fresh troop movements across the border.*

4. variable noun

Movement is a gradual development or change of an attitude , opinion , or policy .

- *...the movement towards democracy in Latin America.*
- *The talks went well and participants believed movement forward was possible.*

5. plural noun

Your **movements** are everything which you do or plan to do during a period of time.

- *I want a full account of your movements the night Mr Gower was killed.*

6. countable noun

A **movement** of a piece of classical music is one of its main sections.

- *...the first movement of Beethoven's 7th symphony.*

responsible

Explain

1. adjective

If someone or something is **responsible for** a particular event or situation , they are the cause of it or they can be blamed for it.

- *He still felt responsible for her death.*
- *I want you to do everything you can to find out who's responsible.*

2. adjective

If you are **responsible for** something, it is your job or duty to deal with it and make decisions relating to it.

- *...the minister responsible for the environment.*
- *...the man responsible for finding the volunteers.*

3. adjective

If you are **responsible to** a person or group, they have authority over you and you have to report to them about what you do.

- *I'm responsible to my board of directors.*
- *The government will be responsible to the President alone.*

4. adjective

Responsible people behave properly and sensibly, without needing to be supervised .

- *He's a very responsible sort of person.*

- *He feels that the media should be more responsible in what they report.*

5. adjective

Responsible jobs involve making important decisions or carrying out important tasks .

- *I work in a government office. It's a responsible position, I suppose, but not very exciting.*
- *They have been demoted to less responsible jobs.*

observation

observations

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Observation is the action or process of carefully watching someone or something.

- *...careful observation of the movement of the planets.*
- *In hospital she'll be under observation all the time.*

2. countable noun

An **observation** is something that you have learned by seeing or watching something and thinking about it.

- *This book contains observations about the causes of addictions.*

3. countable noun

If a person makes an **observation** , they make a comment about something or someone, usually as a result of watching how they behave .

- *'You're an obstinate man,' she said. 'Is that a criticism,' I said, 'or just an observation?'*

4. uncountable noun

Observation is the ability to pay a lot of attention to things and to notice more about them than most people do.

- *She has good powers of observation.*

secure

secures securing secured

Explain

1. verb

If you **secure** something that you want or need , you obtain it, often after a lot of effort .

- *Federal leaders continued their efforts to secure a ceasefire.*
- *Graham's achievements helped secure him the job.*

2. verb

If you **secure** a place, you make it safe from harm or attack.

- *Staff withdrew from the main part of the prison but secured the perimeter.*
- *The shed was secured by a hasp and staple fastener.*

3. adjective

A **secure** place is tightly locked or well protected , so that people cannot enter it or leave it.

- *We shall make sure our home is as secure as possible from now on.*

4. verb

If you **secure** an object , you fasten it firmly to another object.

- *He helped her close the cases up, and then he secured the canvas straps.*
- *The frames are secured by horizontal rails to the back wall.*

5. adjective

If an object is **secure** , it is fixed firmly in position.

- *Check joints are secure and the wood is sound.*
- *Shelves are only as secure as their fixings.*

6. adjective

If you describe something such as a job as **secure** , it is certain not to change or end .

- *...trade union demands for secure wages and employment.*
- *...the failure of financial institutions once thought to be secure.*

7. adjective

A **secure** base or foundation is strong and reliable .

- *He was determined to give his family a secure and solid base.*

8. adjective

If you feel **secure** , you feel safe and happy and are not worried about life .

- *She felt secure and protected when she was with him.*
- *The government must feel secure before it makes the concessions needed for peace.*

9. verb

If a loan **is secured** , the person who lends the money may take property such as a house from the person who borrows the money if they fail to repay it.

- *The loan is secured against your home.*
- *His main task is to raise enough finance to repay secured loans.*

Explain

1. countable noun

An **operation** is a highly organized activity that involves many people doing different things.

- *The rescue operation began on Friday afternoon.*
- *The soldiers were engaged in a military operation close to the border.*
- *...a police operation against organised crime.*

2. countable noun

A business or company can be referred to as an **operation** .

- *Thorn's electronics operation employs around 5,000 people.*
- *The two parent groups now run their business as a single combined operation.*

3. countable noun

When a patient has an **operation** , a surgeon cuts open their body in order to remove, replace , or repair a diseased or damaged part.

- *Charles was at the clinic recovering from an operation on his arm.*

4. uncountable noun

If a system is **in operation** , it is being used.

- *The scheme is expected to be in operation by the end of March.*
- *...the free banking system that has been in operation since the early eighties.*

5. uncountable noun

If a machine or device is **in operation** , it is working .

- *There are three ski lifts in operation.*

6. come into operation/put sth into operation

operation

operations

separate

separates separating separated

Explain

1. adjective

If one thing is **separate from** another, there is a barrier, space , or division between them, so that they are clearly two things.

- *Each villa has a separate sitting-room.*
- *They are now making plans to form their own separate party.*
- *Business bank accounts were kept separate from personal ones.*

2. adjective

If you refer to **separate** things, you mean several different things, rather than just one thing.

- *Use separate chopping boards for raw meats, cooked meats, vegetables and salads.*
- *Men and women have separate exercise rooms.*
- *The authorities say six civilians have been killed in two separate attacks.*

3. verb

If you **separate** people or things that are together, or if they **separate** , they move apart.

- *Police moved in to separate the two groups.*
- *The pans were held in both hands and swirled around to separate gold particles from the dirt.*
- *The front end of the car separated from the rest of the vehicle.*
- *They separated. Stephen returned to the square.*
- *They're separated from the adult inmates.*

4. verb

If you **separate** people or things that have been connected , or if one **separates from** another, the connection between them is ended .

- *They want to separate teaching from research.*

- *It's very possible that we may see a movement to separate the two parts of the country.*
- *...Catalan parties vowing to separate from Spain.*

5. verb

If a couple who are married or living together **separate** , they decide to live apart.

- *Her parents separated when she was very young.*
- *Since I separated from my husband I have gone a long way.*

6. verb

An object , obstacle , distance , or period of time which **separates** two people, groups, or things exists between them.

- *...the white-railed fence that separated the yard from the paddock.*
- *They had undoubtedly made progress in the six years that separated the two periods.*
- *Rural communities are widely separated and often small.*
- *But a group of six women and 23 children got separated from the others.*

7. verb

If you **separate** one idea or fact **from** another, you clearly see or show the difference between them. **Separate out** means the same as separate .

- *It is difficult to separate legend from truth.*
- *...learning how to separate real problems from imaginary illnesses.*
- *It is difficult to separate the two aims.*
- *How can one ever separate out the act from the attitudes that surround it?*

8. verb

A quality or factor that **separates** one thing **from** another is the reason why the two things are different from each other.

- *The single most important factor that separates ordinary photographs from good photographs is the lighting.*
- *The question of what separates man from animals has fascinated scientists for centuries.*

9. verb

If a particular number of points **separate** two teams or competitors , one of them is winning or has won by that number of points.

- *In the end only three points separated the two teams.*

10. verb

If you **separate** a group of people or things **into** smaller elements , or if a group **separates** , it is divided into smaller elements. **Separate out** means the same as separate .

- *The police wanted to separate them into smaller groups.*
- *Wallerstein's work can be separated into three main component themes.*
- *Let's separate into smaller groups.*
- *So all the colours that make up white light are sent in different directions and they separate.*
- *If prepared many hours ahead, the mixture may separate out.*

11. plural noun

Separates are clothes such as skirts , trousers , and shirts which cover just the top half or the bottom half of your body.

12. go their separate ways

playground

playgrounds

Explain

1. countable noun

A **playground** is a piece of land, at school or in a public area, where children can play.

2. countable noun

If you describe a place as a **playground** for a certain group of people, you mean that those people like to enjoy themselves there or go on holiday there.

- *...St Tropez, playground of the rich and famous.*

skilled

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **skilled** has the knowledge and ability to do something well .

- *Not all doctors are skilled in helping their patients make choices.*
- *...a network of amateur but highly skilled observers of wildlife.*

2. adjective

Skilled work can only be done by people who have had some training.

- *New industries demanded skilled labour not available locally.*
- *...skilled workers, such as plumbers and electricians.*

refusal

refusals

Explain

1. variable noun

Someone's **refusal to** do something is the fact of them showing or saying that they will not do it, allow it, or accept it.

- ...her refusal to accept change.
- His letter in response to her request had contained a firm refusal.
- ...the Council's refusal of planning permission for a major shopping centre.
- We would appreciate confirmation of your refusal of our invitation to take part.

2. first refusal

sophomore

sophomores

Explain

1. countable noun

A **sophomore** is a student in the second year of college or high school.

ring

rings ringing rang rung

Explain

1. verb

When you **ring** someone, you phone them. **Ring up** means the same as ring1 .

- He rang me at my mother's.
- If you'd like more information, ring the Hotline on 414 3929.
- I would ring when I got back to the hotel.
- She has rung home just once.
- Could someone ring for a taxi?
- You can ring us up anytime.
- John rang up and invited himself over for dinner.
- A few months ago I rang up about some housing problems.

- Nobody rings up a doctor in the middle of the night for no reason.

2. verb

When a phone **rings** , it makes a sound to let you know that someone is phoning you. **Ring** is also a noun.

- As soon as he got home, the phone rang.
- The phone never stopped ringing.
- After at least eight rings, an ancient-sounding maid answered the phone.

3. verb

When you **ring** a bell or when a bell **rings** , it makes a sound. **Ring** is also a noun.

- He heard the school bell ring.
- The door was opened before she could ring the bell.
- There was a ring at the bell.

4. verb

If you **ring for** something, you ring a bell to call someone to bring it to you. If you **ring** for someone, you ring a bell so that they will come to you.

- Shall I ring for a fresh pot of tea?
- He rang for the guard to let him out.

5. verb

If you say that a place **is ringing with** sound, usually pleasant sound, you mean that the place is completely filled with that sound.

- The whole place was ringing with music.

6. singular noun

You can use **ring** to describe a quality that something such as a statement, discussion , or argument seems to have. For example, if an argument **has a familiar ring** , it seems familiar.

- His proud boast of leading 'the party of low taxation' has a hollow ring.

7. to ring the changes

8. ring in one's ears/ring in one's head

9. give sb a ring

10. to ring true

sufficient

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **sufficient for** a particular purpose, there is enough of it for the purpose.

- *One metre of fabric is sufficient to cover the exterior of an 18-in-diameter hatbox.*
- *Lighting levels should be sufficient for photography without flash.*
- *There was not sufficient evidence to secure a conviction.*

2. adjective

If something is a **sufficient** cause or condition for something to happen, it can happen.

- *Discipline is a necessary, but certainly not a sufficient condition for learning to take place.*

ruby

rubies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **ruby** is a dark red jewel.

- *...a ruby and diamond ring.*

2. colour

Something that is **ruby** is dark red in colour.

- *...a glass of ruby-red Cabernet Sauvignon.*

suitable

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **suitable for** a particular purpose or occasion is right or acceptable for it.

- *Employers usually decide within five minutes whether someone is suitable for the job.*
- *She had no other dress suitable for the occasion.*
- *The authority must make suitable accommodation available to the family.*

shape

shapes shaping shaped

Explain

1. countable noun

The **shape of** an object, a person, or an area is the appearance of their outside edges or surfaces, for example whether they are round, square, curved, or fat.

- *Each mirror is made to order and can be designed to almost any shape or size.*
- *...little pens in the shape of baseball bats.*
- *The glass bottle is the shape of a woman's torso.*
- *...sofas and chairs of contrasting shapes and colours.*
- *The buds are conical or pyramidal in shape.*
- *These bras should be handwashed to help them keep their shape.*
- *Walking is extremely beneficial to your body shape.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to something that you can see as a **shape** if you cannot see it clearly, or if its

outline is the clearest or most striking aspect of it.

- *The great grey shape of a tank rolled out of the village.*
- *Lying in bed we often see dark shapes of herons silhouetted against the moon.*

3. countable noun

A **shape** is a space enclosed by an outline, for example a circle , a square, or a triangle .

- *...if you imagine a sort of a kidney shape.*
- *He suggested that the shapes represented a map of Britain and Ireland.*

4. singular noun

The **shape of** something that is planned or organized is its structure and character .

- *The last two weeks have seen a lot of talk about the future shape of Europe.*
- *Ultimately, we can change the shape of people's lives.*

5. verb

Someone or something that **shapes** a situation or an activity has a very great influence on the way it develops .

- *Their views provide an insight into how environmental issues are shaping the future of business.*
- *Like it or not, our families shape our lives and make us what we are.*

6. verb

If you **shape** an object, you give it a particular shape, using your hands or a tool .

- *Cut the dough in half and shape each half into a loaf.*
- *...machinery for shaping the plutonium core of nuclear weapons.*

7. the shape of things to come

8. in any shape or form

9. in good shape

10. in the shape of

11. to lick into shape

12. out of shape

13. out of shape

14. comes in all shapes and sizes

15. take shape

suspicious

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **suspicious of** someone or something, you do not trust them, and are careful when dealing with them.

- *He was rightly suspicious of meeting me until I reassured him I was not writing about him.*
- *He has his father's suspicious nature.*

2. adjective

If you are **suspicious of** someone or something, you believe that they are probably involved in a crime or some dishonest activity.

- *Two officers on patrol became suspicious of two men in a car.*
- *A woman kept prisoner in a basement was rescued after suspicious neighbours tipped off police.*

3. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **suspicious** , you mean that there is some aspect of them which makes you think that they are involved in a crime or a dishonest activity.

- *He reported that two suspicious-looking characters had approached Callendar.*
- *Nottingham police last night found what they described as a suspicious package.*

situation

situations

Explain

1. countable noun

You use **situation** to refer generally to what is happening in a particular place at a particular time, or to refer to what is happening to you.

- *Army officers said the situation was under control.*
- *And now for a look at the travel situation in the rest of the country.*
- *She's in a hopeless situation.*
- *If you want to improve your situation you must adopt a positive mental attitude.*

2. countable noun

The **situation** of a building or town is the kind of surroundings that it has.

- *The garden is in a beautiful situation.*

3. situations vacant

2. adjective

If a particular action or feature is **typical of** someone or something, it shows their usual qualities or characteristics.

- *This reluctance to move towards a democratic state is typical of totalitarian regimes.*
- *This is not typical of Chinese, but is a feature of the Thai language.*
- *With typical energy he found new journalistic outlets.*

3. adjective

If you say that something is **typical of** a person, situation, or thing, you are criticizing them or complaining about them and saying that they are just as bad or disappointing as you expected them to be.

- *She threw her hands into the air. 'That is just typical of you, isn't it?'*
- *'Typical!' Hattie slammed down the receiver. 'Absolutely typical!'*

typical

Explain

1. adjective

You use **typical** to describe someone or something that shows the most usual characteristics of a particular type of person or thing, and is therefore a good example of that type.

- *Cheney is everyone's image of a typical cop: a big white guy, six foot, 220 pounds.*
- *Carole goes in for such typical schoolgirl pastimes as horse-riding and watching old films.*
- *Horrigan was typical of the new-generation executive Sticht had brought into the company.*

skill

skills

Explain

1. countable noun

A **skill** is a type of work or activity which requires special training and knowledge.

- *Most of us will know someone who is always learning new skills, or studying new fields.*

2. uncountable noun

Skill is the knowledge and ability that enables you to do something well.

- *The cut of a diamond depends on the skill of its craftsman.*

technician

technicians

Explain

1. countable noun

A **technician** is someone whose job involves skilled practical work with scientific equipment , for example in a laboratory.

- *...a laboratory technician.*

2. countable noun

A **technician** is someone who is very good at the detailed technical aspects of an activity.

- *...a versatile, veteran player, a superb technician.*

predominant

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **predominant** , it is more important or noticeable than anything else in a set of people or things.

- *Amanda's predominant emotion was that of confusion.*

technique

techniques

Explain

1. countable noun

A **technique** is a particular method of doing an activity , usually a method that involves practical skills.

- *...tests performed using a new technique.*

2. uncountable noun

Technique is skill and ability in an artistic , sporting , or other practical activity that you develop through training and practice .

- *He went off to the Amsterdam Academy to improve his technique.*

skillful

Explain

viewpoint

viewpoints

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **viewpoint** is the way that they think about things in general , or the way they think about a particular thing.

- *The novel is shown from the girl's viewpoint.*
- *To include as many viewpoints as possible, the editor reserves the right to shorten letters.*

2. countable noun

A **viewpoint** is a place from which you can get a good view of something.

- *You have to know where to stand for a good viewpoint.*

static

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **static** does not move or change.

- *The number of young people obtaining qualifications has remained static or decreased.*

- *Both your pictures are of static subjects.*

2. uncountable noun

Static or **static electricity** is electricity which can be caused by things rubbing against each other and which collects on things such as your body or metal objects.

3. uncountable noun

If there is **static** on the radio or television, you hear a series of loud noises which spoils the sound.

wagon

wagons

Explain

1. countable noun

A **wagon** is a strong vehicle with four wheels, usually pulled by horses or oxen and used for carrying heavy loads.

2. countable noun

A **wagon** is a large container on wheels which is pulled by a train .

3. on the wagon

adjacent

Explain

1. adjective

If one thing is **adjacent to** another, the two things are next to each other.

- *He sat in an adjacent room and waited.*
- *The schools were adjacent but there were separate doors.*
- *...offices adjacent to the museum.*

ballet

ballets

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Ballet is a type of very skilled and artistic dancing with carefully planned movements.

- *I trained as a ballet dancer.*
- *She is also keen on the ballet.*

2. countable noun

A **ballet** is an artistic work that is performed by ballet dancers.

- *The performance will include the premiere of three new ballets.*

aerial

aerials

Explain

1. adjective

You talk about **aerial** attacks and **aerial** photographs to indicate that people or things on the ground are attacked or photographed by people in aeroplanes .

- *Weeks of aerial bombardment had destroyed factories and highways.*
- *He planned to take aerial photographs of the Baru volcano.*
- *The film begins with an aerial view of the Great Basin of Nevada.*

2. adjective

You can use **aerial** to describe things that exist or happen above the ground or in the air.

- *The seagulls swirled in aerial combat over the barges.*

3. countable noun

An **aerial** is a device or a piece of wire that receives television or radio signals and is usually attached to a radio, television, car , or building.

- *...a saucer-shaped satellite television aerial.*
- *...the radio aerials of taxis and cars.*

bloom

blooms blooming bloomed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bloom** is the flower on a plant.

- *...the sweet fragrance of the white blooms.*
- *Harry carefully picked the bloom.*

2. in bloom

3. verb

When a plant or tree **blooms** , it produces flowers. When a flower **blooms** , it opens.

- *This plant blooms between May and June.*

4. verb

If someone or something **blooms** , they develop good, attractive , or successful qualities.

- *Not many economies bloomed that year, least of all gold exporters like Australia.*
- *She bloomed into an utterly beautiful creature.*

5. uncountable noun

If something such as someone's skin has a **bloom** , it has a fresh and healthy appearance.

- *The skin loses its youthful bloom.*

any

Explain

1. determiner

You use **any** in statements with negative meaning to indicate that no thing or person of a particular type exists , is present , or is involved in a situation . **Any** is also a quantifier . **Any** is also a pronoun.

- *I never make any big decisions.*
- *I'm not making any promises.*

- *We are doing this all without any support from the hospital.*
- *Earlier reports were unable to confirm that there were any survivors.*
- *It is too early to say what effect, if any, there will be on the workforce.*
- *You don't know any of my friends.*
- *There was nothing you could do, nothing any of us could do.*
- *The children needed new school clothes and Kim couldn't afford any.*

2. determiner

You use **any** in questions and conditional clauses to ask whether there is some of a particular thing or some of a particular group of people, or to suggest that there might be. **Any** is also a quantifier. **Any** is also a pronoun.

- *Do you speak any foreign languages?*
- *Have you got any cheese I can have with this bread?*
- *Introduce foods one at a time and notice if you feel uncomfortable with any of them.*
- *Have you ever used a homeopathic remedy for any of the following reasons?*
- *If any bright thoughts occur to you pass them straight to me. Have you got any?*
- *I'll keep an eye out for books and if I find any, I'll send them to you.*

3. determiner

You use **any** in positive statements when you are referring to someone or something of a particular kind that might exist, occur, or be involved in a situation, when their exact identity or nature is not important . **Any** is also a quantifier. **Any** is also a pronoun.

- *Any actor will tell you that it is easier to perform than to be themselves.*
- *I'm prepared to take any advice.*
- *I would overcome any weakness, any despair, any fear.*

- *Nealy disappeared two days ago, several miles away from any of the fighting.*
- *It had been the biggest mistake any of them could remember.*
- *Clean the mussels and discard any that do not close.*
- *...mangoes, bananas, pineapples, pears, and grapes as delicious as any you have ever eaten.*

4. adverb

You can also use **any** to emphasize a comparative adjective or adverb in a negative statement.

- *I can't see things getting any easier for graduates.*
- *Anne's not getting any younger.*

5. not just any

6. any more

blossom

blossoms blossoming blossomed

Explain

1. variable noun

Blossom is the flowers that appear on a tree before the fruit.

- *The cherry blossom came out early in Washington this year.*
- *...the blossoms of plants, shrubs and trees.*

2. verb

If someone or something **blossoms** , they develop good, attractive , or successful qualities.

- *Why do some people take longer than others to blossom?*
- *What began as a local festival has blossomed into an international event.*
- *The pair have tried to keep their blossoming relationship under wraps.*

3. verb

When a tree **blossoms** , it produces blossom.

- *Rain begins to fall and peach trees blossom.*

available

Explain

1. adjective

If something you want or need is **available** , you can find it or obtain it.

- *The amount of money available to buy books has fallen by 17*
- *There are three small boats available for hire.*
- *According to the best available information, the facts are these.*

2. adjective

Someone who is **available** is not busy and is therefore free to talk to you or to do a particular task .

- *Mr Leach is on holiday and was not available for comment.*

bud

buds budding budded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bud** is a small pointed lump that appears on a tree or plant and develops into a leaf or flower.

- *Rosanna's favourite time is early summer, just before the buds open.*

2. verb

When a tree or plant **is budding** , buds are appearing on it or are beginning to open.

- *The leaves were budding on the trees below.*

3. vocative noun
Some men use **bud** as a way of addressing other men.
 - *You heard what the boss said, bud.*
4. in/into bud
5. to nip something in the bud

beneficial

Explain

1. adjective
Something that is **beneficial** helps people or improves their lives.
 - *...vitamins which are beneficial to our health.*
 - *Using computers has a beneficial effect on children's learning.*

cemetery

cemeteries

Explain

1. countable noun
A **cemetery** is a place where dead people's bodies or their ashes are buried.

benign

Explain

1. adjective
You use **benign** to describe someone who is kind, gentle, and harmless.
 - *They are normally a more benign audience.*
 - *Critics of the scheme take a less benign view.*

2. adjective
A **benign** substance or process does not have any harmful effects.
 - *We're taking relatively benign medicines and we're turning them into poisons.*
3. adjective
A **benign** tumour will not cause death or serious harm.
 - *It wasn't cancer, only a benign tumour.*
4. adjective
Benign conditions are pleasant or make it easy for something to happen.
 - *They enjoyed an especially benign climate.*
 - *This plunge came in a time of relatively benign economic conditions.*
5. benign neglect

contribution

contributions

Explain

1. countable noun
If you make a **contribution to** something, you do something to help make it successful or to produce it.
 - *The study made important contributions to the field of corporate economics.*
 - *He was awarded a prize for his contribution to world peace.*
2. countable noun
A **contribution** is a sum of money that you give in order to help pay for something.
 - *...charitable contributions of a half million dollars or more.*
3. countable noun
A **contribution to** a magazine, newspaper, or book is something that you write to be published in it.

bitter

bitterest bitters

Explain

1. adjective

In a **bitter** argument or conflict , people argue very angrily or fight very fiercely.

- ...the scene of bitter fighting during the Second World War.
- ...a bitter attack on the Government's failure to support manufacturing.
- On the eve of the poll, campaigning was bitter.

2. adjective

If someone is **bitter** after a disappointing experience or after being treated unfairly, they continue to feel angry about it.

- She is said to be very bitter about the way she was sacked.
- His long life was marked by bitter personal and political memories.

3. adjective

A **bitter** experience makes you feel very disappointed. You can also use **bitter** to emphasize feelings of disappointment .

- I think the decision was a bitter blow from which he never quite recovered.
- A great deal of bitter experience had taught him how to lose gracefully.
- The statement was greeted with bitter disappointment by many of the other delegates.

4. adjective

Bitter weather , or a **bitter** wind , is extremely cold.

- Outside, a bitter east wind was accompanied by flurries of snow.
- ...after spending a night in the bitter cold.

5. adjective

A **bitter** taste is sharp , not sweet , and often slightly unpleasant.

- The leaves taste rather bitter.
- ...as the wine ages, losing its bitter harshness, and becoming softer and smoother.

6. variable noun

Bitter is a kind of beer that is light brown in colour .

- ...a pint of bitter.

7. to the bitter end

deficit

deficits

Explain

1. countable noun

A **deficit** is the amount by which something is less than what is required or expected, especially the amount by which the total money received is less than the total money spent .

- They're ready to cut the federal budget deficit for the next fiscal year.
- ...a deficit of 3.275 billion francs.

calm

calmer calmest calms calming calmed

Explain

1. adjective

A **calm** person does not show or feel any worry , anger , or excitement . **Calm** is also a noun .

- She is usually a calm and diplomatic woman.
- Try to keep calm and just tell me what happened.

- *She sighed, then continued in a soft, calm voice.*
 - *Diane felt very calm and unafraid as she saw him off the next morning.*
 - *He felt a sudden sense of calm, of contentment.*
2. verb
If you **calm** someone, you do something to make them feel less angry , worried, or excited.
- *The ruling party's veterans know how to calm their critics.*
 - *She was breathing quickly and tried to calm herself.*
 - *Some people say smoking calms your nerves.*
3. uncountable noun
Calm is used to refer to a quiet , still, or peaceful atmosphere in a place.
- *The house projects an atmosphere of calm and order.*
 - *...the rural calm of Grand Rapids, Michigan.*
4. adjective
If someone says that a place is **calm** , they mean that it is free from fighting or public disorder , when trouble has recently occurred there or had been expected . **Calm** is also a noun.
- *The city of Sarajevo appears relatively calm today.*
 - *Community and church leaders have appealed for calm and no retaliation.*
 - *An uneasy calm is reported to be prevailing in the area.*
5. verb
To **calm** a situation means to reduce the amount of trouble, violence , or panic there is.
- *Mr Beazer tried to calm the protests.*
6. adjective
If the sea or a lake is **calm** , the water is not moving very much and there are no big waves .
- *...as we slid into the calm waters of Cowes Harbour.*
7. adjective
Calm weather is pleasant weather with little or no wind.
- *Tuesday was a fine, clear and calm day.*
8. countable noun
In sailing , a flat **calm** or a dead **calm** is a condition of the sea or the weather in which there is very little wind or movement of the water.
- *...during flat calms when the water is crystal clear.*
 - *We had the whole gamut of wind from a dead calm to a force 10 gale.*
9. verb
When the sea **calms** , it becomes still because the wind stops blowing strongly. When the wind **calms** , it stops blowing strongly.
- *Dawn came, the sea calmed but the cold was as bitter as ever.*
10. verb
To **calm** a pain or an itch means to reduce it or get rid of it.
- *...more traditional methods of soothing the skin and calming the itch.*
11. the calm before the storm
- discount**
discounts discounting discounted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **discount** is a reduction in the usual price of something.

- *They are often available at a discount.*
- *Full-time staff get a 20 per cent discount.*
- *...a discount store specializing in household goods.*
- *...discontinued ranges of tiles at discount prices.*

2. verb

If a shop or company **discounts** an amount or percentage from something that they are selling, they take the amount or percentage off the usual price.

- *This has forced airlines to discount fares heavily in order to spur demand.*
- *Tour prices are being discounted as much as 33*

3. verb

If you **discount** an idea, fact, or theory, you consider that it is not true, not important, or not relevant.

- *However, traders tended to discount the rumor.*
- *This theory has now been discounted.*

chronic

Explain

1. adjective

A **chronic** illness or disability lasts for a very long time. Compare acute.

- *...chronic back pain.*

2. adjective

You can describe someone's bad habits or behaviour as **chronic** when they have behaved like that for a long time and do not seem to be able to stop themselves.

- *Anyone who does not believe that smoking is an addiction has never been a chronic smoker.*
- *...a chronic worrier.*

3. adjective

A **chronic** situation or problem is very severe and unpleasant.

- *One cause of the artist's suicide seems to have been chronic poverty.*
- *There is a chronic shortage of patrol cars in this police district.*

equator

Explain

1. singular noun

The **equator** is an imaginary line around the middle of the Earth at an equal distance from the North Pole and the South Pole.

comparable

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **comparable** to something else is roughly similar, for example in amount or importance.

- *...paying the same wages to men and women for work of comparable value.*
- *Farmers were meant to get an income comparable to that of townspeople.*
- *The risk it poses is comparable with smoking just one cigarette every year.*

2. adjective

If two or more things are **comparable**, they are of the same kind or are in the same situation, and so they can reasonably be compared.

- *In other comparable countries real wages increased much more rapidly.*

- *By contrast, the comparable figure for the Netherlands is 16 per cent.*
- *Published rates are not always directly comparable.*

expenditure

expenditures

Explain

1. variable noun

Expenditure is the spending of money on something, or the money that is spent on something.

- *Policies of tax reduction must lead to reduced public expenditure.*
- *They should cut their expenditure on defence.*
- *An expenditure for clothing will qualify as a trade or business expense.*

2. uncountable noun

Expenditure of something such as time or energy is the using of that thing for a particular purpose.

- *The financial rewards justified the expenditure of effort.*

contrary

Explain

1. adjective

Ideas, attitudes, or reactions that are **contrary to** each other are completely different from each other.

- *This view is contrary to the aims of critical social research for a number of reasons.*
- *Several of those present, including Weinberger, had contrary information.*

2. contrary to

3. on the contrary

4. on the contrary

5. quite the contrary

6. to the contrary

expense

expenses

Explain

1. variable noun

Expense is the money that something costs you or that you need to spend in order to do something.

- *Most of the marble had been imported at vast expense from Italy.*
- *Taking holidays with your dog can often involve extra expense.*
- *It was not a fortune but would help to cover household expenses.*

2. plural noun

Expenses are amounts of money that you spend while doing something in the course of your work, which will be paid back to you afterwards

- *As a politician, her salary and expenses were paid by the taxpayer.*
- *Can you claim this back on expenses?*

3. at someone's expense

4. at someone's expense

5. at the expense of

6. at the expense of

7. go to ... expense

convenient

Explain

1. adjective

If a way of doing something is **convenient** , it is easy, or very useful or suitable for a particular purpose.

- *...a flexible and convenient way of paying for business expenses.*
- *The family thought it was more convenient to eat in the kitchen.*

2. adjective

If you describe a place as **convenient** , you are pleased because it is near to where you are, or because you can reach another place from there quickly and easily.

- *The town is well placed for easy access to London and convenient for Heathrow Airport.*
- *Martin drove along until he found a convenient parking place.*

3. adjective

A **convenient** time to do something, for example to meet someone, is a time when you are free to do it or would like to do it.

- *She will try to arrange a mutually convenient time and place for an interview.*
- *Would this evening be convenient for you?*

4. adjective

If you describe someone's attitudes or actions as **convenient** , you think they are only adopting those attitudes or performing those actions in order to avoid something difficult or unpleasant .

- *We cannot make this minority a convenient excuse to turn our backs.*
- *...a convenient scapegoat.*
- *It does seem a bit convenient, doesn't it?*

flower

flowers flowering flowered

Explain

1. countable noun

A **flower** is the part of a plant which is often brightly coloured, grows at the end of a stem , and only survives for a short time.

- *Each individual flower is tiny.*
- *...large, purplish-blue flowers.*

2. countable noun

A **flower** is a stem of a plant that has one or more flowers on it and has been picked , usually with others, for example to give as a present or to put in a vase .

- *...a bunch of flowers sent by a new admirer.*

3. countable noun

Flowers are small plants that are grown for their flowers as opposed to trees, shrubs , and vegetables .

- *...a lawned area surrounded by plants and flowers.*
- *The flower garden will be ablaze with colour every day.*

4. verb

When a plant or tree **flowers** , its flowers appear and open.

- *Several of these rhododendrons will flower this year for the first time.*

5. verb

When something **flowers** , for example a political movement or a relationship , it gets stronger and more successful .

- *Their relationship flowered.*

6. singular noun

A person or thing that is described as **the flower** of something is the best part or example of it.

- *Those killed have been described as the flower of Polish manhood.*

7. in flower

discreet

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **discreet**, you are polite and careful in what you do or say, because you want to avoid embarrassing or offending someone.

- *They were gossiping and not always discreet.*
- *He followed at a discreet distance.*

2. adjective

If you are **discreet about** something you are doing, you do not tell other people about it, in order to avoid being embarrassed or to gain an advantage.

- *We were very discreet about the romance.*
- *She's making a few discreet inquiries with her mother's friends.*

3. adjective

If you describe something as **discreet**, you approve of it because it is small in size or degree, or not easily noticed.

- *She wore discreet jewellery.*

grave

graves graver gravest

Explain

1. countable noun

A **grave** is a place where a dead person is buried.

- *They used to visit her grave twice a year.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to someone's death as their **grave** or to death as **the grave**.

- *...drinking yourself to an early grave.*
- *Most men would rather go to the grave than own up to feelings of dependency.*

3. adjective

A **grave** event or situation is very serious, important, and worrying.

- *He said that the situation in his country is very grave.*
- *I have grave doubts that the documents tell the whole story.*

4. adjective

A **grave** person is quiet and serious in their appearance or behaviour.

- *William was up on the roof for some time and when he came down he looked grave.*
- *Anxiously, she examined his unusually grave face.*

5. adjective

In some languages such as French, a **grave** accent is a symbol that is placed over a vowel in a word to show how the vowel is pronounced. For example, the word 'mère' has a grave accent over the first 'e'.

6. dig one's own grave

7. turn in their grave

due

dues

Explain

1. phrase

If an event is **due to** something, it happens or exists as a direct result of that thing.

- *The country's economic problems are largely due to the weakness of the recovery.*
 - *If the trip is a success, a lot of this will be due to Mr Green's efforts.*
2. phrase
You can say **due to** to introduce the reason for something happening . Some speakers of English believe that it is not correct to use **due to** in this way.
- *Due to the large volume of letters he receives Dave regrets he is unable to answer queries personally.*
 - *Jobs could be lost in the defence industry due to political changes sweeping Europe.*
3. adjective
If something is **due** at a particular time, it is expected to happen, be done, or arrive at that time.
- *The results are due at the end of the month.*
 - *The first price increases are due to come into force in July.*
 - *Her first novel is due out in May.*
 - *Mr Carter is due in London on Monday.*
 - *...customers who paid later than twenty days after the due date.*
4. adjective
Due attention or consideration is the proper, reasonable , or deserved amount of it under the circumstances .
- *After due consideration it was decided to send him away to live with foster parents.*
 - *I hope people will use the footpaths and treat them with due attention.*
5. adjective
Something that is **due** , or that is **due to** someone, is owed to them, either as a debt or because they have a right to it. **Due** is also a preposition .
- *I was sent a cheque for £1,525 and advised that no further pension was due.*
 - *I've got some leave due to me and I was going to Tasmania for a fortnight.*
 - *He had not taken a summer holiday that year but had accumulated the leave due him.*
6. adjective
If someone is **due for** something, that thing is planned to happen or be given to them now, or very soon , often after they have been waiting for it for a long time. **Due** is also a preposition.
- *She was due for a follow-up appointment.*
 - *He is not due for release until 2020.*
 - *I reckon I'm due one of my travels.*
7. plural noun
Dues are sums of money that you give regularly to an organization that you belong to, for example a social club or trade union , in order to pay for being a member.
- *Only 18 of the U.N. 's 180 members had paid their dues by the January deadline.*
8. adverb
Due is used before the words 'north', 'south', 'east', or 'west' to indicate that something is in exactly the direction mentioned .
- *They headed due north.*
 - *The Thames flows due south from Oxford, through the market town of Abingdon.*
 - *...a mining town 40 miles due east of Los Angeles.*
9. in due course
10. to give sb their due
11. with due respect
- investment**
investments

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Investment is the activity of investing money.

- *He said the government must introduce tax incentives to encourage investment.*
- *One of the most important changes concerns the investment of pension contributions.*
- *...investment bankers.*

2. variable noun

An **investment** is an amount of money that you invest, or the thing that you invest it in.

- *...an investment of twenty-eight million pounds.*
- *You'll be able to earn an average rate of return of 8*
- *...people's desire to buy a house as an investment.*
- *Total foreign investment in America still constitutes only about 5*

3. countable noun

If you describe something you buy as an **investment**, you mean that it will be useful, especially because it will help you to do a task more cheaply or efficiently.

- *When selecting boots, fine, quality leather will be a wise investment.*
- *Theatre membership can be a good investment.*

4. uncountable noun

Investment of time or effort is the spending of time or effort on something in order to make it a success.

- *I worry about this big investment of time and effort.*

equivalent

equivalents

Explain

1. singular noun

If one amount or value is **the equivalent of** another, they are the same. **Equivalent** is also an adjective.

- *The equivalent of two tablespoons of polyunsaturated oils is ample each day.*
- *Even the cheapest car costs the equivalent of 70 years' salary for a government worker.*
- *A unit is equivalent to a glass of wine or a single measure of spirits.*
- *Calls for equivalent wage increases are bound to be heard.*

2. countable noun

The **equivalent** of someone or something is a person or thing that has the same function in a different place, time, or system. **Equivalent** is also an adjective.

- *...the civil administrator of the West Bank and his equivalent in Gaza.*
- *...the Red Cross emblem, and its equivalent in Muslim countries, the Red Crescent.*
- *...a decrease of 10year.*

3. singular noun

You can use **equivalent** to emphasize the great or severe effect of something.

- *His party has just suffered the equivalent of a near-fatal heart attack.*

lace

laces lacing laced

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Lace is a very delicate cloth which is made with a lot of holes in it. It is made by twisting together very fine threads of cotton to form patterns.

- *She finally found the perfect gown, a beautiful creation trimmed with lace.*
- *...a plain white lace bedspread.*

2. countable noun

Laces are thin pieces of material that are put through special holes in some types of clothing, especially shoes. The laces are tied together in order to tighten the clothing.

- *Barry was sitting on the bed, tying the laces of an old pair of running shoes.*

3. verb

If you **lace** something such as a pair of shoes, you tighten the shoes by pulling the laces through the holes, and usually tying them together. **Lace up** means the same as lace .

- *I have a good pair of skates, but no matter how tightly I lace them, my ankles wobble.*
- *He sat on the steps, and laced up his boots.*
- *Nancy was lacing her shoe up when the doorbell rang.*

4. verb

To **lace** food or drink with a substance such as alcohol or a drug means to put a small amount of the substance into the food or drink.

- *She laced his food with sleeping pills.*

5. verb

If you **lace** your speech or writing with words of a particular kind , you include a lot of those words in what you say or write.

- *Fred liked to lace his conversation with military terms.*
- *...a speech laced with wry humour.*

6. verb

If you **lace** your fingers together, you put the palms of your hands together and fold your fingers over, fitting the fingers of one hand between the fingers of the other.

- *He took to lacing his fingers together in an attempt to keep his hands still.*

far

Explain

1. adverb

If one place, thing, or person is **far** away from another, there is a great distance between them.

- *I know a nice little Italian restaurant not far from here.*
- *They came from as far away as Florida.*
- *Both of my sisters moved even farther away from home.*
- *They lay in the cliff top grass with the sea stretching out far below.*
- *Is it far?*

2. adverb

If you ask **how far** a place is, you are asking what distance it is from you or from another place. If you ask **how far** someone went , you are asking what distance they travelled , or what place they reached .

- *How far is Pawtucket from Providence?*
- *How far is it to Malcy?*
- *How far can you throw?*
- *You can only judge how high something is when you know how far away it is.*
- *She followed the tracks as far as the road.*

3. adjective

When there are two things of the same kind in a place, **the far** one is the one that is a greater distance from you.

- *He had wandered to the far end of the room.*
- *A narrow steep path leads down into a valley and up the far side.*

4. adjective

You can use **far** to refer to the part of an area or object that is the greatest distance from the centre in a particular direction . For example , **the far north of** a country is the part of it that is the greatest distance to the north.

- *I've spent a lot of time walking around Britain from the far north of Scotland down to Cornwall.*
 - *I wrote the date at the far left of the black-board.*
5. adverb
A time or event that is **far** away in the future or the past is a long time from the present or from a particular point in time.
- *...hidden conflicts whose roots lie far back in time.*
 - *I can't see any farther than the next six months.*
 - *The first day of term, which seemed so far away at the start of the summer holidays, is looming.*
6. adverb
You can use **far** to talk about the extent or degree to which something happens or is true .
- *How far did the film tell the truth about the inventor?*
 - *But it is not clear how far they could help with the work on a power plant.*
7. adverb
You can talk about how **far** someone or something gets to describe the progress that they make.
- *Discussions never progressed very far.*
 - *Think of how far we have come in a little time.*
 - *I don't think Mr Cavanagh would get far with that trick.*
8. adverb
You can talk about how **far** a person or action goes to describe the degree to which someone's behaviour or actions are extreme .
- *It's still not clear how far the government will go to implement its own plans.*
- *Competition can be healthy, but if it is pushed too far it can result in bullying.*
 - *This time he's gone too far.*
9. graded adverb
You can use **far** in expressions like '**I wouldn't go that far**' and '**I would go so far**' to indicate to what extent you agree with something.
- *'Does it sound like music?'—'I wouldn't go that far.'*
10. adverb
You can use **far** to mean 'very much' when you are comparing two things and emphasizing the difference between them. For example, you can say that something is **far better** or **far worse** than something else to indicate that it is very much better or worse. You can also say that something is, for example, **far too big** to indicate that it is very much too big.
- *Women who eat plenty of fresh vegetables are far less likely to suffer anxiety or depression.*
 - *The police say the response has been far better than expected.*
 - *These trials are simply taking far too long.*
 - *It now has debts reported to be far in excess of one thousand million pounds.*
11. adjective
You can describe people with extreme left-wing or right-wing political views as the **far** left or the **far** right .
- *Anti-racist campaigners are urging the Government to ban all far-Right groups.*
12. as far as I know
13. far and away
14. by far
15. far from
16. far from it

17. far be it from me to do sth
18. as far as it goes
19. sb will go far
20. far gone
21. not far wrong
22. as far as I can see
23. so far
24. so far
25. so far so good
26. thus far
27. far and wide
28. sb will/can not go far wrong

lever

levers levering levered

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lever** is a handle or bar that is attached to a piece of machinery and which you push or pull in order to operate the machinery.

- *Push the tiny lever on the lock.*
- *The taps have a lever to control the mix of hot and cold water.*

2. countable noun

A **lever** is a long bar, one end of which is placed under a heavy object so that when you press down on the other end you can move the object.

3. verb

If you **lever** something in a particular direction , you move it there, especially by using a lot of effort .

- *Neighbours eventually levered open the door with a crowbar.*
- *Insert the fork about 6in. from the root and simultaneously lever it backwards.*
- *Alex levered himself up from the sofa.*

4. countable noun

A **lever** is an idea or action that you can use to make people do what you want them to do, rather than what they want to do.

- *He may use money as a lever to control and manipulate her.*

fit

fits fitting fitted

Explain

1. verb

If something **fits** , it is the right size and shape to go onto a person's body or onto a particular object.

- *The sash, kimono, and other garments were made to fit a child.*
- *She has to go to the men's department to find trousers that fit at the waist.*
- *Line a tin with lightly-greased greaseproof paper, making sure the corners fit well.*

2. singular noun

If something is a good **fit** , it fits well .

- *Eventually he was happy that the sills and doors were a reasonably good fit.*

3. verb

If you **are fitted for** a particular piece of clothing, you try it on so that the person who is making it can see where it needs to be altered .

- *She was being fitted for her wedding dress.*

4. verb

If something **fits** somewhere , it can be put there or is designed to be put there.

- *...a computer which is small enough to fit into your pocket.*
- *He folded his long legs to fit under the table.*
- *The crowd was too large to fit inside the hall.*
- *...filters are available that fit over the lens of suitable cameras.*

5. verb

If you **fit** something into a particular space or place, you put it there.

- *She fitted her key in the lock.*
- *Who could cut the millions of stone blocks and fit them together?*
- *When the crown has been made you go back and the dentist will fit it into place.*

6. verb

If you **fit** something somewhere, you attach it there, or put it there carefully and securely.

- *Fit hinge bolts to give extra support to the door lock.*
- *Peter had built the overhead ladders, and the next day he fitted them to the wall.*
- *Home spas or mini whirlpools massage and relax, and can be fitted into the bath.*

7. verb

If something **fits** something else or **fits** into it, it goes together well with that thing or is able to be part of it.

- *Her daughter doesn't fit the current feminine ideal.*
- *Fostering is a full-time job and you should consider how it will fit into your career.*
- *There's something about the way he talks of her that doesn't fit.*

8. verb

You can say that something **fits** a particular person or thing when it is appropriate or suitable for them or it.

- *The punishment must always fit the crime.*

9. adjective

If something is **fit** for a particular purpose, it is suitable for that purpose.

- *Of the seven bicycles we had, only two were fit for the road.*
- *...safety measures intended to reassure consumers that the meat is fit to eat.*
- *Follow our guide to making your home a fit place to work, rest and play.*

10. adjective

If someone is **fit** to do something, they have the appropriate qualities or skills that will allow them to do it.

- *You're not fit to be a mother!*
- *In a word, this government isn't fit to rule.*
- *He was not a fit companion for their skipper that particular morning.*

11. verb

If something **fits** someone for a particular task or role , it makes them good enough or suitable for it.

- *...a man whose past experience fits him for the top job in education.*
- *His personality may not have fitted him to be Prime Minister.*

12. adjective

If you say that something or someone is **fit to** produce some extreme result, you are emphasizing the extreme nature of that thing or that person's activity. **Fit** is also an adverb .

- *The stink was fit to knock you down.*
- *...hour after hour, the same exercises until you're fit to drop!*

- *Wally was laughing fit to burst.*
- *You're shivering fit to die, Gracie.*

13. to see fit

newspaper

newspapers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **newspaper** is a publication consisting of a number of large sheets of folded paper , on which news, advertisements, and other information is printed .

- *He was carrying a newspaper.*
- *They read their daughter's allegations in the newspaper.*
- *She writes a regular Sunday newspaper feature.*

2. countable noun

A **newspaper** is an organization that produces a newspaper.

- *It is Britain's fastest growing national daily newspaper.*
- *He is a food critic for the newspaper.*

3. uncountable noun

Newspaper consists of pieces of old newspapers, especially when they are being used for another purpose such as wrapping things up.

- *He found two pots, each wrapped in newspaper.*

grateful

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **grateful for** something that someone

has given you or done for you, you have warm , friendly feelings towards them and wish to thank them.

- *She was grateful to him for being so good to her.*
- *I should like to extend my grateful thanks to all the volunteers.*

nurse

nurses nursing nursed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **nurse** is a person whose job is to care for people who are ill .

- *She had spent 29 years as a nurse.*
- *I rang for the nurse and asked for some water.*

2. verb

If you **nurse** someone, you care for them when they are ill.

- *All the years he was sick, my mother had nursed him.*
- *She rushed home to nurse her daughter back to health.*

3. verb

If you **nurse** an illness or injury , you allow it to get better by resting as much as possible .

- *We're going to go home and nurse our colds.*

4. verb

If you **nurse** an emotion or desire , you feel it strongly for a long time.

- *Jane still nurses the pain of rejection.*
- *He had nursed an ambition to lead his own big orchestra.*

5. countable noun

A **nurse** is a person who is trained to look after young children.

- *Every morning she got up early with the children and the nurse.*

6. verb

When a baby **nurses** or when its mother **nurses** it, it feeds by sucking milk from its mother's breast.

- *Most authorities recommend letting the baby nurse whenever it wants.*
- *...young women nursing babies.*
- *Young people and nursing mothers are exempted from charges.*

helpful

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **helpful**, you mean that they help you in some way, such as doing part of your job for you or by giving you advice or information.

- *The staff in the London office are helpful but only have limited information.*
- *James is a very helpful and cooperative lad.*
- *Thank you, you've been most helpful.*

2. adjective

If you describe information or advice as **helpful**, you mean that it is useful for you.

- *The catalog includes helpful information on the different bike models available.*
- *The following information may be helpful to readers.*

3. adjective

Something that is **helpful** makes a situation more pleasant or more easy to tolerate.

- *A predominantly liquid diet for a day or two may be helpful.*
- *It is often helpful to have your spouse in the room when major news is expected.*
- *Recognising this can be very helpful in enabling one to cope.*

passport

passports

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **passport** is an official document containing your name, photograph, and personal details, which you need to show when you enter or leave a country.

- *You should take your passport with you when changing money.*
- *...a South African businessman travelling on a British passport.*

2. countable noun

If you say that a thing is a **passport to** success or happiness, you mean that this thing makes success or happiness possible.

- *Victory would give him a passport to the riches he craves.*
- *If the interview goes well it could be the passport to an exciting new career.*

hot

hotter hottest hots hotting hotted

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **hot** has a high temperature.

- *When the oil is hot, add the sliced onion.*

- *What he needed was a hot bath and a good sleep.*
 - *Metal-handled pans can get really hot and burn you.*
2. adjective
Hot is used to describe the weather or the air in a room or building when the temperature is high.
- *It was too hot even for a gentle stroll.*
 - *It was a hot, humid summer day.*
 - *My small greenhouse gets very hot when the sun is shining.*
3. adjective
 If you are **hot**, you feel as if your body is at an unpleasantly high temperature.
- *I was too hot and tired to eat more than a few mouthfuls.*
 - *My head was reeling. I felt hot all over.*
4. graded adjective
 You use **hot** to talk or ask about how high the temperature of something is.
- *They are called incandescent lights, and their colour depends on how hot they are.*
 - *Remember that the top of the oven will be hotter than the bottom.*
5. adjective
Hot food is intended to be eaten as soon as it is cooked, as opposed to food that you eat when it has cooled or that you do not cook at all.
- *If you live alone, you might not want to cook a hot meal every day.*
6. adjective
 You can say that food is **hot** when it has a strong, burning taste caused by chillies, pepper, or ginger.
- *...hot curries.*
 - *...a dish that's spicy but not too hot.*
7. adjective
 A **hot** issue or topic is one that is very important at the present time and is receiving a lot of publicity.
- *The role of women in war is a hot topic of debate.*
8. adjective
Hot news is new, recent, and fresh.
- *...eight pages of the latest movies and the hot news from Tinseltown.*
9. adjective
 You can use **hot** to describe something that is very exciting and that many people want to see, use, obtain, or become involved with.
- *The hottest show in town was the Monet Exhibition at the Art Institute.*
 - *When I was last there, the hot place was the Royal Bachelors' Club.*
10. adjective
 You can describe someone as **hot** if you think they are sexually attractive.
- *This girl is incredibly hot.*
11. adjective
 You can use **hot** to describe something that no one wants to deal with, often because it has been illegally obtained and is very valuable or famous.
- *If too much publicity is given to the theft, the works will become too hot to handle and be destroyed.*
12. adjective
 You can describe a situation that is created by a person's behaviour or attitude as **hot** when it is unpleasant and difficult to deal with.
- *When the streets get too hot for them, they head south in one stolen car after another.*
13. adjective
 A **hot** contest is one that is intense and involves a great deal of activity and determination.

- *It took hot competition from abroad, however, to show us just how good Scottish cashmere really is.*

14. adjective

If a person or team is the **hot** favourite , people think that they are the one most likely to win a race or competition.

- *Atlantic City is the hot favourite to stage the fight.*

15. adjective

Someone who has a **hot** temper gets angry very quickly and easily.

- *His hot temper was making it increasingly difficult for others to work with him.*

16. to blow hot and cold

17. hot and bothered

18. get/have the hots for

peanut

peanuts

Explain

1. countable noun

Peanuts are small nuts that grow under the ground . Peanuts are often eaten as a snack , especially roasted and salted .

- *...a packet of peanuts.*
- *Add 2 tablespoons of peanut oil.*

2. plural noun

If you say that a sum of money is **peanuts** , you mean that it is very small.

- *The cost was peanuts compared to a new kitchen.*
- *The jobs they offer pay peanuts.*

identical

Explain

1. adjective

Things that are **identical** are exactly the same.

- *Nearly all the houses were identical.*
- *The two parties fought the last election on almost identical manifestos.*

pit

pits pitting pitted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pit** is a coal mine.

- *It was a better community then when all the pits were working.*

2. countable noun

A **pit** is a large hole that is dug in the ground.

- *Eric lost his footing and began to slide into the pit.*

3. countable noun

A **gravel pit** or **clay pit** is a very large hole that is left where gravel or clay has been dug from the ground.

- *This area of former farmland was worked as a gravel pit until 1964.*

4. verb

If two opposing things or people **are pitted against** one another, they are in conflict .

- *You will be pitted against people who are every bit as good as you are.*
- *This was one man pitted against the universe.*

5. plural noun

In motor racing , **the pits** are the areas at the side of the track where drivers stop to get more fuel and to repair their cars during races.

- *He moved quickly into the pits and climbed rapidly out of the car.*

6. plural noun

If you describe something as **the pits** , you mean that it is extremely bad .

- *Mary Ann asked him how dinner had been. 'The pits,' he replied.*

7. countable noun

A **pit** is the stone of a fruit or vegetable .

8. pit one's wits against sb

9. in the pit of one's stomach

immigrant

immigrants

Explain

1. countable noun

An **immigrant** is a person who has come to live in a country from some other country. Compare emigrant .

- *...illegal immigrants.*
- *...immigrant visas.*

prestige

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If a person, a country, or an organization has **prestige** , they are admired and respected because of the position they hold or the things they have achieved.

- *...efforts to build up the prestige of the United Nations.*

- *It was his responsibility for foreign affairs that gained him international prestige.*

- *...high prestige jobs.*

2. adjective

Prestige is used to describe products , places, or activities which people admire because they are associated with being rich or having a high social position.

- *...such prestige cars as Cadillac, Mercedes, Porsche and Jaguar.*

reed

reeds

Explain

1. countable noun

Reeds are tall plants that grow in large groups in shallow water or on ground that is always wet and soft . They have strong , hollow stems that can be used for making things such as mats or baskets .

2. countable noun

A **reed** is a small piece of cane or metal inserted into the mouthpiece of a woodwind instrument. The reed vibrates when you blow through it and makes a sound.

intrinsic

Explain

1. adjective

If something has **intrinsic** value or **intrinsic** interest , it is valuable or interesting because of its basic nature or character , and not because of its connection with other things.

- *The paintings have no intrinsic value except as curiosities.*
- *The rate is determined by intrinsic qualities such as the land's slope.*

reporter

reporters

Explain

1. countable noun

A **reporter** is someone who writes news articles or who broadcasts news reports.

- ...a TV reporter.
- ...a trainee sports reporter.
- Our reporter Chris Loosemore sums up the findings.

restraint

restraints

Explain

1. variable noun

Restraints are rules or conditions that limit or restrict someone or something.

- The Prime Minister is calling for new restraints on trade unions.
- With open frontiers, criminals could cross into the country without restraint.

2. uncountable noun

Restraint is calm , controlled, and unemotional behaviour .

- They behaved with more restraint than I'd expected.
- I'll speak to the staff and ask them to exercise restraint and common sense.

3. uncountable noun

Restraint of something is the act of preventing it from increasing too much or from being done freely.

- For a year and a half, wage restraint on a voluntary basis worked.

- He sued them for restraint of trade and won.

loose

looser loosest looses loosing loosed

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **loose** is not firmly held or fixed in place.

- If a tooth feels very loose, your dentist may recommend that it's taken out.
- Two wooden beams had come loose from the ceiling.
- His tie was pulled loose and his collar hung open.
- She idly pulled at a loose thread on her skirt.

2. adjective

Something that is **loose** is not attached to anything, or held or contained in anything.

- Two young men were racing motorcycles on the loose gravel.
- Frank emptied a handful of loose change on the table.
- A page came loose and floated onto the tiles.

3. adjective

If people or animals break **loose** or are set **loose** , they are no longer held, tied , or kept somewhere and can move around freely.

- She broke loose from his embrace and crossed to the window.
- Why didn't you tell me she'd been set loose?
- Jack was chased by a loose dog.

4. adjective

Clothes that are **loose** are rather large and do not fit closely.

- *A pistol wasn't that hard to hide under a loose shirt.*
 - *Wear loose clothes as they're more comfortable.*
5. adjective
If your hair is **loose** , it hangs freely round your shoulders and is not tied back.
- *She was still in her nightdress, with her hair hanging loose over her shoulders.*
6. adjective
If something is **loose** in texture , there is space between the different particles or threads it consists of.
- *She gathered loose soil and let it filter slowly through her fingers.*
7. adjective
A **loose** grouping , arrangement, or organization is flexible rather than strictly controlled or organized .
- *Murray and Alison came to some sort of loose arrangement before he went home.*
 - *He wants a loose coalition of left wing forces.*
8. graded adjective
Loose words or expressions are not exact but rather vague .
- *...a loose translation.*
 - *He despised loose thinking.*
9. graded adjective
If someone describes a woman or someone's behaviour as **loose** , they disapprove of that person because they think she or he has sexual relationships with too many people.
10. verb
To **loose** a shot, arrow, or missile means to fire it. **Loose off** means the same as loose .
- *He trained his gun down and loosed a brief burst.*

- *He loosed off two shots at the oncoming car.*

11. verb

If you **loose** something, you hold it less tightly or untie it slightly or completely.

- *He gave a grunt and loosed his grip on the rifle.*
- *The guards loosed his arms.*

12. on the loose

revenge

revenges revenging revenged

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Revenge involves hurting or punishing someone who has hurt or harmed you.

- *The prisoners took revenge on their captors, eventually overcoming them.*
- *The killings were said to have been in revenge for the murder of her lover.*

2. verb

If you **revenge** yourself on someone who has hurt you, you hurt them in return.

- *The Sunday Mercury accused her of trying to revenge herself on her former lover.*
- *...the relatives of murdered villagers wanting to revenge the dead.*

loyal

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **loyal** remains firm in their friendship or support for a person or thing.

- *They had remained loyal to the president.*
- *He'd always been such a loyal friend to us all.*

rod

rods

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rod** is a long, thin metal or wooden bar .

- *...a 15-foot thick roof that was reinforced with steel rods.*

own

owns owning owned

Explain

1. adjective

You use **own** to indicate that something belongs to a particular person or thing. **Own** is also a pronoun.

- *Helen decided I should have my own shop.*
- *...another group of patients who were taught to change their own dressings.*
- *Why can't I live a normal life in my own country?*
- *He could no longer trust his own judgement.*
- *His office had its own private entrance.*
- *He saw the Major's face a few inches from his own.*

2. adjective

You use **own** to indicate that something is used by, or is characteristic of, only one person, thing, or group. **Own** is also a pronoun.

- *Jennifer insisted on her own room.*
- *I let her tell me about it in her own way.*
- *Each nation has its own peculiarities when it comes to doing business.*
- *This young lady has a sense of style that is very much her own.*

3. adjective

You use **own** to indicate that someone does something without any help from other people. **Own** is also a pronoun.

- *They enjoy making their own decisions.*
- *Tony also built his own house from his own plans.*
- *He'll have to make his own arrangements.*
- *There's no career structure, you have to create your own.*

4. verb

If you **own** something, it is your property.

- *His father owns a local pub.*
- *Some of these companies are now owned by overseas corporations.*

5. verb

If you **own** someone, you completely defeat them in a game, competition , or argument .

- *I just totally owned you.*

6. to call something your own

7. come into one's/its own

8. to get your own back

9. make sth one's own

10. of one's own

11. of one's own/all of one's own

12. on one's own

13. on one's own

14. as if/like one owns the place

shell

shells shelling shelled

Explain

1. countable noun

The **shell** of a nut or egg is the hard covering which surrounds it. **Shell** is the substance that a shell is made of.

- *They cracked the nuts and removed their shells.*
- *Once the eggs have hatched the shells are left behind.*
- *...beads made from ostrich egg shell.*

2. countable noun

The **shell** of an animal such as a tortoise , snail , or crab is the hard protective covering that it has around its body or on its back.

3. countable noun

Shells are hard objects found on beaches . They are usually pink , white, or brown and are the coverings which used to surround small sea creatures .

- *I collect shells and interesting seaside items.*
- *...sea shells.*

4. verb

If you **shell** nuts, peas , prawns , or other food, you remove their natural outer covering.

- *She shelled and ate a few nuts.*
- *...shelled prawns.*

5. countable noun

If someone comes out of their **shell** , they become more friendly and interested in other people and less quiet , shy , and reserved .

- *Her normally shy son had come out of his shell.*
- *...a lonely boy struggling to emerge from his shell.*

6. countable noun

The **shell** of a building, boat, car, or other structure is the outside frame of it.

- *...the shells of burned buildings.*
- *The solid feel of the car's shell is impressive.*

7. countable noun

A **shell** is a weapon consisting of a metal container filled with explosives that can be fired from a large gun over long distances.

8. verb

To **shell** a place means to fire explosive shells at it.

- *The rebels shelled the densely-populated suburbs near the port.*

preferable

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that one thing is **preferable** to another, you mean that it is more desirable or suitable .

- *A big earthquake a long way off is preferable to a smaller one nearby.*
- *The hazards of the theatre seemed preferable to joining the family paint business.*
- *Eating little and often may be preferable to large regular meals.*

soda

sodas

Explain

1. variable noun

Soda is the same as soda water .

2. variable noun

Soda is a sweet fizzy drink. A **soda** is a bottle of soda.

- *...a glass of diet soda.*

- *They had liquor for the adults and sodas for the children.*

3. countable noun

A **soda** is an ice-cream soda .

- *...self-service fountain sodas and small bags of potato chips.*

regardless

Explain

1. regardless of

2. adverb

If you say that someone did something **regardless** , you mean that they did it even though there were problems or factors that could have stopped them, or perhaps should have stopped them.

- *Despite her recent surgery she has been carrying on regardless.*

sound

sounds sounding sounded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **sound** is something that you hear.

- *Peter heard the sound of gunfire.*
- *Liza was so frightened she couldn't make a sound.*
- *There was a splintering sound as the railing gave way.*
- *...the sounds of children playing.*

2. uncountable noun

Sound is energy that travels in waves through air, water, or other substances, and can be heard.

- *The aeroplane will travel at twice the speed of sound.*

3. singular noun

The sound on a television, radio, or CD player is what you hear coming from the machine. Its loudness can be controlled.

- *She went and turned the sound down.*
- *Compact discs have brought about a vast improvement in recorded sound quality.*

4. countable noun

A singer's or band's **sound** is the distinctive quality of their music.

- *They have started showing a strong soul element in their sound.*
- *He's got a unique sound and a unique style.*

5. verb

If something such as a horn or a bell **sounds** or if you **sound** it, it makes a noise.

- *The buzzer sounded in Daniel's office.*
- *A young man sounds the bell to start the Sunday service.*

6. verb

If you **sound** a warning , you publicly give it. If you **sound** a note of caution or optimism , you say publicly that you are cautious or optimistic.

- *The markets sounded a warning over a slowdown in the global economy.*
- *Others consider the move premature and have sounded a note of caution.*
- *Sir Patrick attempted to sound a positive note, describing the meeting as serving a useful purpose.*

7. link verb

When you are describing a noise, you can talk about the way it **sounds** .

- *They heard what sounded like a huge explosion.*
- *The creaking of the hinges sounded very loud in that silence.*

- *It sounded as if he were trying to say something.*

8. link verb

When you talk about the way someone **sounds** , you are describing the impression you have of them when they speak.

- *She sounded a bit worried.*
- *Murphy sounds like a child.*
- *She sounded as if she really cared.*
- *I thought she sounded a genuinely caring and helpful person.*

9. link verb

When you are describing your impression or opinion of something you have heard about or read about, you can talk about the way it **sounds** .

- *It sounds like a wonderful idea to me, does it really work?*
- *It sounds as if they might have made a dreadful mistake.*
- *She decided that her doctor's advice sounded pretty good.*
- *The book is not as morbid as it sounds.*
- *I know this sounds a crazy thing for me to ask you.*

10. singular noun

You can describe your impression of something you have heard about or read about by talking about **the sound of** it.

- *Here's a new idea we liked the sound of.*
- *I don't like the sound of Toby Osborne.*
- *From the sound of things, he might well be the same man.*
- *He was being paid danger money from the sound of it.*

statement

statements statementing statemented

Explain

1. countable noun

A **statement** is something that you say or write which gives information in a formal or definite way.

- *Andrew now disowns that statement, saying he was depressed when he made it.*
- *'Things are moving ahead.'- I found that statement vague and unclear.*

2. countable noun

A **statement** is an official or formal announcement that is issued on a particular occasion .

- *The statement by the military denied any involvement in last night's attack.*

3. countable noun

You can refer to the official account of events which a suspect or a witness gives to the police as a **statement** .

- *The 350-page report was based on statements from witnesses to the events.*

4. countable noun

If you describe an action or thing as a **statement** , you mean that it clearly expresses a particular opinion or idea that you have.

- *The following recipe is a statement of another kind-food is fun!*

5. countable noun

A printed document showing how much money has been paid into and taken out of a bank or building society account is called a **statement** .

6. verb

If a child **is statemented** , social services staff write a document stating that the child has special educational needs, and the local education authority has to make sure that everything that is necessary is provided for that child.

- *Nearly a year later, it was agreed that Tom would be statemented.*
- *I had eight statemented children in my class.*

sensitive

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **sensitive to** other people's needs , problems , or feelings, you show understanding and awareness of them.

- *The classroom teacher must be sensitive to a child's needs.*
- *He was always so sensitive and caring.*

2. adjective

If you are **sensitive about** something, you are easily worried and offended when people talk about it.

- *Some young people are very sensitive about their appearance.*
- *Take it easy. Don't be so sensitive.*

3. adjective

A **sensitive** subject or issue needs to be dealt with carefully because it is likely to cause disagreement or make people angry or upset .

- *Employment is a very sensitive issue.*
- *...politically sensitive matters.*

4. adjective

Sensitive documents or reports contain information that needs to be kept secret and dealt with carefully.

- *He instructed staff to shred sensitive documents.*
- *...sensitive information which, in the wrong hands, could jeopardise the safety of British troops.*

5. adjective

Something that is **sensitive to** a physical force, substance, or treatment is easily affected by it and often harmed by it.

- *...a chemical which is sensitive to light.*
- *...gentle cosmetics for sensitive skin.*

6. adjective

A **sensitive** piece of scientific equipment is capable of measuring or recording very small changes.

- *...an extremely sensitive microscope.*

tomb

tombs

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tomb** is a large grave that is above ground and that usually has a sculpture or other decoration on it.

similar

Explain

1. adjective

If one thing is **similar to** another, or if two things are **similar** , they have features that are the same.

- *...a savoury cake with a texture similar to that of carrot cake.*
- *The accident was similar to one that happened in 1973.*
- *...a group of similar pictures.*

torment

torments tormenting tormented

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Torment is extreme suffering, usually mental suffering.

- *The torment of having her baby kidnapped is written all over her face.*

- *He spent days in torment while the police searched for his stolen car.*

2. countable noun

A **torment** is something that causes extreme suffering, usually mental suffering.

- *Sooner or later most writers end up making books about the torments of being a writer.*
- *Outdoors, mosquitoes and midges were a perpetual torment.*

3. verb

If something **torments** you, it causes you extreme mental suffering.

- *At times the memories returned to torment her.*
- *He had lain awake all night, tormented by jealousy.*

4. verb

If you **torment** a person or animal, you annoy them in a playful, rather cruel way for your own amusement.

- *My older brother and sister used to torment me by singing it to me.*

called

Explain

1. adjective

having the name

- *There are two men called Buckley at the Home Office.*
- *a device called an optical amplifier*

tribute

tributes

Explain

1. variable noun

A **tribute** is something that you say, do, or make to show your admiration and respect for someone.

- *The song is a tribute to Roy Orbison.*
- *He paid tribute to the organising committee.*
- *Over nine-thousand ex-servicemen and women marched past in tribute to their fallen comrades.*

2. singular noun

If one thing is a **tribute to** another, the first thing is the result of the second and shows how good it is.

- *His success has been a tribute to hard work, to professionalism.*
- *It is a tribute to Mr Chandler's skill that he has fashioned a fascinating book out of such unpromising material.*

solitary

Explain

1. adjective

A person or animal that is **solitary** spends a lot of time alone.

- *Paul was a shy, pleasant, solitary man.*
- *They often have a lonely and solitary life to lead.*

2. adjective

A **solitary** activity is one that you do alone.

- *His evenings were spent in solitary drinking.*

3. adjective

A **solitary** person or object is alone, with no others near them.

- *...the occasional solitary figure making a study of wildflowers or grasses.*

4. uncountable noun

Solitary is the same as solitary confinement .

- *Tom was in solitary across the way from me.*

trigger

triggers triggering triggered

Explain

1. countable noun

The **trigger** of a gun is a small lever which you pull to fire it.

- *A man pointed a gun at them and pulled the trigger.*

2. countable noun

The **trigger** of a bomb is the device which causes it to explode .

- *...trigger devices for nuclear weapons.*

3. verb

To **trigger** a bomb or system means to cause it to work.

- *The thieves must have deliberately triggered the alarm and hidden inside the house.*
- *The one thousand pound bomb was triggered by a wire.*
- *...nuclear triggering devices.*

4. verb

If something **triggers** an event or situation , it causes it to begin to happen or exist . **Trigger off** means the same as trigger .

- *...the incident which triggered the outbreak of the First World War.*
- *The current recession was triggered by a slump in consumer spending.*
- *Even a problem as simple as a bad back often has an underlying triggering factor.*

- *It is still not clear what events triggered off the demonstrations.*

5. countable noun

If something acts as a **trigger** for another thing such as an illness , event, or situation, the first thing causes the second thing to begin to happen or exist.

- *Stress may act as a trigger for these illnesses.*

strict

stricter strictest

Explain

1. adjective

A **strict** rule or order is very clear and precise or severe and must always be obeyed completely.

- *The officials had issued strict instructions that we were not to get out of the jeep.*
- *French privacy laws are very strict.*
- *All your replies will be treated in the strictest confidence.*
- *Even if you are on a fairly strict diet you can still go out for a good meal.*

2. adjective

If a parent or other person in authority is **strict** , they regard many actions as unacceptable and do not allow them.

- *My parents were very strict.*
- *...a few schools selected for their high standards and their strict discipline.*

3. adjective

If you talk about the **strict** meaning of something, you mean the precise meaning of it.

- *It's not quite peace in the strictest sense of the word, rather the absence of war.*

4. adjective

You use **strict** to describe someone who never does things that are against their beliefs .

- *Many people in the country are now strict vegetarians.*
- *He was a strict, old-school Freudian.*

vase

vases

Explain

1. countable noun

A **vase** is a jar , usually made of glass or pottery , used for holding cut flowers or as an ornament.

- *...a vase of red roses.*
- *...lead crystal vases.*

subordinate

subordinates subordinating subordinated

Explain

1. countable noun

If someone is your **subordinate** , they have a less important position than you in the organization that you both work for.

- *Haig tended not to seek guidance from subordinates.*
- *Nearly all her subordinates adored her.*

2. adjective

Someone who is **subordinate to** you has a less important position than you and has to obey you.

- *Sixty of his subordinate officers followed his example.*
- *Some people still regard women as subordinate to men.*

3. adjective

Something that is **subordinate to** something else is less important than the other thing.

- *It was an art in which words were subordinate to images.*

4. verb

If you **subordinate** something **to** another thing, you regard it or treat it as less important than the other thing.

- *He was both willing and able to subordinate all else to this aim.*

voice

voices voicing voiced

Explain

1. countable noun

When someone speaks or sings, you hear their **voice** .

- *Miriam's voice was strangely calm.*
- *'The police are here,' she said in a low voice.*
- *There was a sound of loud voices from the kitchen.*
- *I ended up with bronchitis and no voice.*

2. countable noun

Someone's **voice** is their opinion on a particular topic and what they say about it.

- *What does one do when a government simply refuses to listen to the voice of the opposition?*
- *There was no disagreement, there were no dissenting voices.*

3. singular noun

If you have a **voice in** something, you have the right to express an opinion on it.

- *The people themselves must be an important voice in the debate.*
- *But your partners will have no voice in how you operate your company.*

4. verb

If you **voice** something such as an opinion or an emotion , you say what you think or feel .

- *Some scientists have voiced concern that the disease could be passed on to humans.*
- *This is a criticism frequently voiced by opponents.*

5. singular noun

In grammar , if a verb is in **the active voice** , the person who performs the action is the subject of the verb. If a verb is in **the passive voice** , the thing or person affected by the action is the subject of the verb.

6. find one's voice

7. find one's voice

8. give voice to

9. keep one's voice down

10. lose one's voice

11. raise one's voice/lower one's voice

12. at the top of one's voice

13. with one voice

systematic

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is done in a **systematic** way is done according to a fixed plan, in a thorough and efficient way.

- *They went about their business in a systematic way.*
- *They had not found any evidence of a systematic attempt to rig the ballot.*

vote

votes voting voted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **vote** is a choice made by a particular person or group in a meeting or an election .

- *He walked to the local polling centre to cast his vote.*
- *The government got a massive majority—well over 400 votes.*
- *Mr Reynolds was re-elected by 102 votes to 60.*

2. countable noun

A **vote** is an occasion when a group of people make a decision by each person indicating his or her choice. The choice that most people support is accepted by the group.

- *Why do you think we should have a vote on that?*
- *They took a vote and decided not to do it.*

3. singular noun

The vote is the total number of votes or voters in an election, or the number of votes received or cast by a particular group.

- *Opposition parties won about fifty-five per cent of the vote.*
- *The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of the Democratic Party.*
- *...a huge majority of the white male vote.*

4. singular noun

If you have **the vote** in an election, or have **a vote** in a meeting, you have the legal right to indicate your choice.

- *And of course we didn't even have the vote, did we?*
- *Before that, women did not have a vote at all.*

- *People with disabilities have got a vote as well, you know.*

5. verb

When you **vote** , you indicate your choice officially at a meeting or in an election, for example by raising your hand or writing on a piece of paper .

- *Two-thirds of the electorate had the chance to vote in these elections.*
- *It seems many people would vote for the government, if there was a new leader.*
- *Both chambers plan to vote on that policy before January 15th.*
- *The residents of Leningrad voted to restore the city's original name of St Petersburg.*
- *The board of trustees voted by majority vote to remove the director.*
- *The council voted 9:8 for a five percent tax increase.*

6. verb

If you **vote** a particular political party or leader , or **vote yes** or **no** , you make that choice with the vote that you have.

- *52.5*
- *I probably would have voted that way anyway.*
- *A single candidate is put forward and the people vote yes or no.*

7. verb

If a government or other organization **votes** money **for** something or **to** do something, they decide to spend the money in that way.

- *The General Court had voted 250 for a monument to be erected to his memory. The Parliament voted more funds to help maintain American forces.*

8. verb

If people **vote** someone a particular title , they choose that person to have that title.

- *His class voted him the man 'who had done the most for Yale.'*

- *Michael has been voted Player of the Year.*

9. to vote with your feet

10. I vote

11. one man one vote

tall

taller tallest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **tall** has a greater height than is normal or average.

- *Being tall can make you feel incredibly self-confident.*
- *She was a young woman, fairly tall and fairly slim.*
- *The windows overlooked a lawn of tall waving grass.*

2. adjective

You use **tall** to ask or talk about the height of someone or something.

- *How tall are you?*
- *I'm only 5ft tall, and I look younger than my age.*
- *I am already as tall as she is.*
- *Tony, my oldest, is already taller than me, and he's only eleven.*

3. a tall order

4. to walk tall

wreath

wreaths

Explain

1. countable noun

A **wreath** is an arrangement of flowers and leaves, usually in the shape of a circle , which you put on a grave or by a statue to show that you remember a person who has died or people who have died.

- *The coffin lying before the altar was bare, except for a single wreath of white roses.*
- *The British, Australian and Turkish Prime Ministers laid wreaths at the war memorial.*

2. countable noun

A **wreath** is a circle of leaves or flowers which someone wears around their head.

3. countable noun

A **wreath** is a circle of leaves which some people hang on the front door of their house at Christmas .

above

Explain

1. preposition

If one thing is **above** another one, it is directly over it or higher than it. **Above** is also an adverb .

- *He lifted his hands above his head.*
- *Apartment 46 was a quiet apartment, unlike the one above it.*
- *He was staring into the mirror above him.*
- *A long scream sounded from somewhere above.*
- *...a picture of the new plane as seen from above.*
- *There are five bedrooms, a large attic above, and wine cellars below.*

2. adverb

In writing , you use **above** to refer to something that has already been mentioned or discussed .

Above is also a noun . **Above** is also an adjective .

- *Several conclusions could be drawn from the results described above.*
- *Full details are in the table above.*
- *For additional information, contact any of the above.*
- *For a copy of their brochure, write to the above address.*

3. preposition

If an amount or measurement is **above** a particular level , it is greater than that level. **Above** is also an adverb.

- *The temperature crept up to just above 40 degrees.*
- *Victoria Falls has had above average levels of rainfall this year.*
- *These plants must be stored in the light at above freezing temperature.*
- *Government spending is planned to rise 3 per cent above inflation.*
- *Banks have been charging 25 percent and above for unsecured loans.*

4. preposition

If you hear one sound **above** another, it is louder or clearer than the second one.

- *...trying to talk above the noise.*
- *Then there was a woman's voice, rising shrilly above the barking.*

5. preposition

If someone is **above** you, they are in a higher social position than you or in a position of authority over you. **Above** is also an adverb.

- *I know you're above me socially, but I must say I find your attitude offensive.*
- *I married above myself—rich county people.*
- *Look at the people above you in the positions of power.*

- *The police officers admitted beating the student, but said they were acting on orders from above.*

6. get above oneself

7. preposition

If you say that someone thinks they are **above** something, you mean that they act as if they are too good or important for it.

- *This was clearly a failure by someone who thought he was above failure.*
- *I'm not above doing my own cleaning.*

8. preposition

If someone is **above** criticism or suspicion, they cannot be criticized or suspected because of their good qualities or their position.

- *Science should not be above criticism.*
- *He was a respected academic and above suspicion.*

9. preposition

If you value one person or thing **above** any other, you value them more or consider that they are more important.

- *...his tendency to put the team above everything.*
- *I want to be honest, honest above everything else.*

actor

actors

Explain

1. countable noun

An **actor** is someone whose job is acting in plays or films. 'Actor' in the singular usually refers to a man, but some women who act prefer to be called 'actors' rather than 'actresses'.

- *His father was an actor in the Cantonese Opera Company.*

- *You have to be a very good actor to play that part.*

abundant

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **abundant** is present in large quantities.

- *There is an abundant supply of cheap labour.*
- *Birds are abundant in the tall vegetation.*

ankle

ankles

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **ankle** is the joint where your foot joins your leg.

- *John twisted his ankle badly.*

beloved

Explain

1. adjective

A **beloved** person, thing, or place is one that you feel great affection for.

- *He lost his beloved wife last year.*
- *The rose is the most romantic of flowers, beloved of poets, singers, and artists.*

2. singular noun

Your **beloved** is the person that you love.

- *He takes his beloved into his arms.*

boy

boys

Explain

1. countable noun

A **boy** is a child who will grow up to be a man.

- *I knew him when he was a little boy.*
- *He was still just a boy.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to a young man as a **boy** , especially when talking about relationships between boys and girls .

- *...the age when girls get interested in boys.*

3. countable noun

Someone's **boy** is their son .

- *Eric was my cousin Edward's boy.*
- *I have two boys.*

4. countable noun

You can refer to a man as a **boy** , especially when you are talking about him in an affectionate way .

- *...the local boy who made President.*
- *'Come on boys', he shouted to the sailors.*

5. vocative noun

You can use **boy** when giving instructions to a horse or dog .

- *Down, boy, down!*

6. the boys in blue

7. boy/oh boy

8. boys will be boys

9. one of the boys

big

bigger biggest

Explain

1. adjective

A **big** person or thing is large in physical size.

- *Australia's a big country.*
- *Her husband was a big man.*
- *The car was too big to fit into our garage.*

2. adjective

Something that is **big** consists of many people or things.

- *The crowd included a big contingent from Ipswich.*
- *...the big backlog of applications.*

3. adjective

If you describe something such as a problem , increase, or change as a **big** one, you mean it is great in degree, extent, or importance .

- *The problem was just too big for her to tackle on her own.*
- *There could soon be a big increase in unemployment.*

4. adjective

A **big** organization employs many people and has many customers .

- *Exchange is largely controlled by big banks.*
- *...one of the biggest companies in Italy.*

5. adjective

If you say that someone is **big in** a particular organization, activity, or place, you mean that they have a lot of influence or authority in it.

- *Their father was very big in the army.*
- *I'm sure all the big names will come to the club.*

6. adjective

If you call someone a **big** bully or a **big** coward , you are emphasizing your disapproval of them.

7. adjective

Children often refer to their older brother or sister as their **big** brother or sister.

8. adjective

Capital letters are sometimes referred to as **big** letters.

- ...a big letter J.

9. adjective

Big words are long or rare words which have meanings that are difficult to understand .

- They use a lot of big words.

10. make it big

11. to think big

12. in a big way

cottage

cottages

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cottage** is a small house, usually in the country.

- They used to have a cottage in N.W. Scotland.
- My sister Yvonne also came to live at Ockenenden Cottage with me.

bold

bolder boldest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **bold** is not afraid to do things which involve risk or danger .

- Amrita becomes a bold, daring rebel.

- In 1960 this was a bold move.

- Poland was already making bold economic reforms.

2. adjective

Someone who is **bold** is not shy or embarrassed in the company of other people.

- I don't feel I'm being bold, because it's always been natural for me to just speak out.

3. adjective

A **bold** colour or pattern is very bright and noticeable .

- ...bold flowers in various shades of red, blue or white.

- ...bold, dramatic colours.

4. adjective

Bold lines or designs are drawn in a clear , strong way.

- Each picture is shown in colour on one page and as a bold outline on the opposite page.

5. uncountable noun

Bold is print which is thicker and looks blacker than ordinary printed letters .

denial

denials

Explain

1. variable noun

A **denial** of something is a statement that it is not true , does not exist, or did not happen .

- Despite official denials, the rumours still persist.

- Denial of the Mafia's existence is nothing new.

2. uncountable noun

The **denial of** something to someone is the act of refusing to let them have it.

- *...the denial of visas to international relief workers.*
- *This does not justify the denial of constitutional protection.*

3. uncountable noun

In psychology , **denial** is when a person cannot or will not accept an unpleasant truth.

- *With traumas like losing a loved one, the mind's first reaction is denial.*
- *...an addict who is in denial about his addiction.*

careful

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **careful** , you give serious attention to what you are doing, in order to avoid harm , damage , or mistakes . If you are **careful to** do something, you make sure that you do it.

- *Be very careful with this stuff, it can be dangerous if it isn't handled properly.*
- *Careful on those stairs!*
- *We had to be very careful not to be seen.*
- *Pupils will need careful guidance on their choice of options.*

2. adjective

Careful work, thought , or examination is thorough and shows a concern for details .

- *He has decided to prosecute her after careful consideration of all the relevant facts.*
- *What we now know about the disease was learned by careful study of diseased organs.*

3. adjective

If you tell someone to be **careful about** doing something, you think that what they intend to do is probably wrong , and that they should think seriously before they do it.

- *I think you should be careful about talking of the rebels as heroes.*
- *It is important, I think, for everyone to be careful about claiming victory.*

4. adjective

If you are **careful with** something such as money or resources , you use or spend only what is necessary .

- *You will have to make a special effort to train your child to be careful with her pocket-money.*
- *It would force industries to be more careful with natural resources.*

5. you can't be too careful

doctor

doctors doctoring doctored

Explain

1. countable noun

A **doctor** is someone who is qualified in medicine and treats people who are ill .

- *Do not discontinue the treatment without consulting your doctor.*
- *Doctor Paige will be here right after lunch to see her.*

2. countable noun

A dentist or , veterinarian can also be called **doctor** .

3. countable noun

The doctor's is used to refer to the surgery or office where a doctor works.

- *I have an appointment at the doctor's.*

4. countable noun

A **doctor** is someone who has been awarded the highest academic or honorary degree by a university.

- *He is a doctor of philosophy.*

5. verb

If someone **doctors** something, they change it in order to deceive people.

- *They doctored the prints to make her look as awful as possible.*
- *...a cleverly doctored photograph.*

6. verb

If someone **doctors** food or drink, they add a poison or drug to it.

- *She had no doubt that it was he who had doctored her milk.*
- *...a doctored cup of tea.*

clear

clearer clearest clears clearing cleared

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **clear** is easy to understand, see, or hear.

- *The book is clear, readable and adequately illustrated.*
- *The space telescope has taken the clearest pictures ever of Pluto.*
- *He repeated his answer, this time in a clear, firm tone of voice.*

2. adjective

Something that is **clear** is obvious and impossible to be mistaken about.

- *It was a clear case of homicide.*

- *The clear message of the scientific reports is that there should be a drastic cut in car use.*

- *A spokesman said the British government's position is perfectly clear.*

- *It became clear that I hadn't been able to convince Mike.*

- *It's not clear whether the incident was an accident or deliberate.*

3. adjective

If you are **clear about** something, you understand it completely.

- *It is important to be clear about what Chomsky is doing here.*

- *He is not entirely clear on how he will go about it.*

- *People use scientific terms with no clear idea of their meaning.*

4. adjective

If your mind or your way of thinking is **clear**, you are able to think sensibly and reasonably, and you are not affected by confusion or by a drug such as alcohol.

- *She needed a clear head to carry out her instructions.*

5. verb

To **clear** your mind or your head means to free it from confused thoughts or from the effects of a drug such as alcohol.

- *He walked up Fifth Avenue to clear his head.*

- *Our therapists will show you how to clear your mind of worries.*

6. adjective

A **clear** substance is one which you can see through and which has no colour, like clean water.

- *...a clear glass panel.*

- ...a clear gel.
 - The water is clear and plenty of fish are visible.
7. graded adjective
A **clear** colour is bright and strong.
- He has clear blue eyes and a dazzling smile.
8. adjective
If a surface, place, or view is **clear** , it is free of unwanted objects or obstacles .
- The runway is clear-go ahead and land.
 - All exits must be kept clear in case of fire or a bomb scare.
 - Caroline prefers her worktops to be clear of clutter.
 - The windows will allow a clear view of the beach.
9. verb
When you **clear** an area or place or **clear** something **from** it, you remove things from it that you do not want to be there.
- To clear the land and harvest the bananas they decided they needed to hire specialist machinery.
 - Stewart was trying to clear a path for the stretcher.
 - Workers could not clear the tunnels of smoke.
 - Firefighters were still clearing rubble from apartments damaged at the scene of the attack.
10. verb
If something or someone **clears** the way or the path **for** something to happen , they make it possible.
- The Prime Minister resigned today, clearing the way for the formation of a new government.
- A court in Berlin has dropped the charges against him, clearing the way for him to leave Germany.
11. adjective
If it is a **clear** day or if the sky is **clear** , there is no mist, rain, or cloud.
- On a clear day you can see the French coast.
 - The winter sky was clear.
12. verb
When fog or mist **clears** , it gradually disappears.
- The early morning mist had cleared.
13. adjective
Clear eyes look healthy , attractive, and shining .
- ...clear blue eyes.
 - Her eyes were clear and steady.
14. adjective
If your skin is **clear** , it is healthy and free from spots.
15. adjective
If you say that your conscience is **clear** , you mean you do not think you have done anything wrong.
- Mr Garcia said his conscience was clear over the jail incidents.
 - I can look back on things with a clear conscience. I did everything I could.
16. adjective
If something or someone is **clear of** something else, it is not touching it or is a safe distance away from it.
- As soon as he was clear of the terminal building he looked round.
 - She placed a towel on a cluster of rocks just clear of the tidemark.
 - He lifted him clear of the deck with one arm.

17. adverb
If you drive **clear** to a place, especially a place that is far away, you go all the way there without delays .

- *After that they drove clear over to St Paul.*

18. verb
If an animal or person **clears** an object or **clears** a certain height, they jump over the object, or over something that height, without touching it.

- *He was the first vaulter to clear 6.00 metres.*

19. verb
When a bank **clears** a cheque or when a cheque **clears** , the bank agrees to pay the sum of money mentioned on it.

- *Polish banks can still take two or three weeks to clear a cheque.*
- *Allow time for the cheque to clear.*

20. verb
If a course of action **is cleared** , people in authority give permission for it to happen.

- *Linda Gradstein has this report from Jerusalem, which was cleared by an Israeli censor.*
- *Within an hour, the helicopter was cleared for take-off.*
- *Some of the pesticides found were not cleared for use in Britain.*

21. verb
If someone **is cleared** , they are proved to be not guilty of a crime or mistake.

- *She was cleared of murder and jailed for just five years for manslaughter.*
- *In a final effort to clear her name, Eunice has written a book.*

22. is that/do I make myself clear?

23. in the clear

24. to make sth clear

25. clear of

26. to steer/stay clear

drought

droughts

Explain

1. variable noun

A **drought** is a long period of time during which no rain falls .

- *Drought and famines have killed up to two million people here.*
- *...one of the worst droughts of the century.*

coherent

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **coherent** , it is well planned , so that it is clear and sensible and all its parts go well with each other.

- *He has failed to work out a coherent strategy for modernising the service.*
- *The President's policy is perfectly coherent.*

2. adjective

If someone is **coherent** , they express their thoughts in a clear and calm way, so that other people can understand what they are saying .

- *He's so calm when he answers questions in interviews. I wish I could be that coherent.*

enclosure

enclosures

Explain

1. countable noun

An **enclosure** is an area of land that is surrounded by a wall or fence and that is used for a particular purpose .

- *This enclosure was so vast that the outermost wall could hardly be seen.*

cunning

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **cunning** has the ability to achieve things in a clever way, often by deceiving other people.

- *These disturbed kids can be cunning.*
- *The clever folk in management came up with a cunning plan.*

2. uncountable noun

Cunning is the ability to achieve things in a clever way, often by deceiving other people.

- *...one more example of the cunning of today's art thieves.*
- *He tackled the job with a great deal of imagination, skill and cunning.*

era

eras

Explain

1. countable noun

You can refer to a period of history or a long period of time as an **era** when you want to draw attention to a particular feature or quality that it has.

- *...the nuclear era.*
- *...the Victorian era.*
- *It was an era of austerity.*

decimal

decimals

Explain

1. adjective

A **decimal** system involves counting in units of ten.

- *...the decimal system of metric weights and measures.*
- *In 1971, the 1p and 2p decimal coins were introduced in Britain.*

2. countable noun

A **decimal** is a fraction that is written in the form of a dot followed by one or more numbers which represent tenths, hundredths , and so on: for example .5, .51, .517.

- *...simple math concepts, such as decimals and fractions.*

football

footballs

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Football is a game played by two teams of eleven players using a round ball. Players kick the ball to each other and try to score goals by kicking the ball into a large net .

- *Several boys were still playing football on the waste ground.*
- *...Arsenal Football Club.*
- *...Italian football fans.*

2. uncountable noun

Football is a game played by two teams of eleven players using an oval ball. Players carry the ball in their hands or throw it to each other as they try to score goals that are called touch-downs.

- *Two blocks beyond our school was a field where boys played football.*
- *...this year's national college football championship.*

3. countable noun

A **football** is a ball that is used for playing football.

direct

directs directing directed

Explain

1. adjective

Direct means moving towards a place or object, without changing direction and without stopping, for example in a journey. **Direct** is also an adverb.

- *They'd come on a direct flight from Athens.*
- *...the direct route from Amman to Bombay.*
- *You can fly direct to Amsterdam from most British airports.*

2. adjective

If something is in **direct** heat or light, it is strongly affected by the heat or light, because there is nothing between it and the source of heat or light to protect it.

- *Medicines should be stored away from direct sunlight.*
- *Direct illumination is harsh and unflattering.*

3. adjective

You use **direct** to describe an experience, activity, or system which only involves the people, actions, or things that are necessary to make it happen. **Direct** is also an adverb.

- *He has direct experience of the process of privatisation.*

- *He seemed to be in direct contact with the Boss.*
- *He is expected to extend direct rule by the central government for another six months.*
- *I can deal direct with your Inspector Kimble.*
- *Write to us direct with details of your clubs.*

4. adjective

You use **direct** to emphasize the closeness of a connection between two things.

- *They were unable to prove that she died as a direct result of his injection.*
- *His visit is direct evidence of the improvement in their relationship.*
- *The minister denied there was a direct connection between the two issues.*

5. adjective

If you describe a person or their behaviour as **direct**, you mean that they are honest and open, and say exactly what they mean.

- *He avoided giving a direct answer.*
- *The new songs are more direct.*
- *No direct reference was made to the call by the Foreign Office minister.*

6. verb

If you **direct** something **at** a particular thing, you aim or point it at that thing.

- *I directed the extinguisher at the fire without effect.*
- *He directed the tiny beam of light at the roof.*

7. verb

If your attention, emotions, or actions **are directed at** a particular person or thing, you are focusing them on that person or thing.

- *The learner's attention needs to be directed to the significant features.*
- *Do not be surprised if, initially, she directs her anger at you.*

- *One assassination attempt was directed against the country's top three government leaders.*

8. verb

If a remark or look **is directed at** you, someone says something to you or looks at you.

- *She could hardly believe the question was directed towards her.*
- *The abuse was directed at the TV crews.*
- *Arnold directed a meaningful look at Irma.*

9. verb

If you **direct** someone somewhere, you tell them how to get there.

- *Could you direct them to Dr Lamont's office, please?*
- *Inside, a guard directed them to the right.*

10. verb

When someone **directs** a project or a group of people, they are responsible for organizing the people and activities that are involved.

- *Christopher will direct day-to-day operations.*
- *...his coolness in directing the rescue of nine hostages.*

11. verb

When someone **directs** a film, play, or television programme, they are responsible for the way in which it is performed and for telling the actors and assistants what to do.

- *He directed various TV shows.*
- *...her long-held ambition to direct as well as act.*

12. verb

If you **are directed to** do something, someone in authority tells you to do it.

- *They have been directed to give special attention to the problem of poverty.*

- *The Bishop directed the faithful to stay at home.*

13. adjective

If you are a **direct** descendant of someone, you are related to them through your parents and your grandparents and so on.

- *She is a direct descendant of Queen Victoria.*

fortnight

fortnights

Explain

1. countable noun

A **fortnight** is a period of two weeks.

- *I hope to be back in a fortnight.*

dry

drier dryer driest driest dries drying dried

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **dry**, there is no water or moisture on it or in it.

- *Clean the metal with a soft dry cloth.*
- *Pat it dry with a soft towel.*
- *Once the paint is dry, apply a coat of the red ochre emulsion paint.*
- *The path was dry and slithery from the drought.*

2. verb

When something **dries** or when you **dry** it, it becomes dry.

- *The washing might dry outside today, the sun's shining.*

- *Leave your hair to dry naturally whenever possible.*
 - *Wash and dry the lettuce.*
 - *Liz laughed again, got up from the water and began to dry herself.*
3. verb
When you **dry** the dishes after a meal , you wipe the water off the plates, cups , knives , pans , and other things when they have been washed , using a cloth. **Dry up** means the same as dry .
- *Mrs. Madrigal began drying dishes.*
 - *He got up and stood beside Julie, drying up the dishes while she washed.*
4. adjective
If you say that your skin or hair is **dry** , you mean that it is less oily than, or not as soft as, normal.
- *Nothing looks worse than dry, cracked lips.*
 - *Dry hair can be damaged by washing it too frequently.*
 - *My skin's been getting a little dry recently.*
5. adjective
If the weather or a period of time is **dry** , there is no rain or there is much less rain than average .
- *Exceptionally dry weather over the past year had cut agricultural production.*
 - *The spring has been unusually dry, with hardly any rain in May.*
6. adjective
A **dry** place or climate is one that gets very little rainfall.
- *It was one of the driest and dustiest places in Africa.*
 - *...a hot, dry climate where the sun is shining all the time.*
7. singular noun
In **the dry** means in a place or at a time that is not damp, wet, or rainy .
- *Such cars, however, do grip the road well, even in the dry.*
8. adjective
If a river, lake, or well is **dry** , it is empty of water, usually because of hot weather and lack of rain.
- *The aquifer which had once fed the wells was pronounced dry.*
 - *The single-engine plane landed at a dry lake in western Arizona.*
 - *In the end the Volga's waters will run dry.*
9. adjective
If an oil well is **dry** , it is no longer producing any oil.
- *To harvest oil and gas profitably from the North Sea, it must focus on the exploitation of small reserves as the big wells run dry.*
10. graded adjective
If you are **dry** , you need to drink something.
- *She was suddenly thirsty and dry.*
11. adjective
If your mouth or throat is **dry** , it has little or no saliva in it, and so feels very unpleasant , perhaps because you are tense or ill .
- *His mouth was dry, he needed a drink.*
 - *My throat was dry. I was at a loss for words.*
12. adjective
A **dry** cough is one that does not produce any mucus .
13. adjective
If someone has **dry** eyes, there are no tears in their eyes; often used with negatives or in contexts where you are expressing surprise that they are not crying .
- *There were few dry eyes in the house when I finished.*

- *She didn't wince and her eyes were dry. Talk about brave. She was unbelievable.*

14. adjective

If a country, state, or city is **dry** , it has laws or rules which forbid anyone to drink, sell, or buy alcoholic drink.

- *Gujarat has been a totally dry state for the past thirty years.*

15. to suck someone dry

16. adjective

Dry humour is very amusing , but in a subtle and clever way.

- *Fulton has retained his dry humour.*
- *Mr Brooke is renowned for his dry wit.*

17. graded adjective

If you describe a voice as **dry** , you mean that it is cold or dull , and does not express any emotions.

- *When he crept back to his desk, he heard the dry voice of Father Laurence.*

18. adjective

If you describe something such as a book, play, or activity as **dry** , you mean that it is dull and uninteresting .

- *...dry, academic phrases.*
- *A lot of the work was very dry and boring in Westminster.*

19. adjective

Dry bread or toast is plain and not covered with butter or jam.

- *For breakfast, they had dry bread and tea.*

20. adjective

Dry sherry or wine does not have a sweet taste .

- *...a glass of chilled, dry white wine.*

hospital

hospitals

Explain

1. variable noun

A **hospital** is a place where people who are ill are looked after by nurses and doctors .

- *...a children's hospital with 120 beds.*
- *A couple of weeks later my mother went into hospital.*
- *He may be able to leave hospital early next week.*

each

Explain

1. determiner

If you refer to **each** thing or **each** person in a group, you are referring to every member of the group and considering them as individuals. **Each** is also a pronoun. **Each** is also an emphasizing pronoun. **Each** is also an adverb . **Each** is also a quantifier .

- *Each book is beautifully illustrated.*
- *Each year, hundreds of animals are killed in this way.*
- *Blend in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each one.*
- *...two bedrooms, each with three beds.*
- *She began to consult doctors, and each had a different diagnosis.*
- *We each have different needs and interests.*
- *The children were given one each, handed to them or placed on their plates.*
- *They were selling tickets at six pounds each.*
- *He handed each of them a page of photos.*
- *Each of these exercises takes one or two minutes to do.*

- *There are three main types of cloud, each of which has many variations.*

2. quantifier

If you refer to **each one of** the members of a group, you are emphasizing that something applies to every one of them.

- *He picked up forty of these publications and read each one of them.*

3. each and every

4. each other

junction

junctions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **junction** is a place where roads or railway lines join.

- *Follow the road to a junction and turn left.*
- *Leave the M1 at junction 25.*
- *There's a good British Rail link at Clapham Junction.*

few

fewer fewest

Explain

1. determiner

You use **a few** to indicate that you are talking about a small number of people or things. You can also say **a very few**. **Few** is also a pronoun. **Few** is also a quantifier.

- *I gave a dinner party for a few close friends.*
- *We had a few drinks afterwards.*
- *Here are a few more ideas to consider.*

- *She was silent for a few seconds.*

- *Doctors work an average of 90 hours a week, while a few are on call for up to 120 hours.*

- *A strict diet is appropriate for only a few.*

- *There are many ways eggs can be prepared; here are a few of them.*

- *...a little tea-party I'm giving for a few of the teachers.*

2. adjective

You use **few** after adjectives and determiners to indicate that you are talking about a small number of things or people.

- *The past few weeks of her life had been the most pleasant she could remember.*

- *The leaders are expected to seal the agreement in the next few days.*

- *...in the last few chapters.*

- *A train would pass through there every few minutes at that time of day.*

3. determiner

You use **few** to indicate that you are talking about a small number of people or things. You can use 'so', 'too', and 'very' in front of **few**. **Few** is also a pronoun. **Few** is also a quantifier. **Few** is also an adjective.

- *She had few friends, and was generally not very happy.*

- *Few members planned to vote for him.*

- *Very few firms collect the tax, even when they're required to do so by law.*

- *The trouble is that few want to buy, despite the knockdown prices on offer.*

- *...a true singing and songwriting talent that few suspected.*

- *Few of the beach houses still had lights on.*

- *Few of the volunteers had military experience.*

- ...spending her few waking hours in front of the TV.
- His memories of his father are few.

4. singular noun

The few means a small set of people considered as separate from the majority , especially because they share a particular opportunity or quality that the others do not have.

- *This should not be an experience for the few.*
- *...a system built on academic excellence for the few.*

5. as few as

6. few and far between

7. a good few

8. have a few too many

9. no fewer than

lad

lads

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lad** is a young man or boy.

- *When I was a lad his age I would laugh at the strangest things.*
- *Come along, lad. Time for you to get home.*

2. plural noun

Some men refer to their male friends or colleagues as **the lads** .

- *...a drink with the lads.*
- *The lads don't join the union because they're frightened of being victimized.*

locker

lockers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **locker** is a small metal or wooden cupboard with a lock, where you can put your personal possessions , for example in a school, place of work, or sports club .

following

followings

Explain

1. preposition

Following a particular event means after that event.

- *In the centuries following Christ's death, Christians genuinely believed the world was about to end.*
- *Following a day of medical research, the conference focused on educational practices.*

2. adjective

The **following** day , week , or year is the day, week, or year after the one you have just mentioned.

- *The following day the picture appeared on the front pages of every newspaper in the world.*
- *We went to dinner the following Monday evening.*
- *The following year she joined the Royal Opera House.*

3. adjective

You use **following** to refer to something that you are about to mention. **The following** refers to the thing or things that you are about to mention.

- Write down the following information: name of product, type, date purchased and price.
- The method of helping such patients is explained in the following chapters.
- The following is a paraphrase of what was said.
- Check with your doctor if you have any of the following: chest pains, high blood pressure, or heart disease.

4. countable noun

A person or organization that has a **following** has a group of people who support or admire their beliefs or actions.

- Australian rugby league enjoys a huge following in New Zealand.

5. adjective

If a boat or vehicle has a **following** wind, the wind is moving in the same direction as the boat or vehicle.

- The following wind and eastward running tide had given us a very pleasant, lazy sail.

mail

mails mailing mailed

Explain

1. singular noun

The mail is the public service or system by which letters and parcels are collected and delivered.

- Your check is in the mail.
- People had to renew their motor vehicle registrations through the mail.
- The firm has offices in several large cities, but does most of its business by mail.

2. uncountable noun

You can refer to letters and parcels that are delivered to you as **mail**.

- There was no mail except the usual junk addressed to the occupier.
- Nora looked through the mail.

3. verb

If you **mail** a letter or parcel to someone, you send it to them by putting it in a post box or taking it to a post office.

- Last year, he mailed the documents to French journalists.
- He mailed me the contract.
- The Government has already mailed some 18 million households with details of the public offer.

4. verb

To **mail** a message to someone means to send it to them by means of email or a computer network. **Mail** is also a noun.

- ...if a report must be electronically mailed to an office by 9 am the next day.
- If you have any problems then send me some mail.

general

generals

Explain

1. countable noun

A **general** is a senior officer in the armed forces, usually in the army.

- He rose through the ranks to become a general.

2. adjective

If you talk about the **general** situation somewhere or talk about something in **general** terms, you are describing the situation as a whole rather than considering its details or exceptions.

- *The figures represent a general decline in employment.*
 - *...the general deterioration of English society.*
3. adjective
You use **general** to describe several items or activities when there are too many of them or when they are not important enough to mention separately.
- *£2,500 for software is soon swallowed up in general costs.*
 - *His firm took over the planting and general maintenance of the park last March.*
4. adjective
You use **general** to describe something that involves or affects most people, or most people in a particular group.
- *The project should raise general awareness about bullying.*
5. adjective
If you describe something as **general**, you mean that it is not restricted to any one thing or area.
- *...a general ache radiating from the back of the neck.*
 - *...a general sense of well-being.*
 - *...raising the level of general physical fitness.*
6. adjective
A **general** business offers a variety of services or goods rather than just one particular kind.
- *They ran the general store and the farm dairy.*
7. adjective
General is used to describe a person's job, usually as part of their title, to indicate that they have complete responsibility for the administration of an organization or business.
- *He joined Sanders Roe, moving on later to become General Manager.*

8. adjective
General workers do a variety of jobs which require no special skill or training.
- *The farm employed a tractor driver and two general labourers.*
9. graded adjective
General is used to describe a person who has an average amount of knowledge or interest in a particular subject.
- *This book is intended for the general reader rather than the student.*
10. in general
11. in general
12. in general

master

masters mastering mastered

Explain

1. countable noun
A servant's **master** is the man that he or she works for.
- *My master ordered me not to deliver the message except in private.*
2. countable noun
A dog's **master** is the man or boy who owns it.
- *The dog yelped excitedly when his master opened a desk drawer and produced his leash.*
3. countable noun
If you say that someone is a **master** of a particular activity, you mean that they are extremely skilled at it. **Master** is also an adjective.
- *She was a master of the English language.*
 - *He is a master at blocking progress.*

- *They appear masters in the art of making regulations work their way.*
 - *...a master craftsman.*
 - *...a master criminal.*
4. See also past master
5. variable noun
If you are **master** of a situation, you have complete control over it.
- *Jackson remained calm and always master of his passions.*
 - *He was under no illusions as to who was master in his house.*
6. verb
If you **master** something, you learn how to do it properly or you succeed in understanding it completely.
- *Duff soon mastered the skills of radio production.*
 - *Students are expected to master a second language.*
7. verb
If you **master** a difficult situation, you succeed in controlling it.
- *When you have mastered one situation you have to go on to the next.*
 - *His genius alone has mastered every crisis.*
8. countable noun
A **master** is a male teacher.
- *Mr Palmer was a retired maths master.*
9. countable noun
A famous male painter of the past is often called a **master** .
- *...a portrait by the Dutch master, Vincent Van Gogh.*
10. adjective
A **master** copy of something such as a film or a tape recording is an original copy that can be used to produce other copies.
- *Keep one as a master copy for your own reference and circulate the others.*
11. countable noun
The **master** of a ship that carries passengers or goods is its captain .
- *...the Royal Pacific's master.*
12. singular noun
A **master's degree** can be referred to as a **master's** .
- *I've a master's in economics.*
13. countable noun
Master is sometimes used by the followers of a male religious teacher or leader as a way of referring to him or addressing him.
- *She believed that she had been selected by the Master to reveal forgotten wisdom.*
14. title noun
In the past, **Master** was used before a boy's name as a polite way of referring to him or addressing him. Nowadays , **Master** can be written before a boy's name when addressing a letter to him.
- *Nice to see you, Master Simon.*
15. be one's own master

human

humans

Explain

1. adjective
Human means relating to or concerning people.
 - *...the human body.*
 - *...human history.*
2. countable noun
You can refer to people as **humans** , especially when you are comparing them with animals or machines.

- *Its rate of growth was fast—much more like that of an ape than that of a human.*

3. adjective

Human feelings , weaknesses , or errors are ones that are typical of humans rather than machines.

- *...an ever-growing risk of human error.*
- *We're not perfect. We're only human.*

material

materials

Explain

1. variable noun

A **material** is a solid substance.

- *...electrons in a conducting material such as a metal.*
- *...the design of new absorbent materials.*
- *...recycling of all materials.*

2. variable noun

Material is cloth.

- *...the thick material of her skirt.*
- *The materials are soft and comfortable to wear.*

3. plural noun

Materials are the things that you need for a particular activity .

- *The builders ran out of materials.*
- *...sewing materials.*

4. uncountable noun

Ideas or information that are used as a basis for a book , play, or film can be referred to as **material** .

- *In my version of the story, I added some new material.*
- *...the film producer's debt to the author of original screen material.*

5. adjective

Material things are related to possessions or money , rather than to more abstract things such as ideas or values .

- *Every room must have been stuffed with material things.*
- *...the material world.*
- *...his descriptions of their poor material conditions.*

6. uncountable noun

If you say that someone is a particular kind of **material** , you mean that they have the qualities or abilities to do a particular job or task .

- *She was not university material.*
- *His message has changed little since he became presidential material.*

7. adjective

Material evidence or information is directly relevant and important in a legal or academic argument .

- *The nature and availability of material evidence was not to be discussed.*
- *They contend that the company failed to disclose material information.*

industrial

Explain

1. adjective

You use **industrial** to describe things which relate to or are used in industry.

- *...industrial machinery and equipment.*
- *...a link between industrial chemicals and cancer.*

2. adjective

An **industrial** city or country is one in which industry is important or highly developed .

- *...ministers from leading western industrial countries.*

nut

nuts

Explain

1. countable noun

The firm shelled fruit of some trees and bushes are called **nuts** . Some nuts can be eaten .

- *Nuts and seeds are good sources of vitamin E.*

2. countable noun

A **nut** is a thick metal ring which you screw onto a metal rod called a bolt. Nuts and bolts are used to hold things such as pieces of machinery together .

- *If you want to repair the wheels, you just undo the four nuts.*
- *...nuts and bolts that haven't been tightened up.*

3. countable noun

If you describe someone as, for example , a football **nut** or a health **nut** , you mean that they are extremely enthusiastic about the thing mentioned .

- *...a football nut who spends thousands of pounds travelling to watch games.*

4. adjective

If you are **nuts about** something or someone, you like them very much.

- *They're nuts about the car.*
- *She's nuts about you.*

5. countable noun

If you refer to someone as a **nut** , you mean that they are mad .

- *There's some nut out there with a gun.*

6. adjective

If you say that someone goes **nuts** or is **nuts** , you mean that they go crazy or are very foolish.

- *You guys are nuts.*
- *A number of the French players went nuts, completely out of control.*

7. plural noun

A man's testicles can be referred to as his **nuts** .

8. countable noun

Your head can be referred to as your **nut** .

9. do one's nut/go nuts

10. nuts and bolts

11. a tough nut

12. a hard nut to crack/ a tough nut to crack

inferior

inferiors

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **inferior** is not as good as something else.

- *Much of the imported coffee is of inferior quality.*
- *This resulted in overpriced and often inferior products.*
- *If children were made to feel inferior to other children their confidence declined.*

2. adjective

If one person is regarded as **inferior to** another, they are regarded as less important because they have less status or ability . **Inferior** is also a noun .

- *He preferred the company of those who were intellectually inferior to himself.*
- *A gentleman should always be civil, even to his inferiors.*

pace

paces pacing paced

Explain

1. singular noun

The **pace** of something is the speed at which it happens or is done.

- *Many people were not satisfied with the pace of change.*
- *...people who prefer to live at a slower pace.*
- *They could not stand the pace or the workload.*
- *Interest rates would come down as the recovery gathered pace.*

2. singular noun

Your **pace** is the speed at which you walk.

- *He moved at a brisk pace down the rue St Antoine.*
- *Their pace quickened as they approached their cars.*

3. countable noun

A **pace** is the distance that you move when you take one step.

- *He'd only gone a few paces before he stopped again.*
- *I took a pace backwards.*

4. verb

If you **pace** a small area, you keep walking up and down it, because you are anxious or impatient .

- *As they waited, Kravis paced the room nervously.*
- *He found John pacing around the flat, unable to sleep.*
- *She stared as he paced and yelled.*

5. verb

If you **pace yourself** when doing something, you do it at a steady rate.

- *It was a tough race and I had to pace myself.*

6. to keep pace

7. to keep pace

8. at one's own pace

9. put sb/go through their paces

infrared

Explain

1. adjective

Infrared radiation is similar to light but has a longer wavelength, so we cannot see it without special equipment .

2. adjective

Infrared equipment detects infrared radiation.

- *...searching with infra-red scanners for weapons and artillery.*

pedestrian

pedestrians

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pedestrian** is a person who is walking , especially in a town or city, rather than travelling in a vehicle.

- *In Los Angeles a pedestrian is a rare spectacle.*
- *More than a third of all pedestrian injuries are to children.*

2. adjective

If you describe something as **pedestrian** , you mean that it is ordinary and not at all interesting.

- *His style is so pedestrian that the book becomes a real bore.*

- *I drove home contemplating my own more pedestrian lifestyle.*

inland

Explain

1. adverb

If something is situated **inland** , it is away from the coast , towards or near the middle of a country. If you go **inland** , you go away from the coast, towards the middle of a country.

- *The vast majority live further inland.*
- *It's about 15 minutes' drive inland from Cannes.*
- *The car turned away from the coast and headed inland.*

2. adjective

Inland areas, lakes , and places are not on the coast, but in or near the middle of a country.

- *...a rather quiet inland town.*

period

periods

Explain

1. countable noun

A **period** is a length of time.

- *This crisis might last for a long period of time.*
- *...a period of a few months.*
- *...for a limited period only.*

2. countable noun

A **period** in the life of a person, organization, or society is a length of time which is remembered for a particular situation or activity.

- *...a period of economic good health and expansion.*

- *He went through a period of wanting to be accepted.*

- *The South African years were his most creative period.*

3. countable noun

A particular length of time in history is sometimes called a **period** . For example, you can talk about **the Victorian period** or **the Elizabethan period** in Britain.

- *...the Roman period.*
- *No reference to their existence appears in any literature of the period.*
- *...the most difficult periods of history.*

4. adjective

Period costumes , furniture , and instruments were made at an earlier time in history, or look as if they were made then.

- *...dressed in full period costume.*
- *...replicas of period instruments.*

5. countable noun

Exercise , training, or study **periods** are lengths of time that are set aside for exercise, training, or study.

- *They accompanied him during his exercise periods.*

6. countable noun

At a school or college , a **period** is one of the parts that the day is divided into during which lessons or other activities take place.

- *...periods of private study.*
- *...taking his scripts to school in order to learn the lines in free periods.*

7. countable noun

When a woman has a **period** , she bleeds from her womb . This usually happens once a month , unless she is pregnant .

8. adverb

Some people say **period** after stating a fact or opinion when they want to emphasize that they are definite about something and do not want to discuss it further.

- *I don't want to do it, period.*

9. countable noun

A **period** is the punctuation mark (.) which you use at the end of a sentence when it is not a question or an exclamation.

junior

juniors

Explain

1. adjective

A **junior** official or employee holds a low-ranking position in an organization or profession . **Junior** is also a noun .

- *Junior and middle-ranking civil servants have pledged to join the indefinite strike.*
- *...a junior minister attached to the prime minister's office.*
- *The Lord Chancellor has said legal aid work is for juniors when they start out in the law.*

2. singular noun

If you are someone's **junior** , you are younger than they are.

- *She now lives with actor Denis Lawson, 10 years her junior.*

3. countable noun

Junior is sometimes used after the name of the younger of two men in a family who have the same name, sometimes in order to prevent confusion . The abbreviation Jr is also used.

- *His son, Arthur Ochs Junior, is expected to succeed him as publisher.*

4. countable noun

In the United States , a student in the third year of a high school or university course is called a **junior** .

- *Their youngest daughter Amy's a junior at the University of Evansville in Indiana.*
- *It was the summer before his junior year in high school.*

portrait

portraits

Explain

1. countable noun

A **portrait** is a painting, drawing, or photograph of a particular person.

- *The artist was asked to paint a portrait of the Queen.*
- *...the English portrait painter Augustus John.*

2. countable noun

A **portrait** of a person, place, or thing is a verbal description of them.

- *...this gripping, funny portrait of Jewish life in 1950s London.*

large

larger largest

Explain

1. adjective

A **large** thing or person is greater in size than usual or average .

- *The Pike lives mainly in large rivers and lakes.*
- *In the largest room about a dozen children and seven adults are sitting on the carpet.*

- *He was a large man with thick dark hair.*

2. adjective

A **large** amount or number of people or things is more than the average amount or number.

- *The gang finally fled with a large amount of cash and jewellery.*
- *There are a large number of centres where you can take full-time courses.*
- *The figures involved are truly very large.*

3. adjective

A **large** organization or business does a lot of work or commercial activity and employs a lot of people.

- *...a large company in Chicago.*
- *Many large organizations run courses for their employees.*

4. adjective

Large is used to indicate that a problem or issue which is being discussed is very important or serious .

- *...the already large problem of under-age drinking.*
- *There's a very large question about the viability of the newspaper.*

5. at large

6. at large

7. by and large

postage

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Postage is the money that you pay for sending letters and packages by post .

little

Explain

1. determiner

You use **little** to indicate that there is only a very small amount of something. You can use 'so', 'too', and 'very' in front of **little** . **Little** is also a quantifier . **Little** is also a pronoun.

- *I had little money and little free time.*
- *I find that I need very little sleep these days.*
- *There is little doubt that a diet high in fibre is more satisfying.*
- *So far little progress has been made towards ending the fighting.*
- *The pudding is quick and easy and needs little attention once in the oven.*
- *Little of the existing housing is of good enough quality.*
- *Little of the money gets through to the children who need it.*
- *He ate little, and drank less.*
- *In general, employers do little to help the single working mother.*
- *Little is known about his childhood.*

2. adverb

Little means not very often or to only a small extent.

- *On their way back to Marseille they spoke very little.*
- *The animals were covered in dust, but otherwise little affected.*

3. determiner

A **little** of something is a small amount of it, but not very much. You can also say a **very little** . **Little** is also a pronoun. **Little** is also a quantifier.

- *Mrs Caan needs a little help getting her groceries home.*

- *A little food would do us all some good.*
- *...a little light reading.*
- *I shall be only a very little time.*
- *They get paid for it. Not much. Just a little.*
- *Pour a little of the sauce over the chicken.*
- *I'm sure she won't mind sparing us a little of her time.*

4. adverb

If you do something **a little** , you do it for a short time.

- *He walked a little by himself in the garden.*

5. adverb

A little or **a little bit** means to a small extent or degree.

- *He complained a little of a nagging pain between his shoulder blades.*
- *He was a little bit afraid of his father's reaction.*
- *If you have to drive when you are tired, go a little more slowly than you would normally.*
- *He wanted to have someone to whom he could talk a little about himself.*

6. little by little

postman

postmen

Explain

1. countable noun

A **postman** is a man whose job is to collect and deliver letters and packages that are sent by post

loud

louder loudest

Explain

1. adjective

If a noise is **loud** , the level of sound is very high and it can be easily heard . Someone or something that is **loud** produces a lot of noise. **Loud** is also an adverb .

- *Suddenly there was a loud bang.*
- *His voice became harsh and loud.*
- *The band was starting to play a fast, loud number.*
- *...amazingly loud discos.*
- *She wonders whether Paul's hearing is OK because he turns the television up very loud.*

2. adjective

If someone is **loud** in their support for or criticism of something, they express their opinion very often and in a very strong way.

- *Mr Adams' speech yesterday was very loud in condemnation of the media.*
- *Mr Jones received loud support from his local community.*

3. adjective

If you describe something, especially a piece of clothing , as **loud** , you dislike it because it has very bright colours or very large, bold patterns which look unpleasant .

- *He liked to shock with his gold chains and loud clothes.*
- *I once paid £120 for an extremely loud shirt which I've yet to wear.*

4. loud and clear

5. out loud

resolution

resolutions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **resolution** is a formal decision taken at a meeting by means of a vote.

- *He replied that the U.N. had passed two major resolutions calling for a complete withdrawal.*
- *...a draft resolution on the occupied territories.*

2. countable noun

If you make a **resolution**, you decide to try very hard to do something.

- *They made a resolution to lose all the weight gained during the Christmas period.*

3. uncountable noun

Resolution is determination to do something or not do something.

- *'I think I'll try a hypnotist,' I said with sudden resolution.*

4. singular noun

The **resolution** of a problem or difficulty is the final solving of it.

- *...the successful resolution of a dispute.*
- *...in order to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis.*

5. uncountable noun

The **resolution** of an image is how clear the image is.

- *Now this machine gives us such high resolution that we can see very small specks of calcium.*

massive

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **massive** is very large in size, quantity, or extent.

- *There was evidence of massive fraud.*
- *...massive air attacks.*
- *The scale of the problem is massive.*
- *...a massive steam boat.*

2. adjective

If you describe a medical condition as **massive**, you mean that it is extremely serious.

- *He died six weeks later of a massive heart attack.*

rifle

rifles rifling rifled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rifle** is a gun with a long barrel.

- *They shot him at point blank range with an automatic rifle.*
- *Neighbours heard the sound of rifle fire and alerted the police.*

2. verb

If you **rifle through** things or **rifle** them, you make a quick search among them in order to find something or steal something.

- *I discovered him rifling through the filing cabinet.*
- *The men rifled through his clothing and snatched the wallet.*
- *There were lockers by each seat and I quickly rifled the contents.*

petty

pettier pettiest

Explain

1. adjective

You can use **petty** to describe things such as problems , rules, or arguments which you think are unimportant or relate to unimportant things.

- *He was miserable all the time and rows would start over petty things.*
- *...endless rules and petty regulations.*
- *The meeting degenerated into petty squabbling.*

2. adjective

If you describe someone's behaviour as **petty** , you mean that they care too much about small, unimportant things and perhaps that they are unnecessarily unkind .

- *He was petty-minded and obsessed with detail.*
- *I think that attitude is a bit petty.*

3. adjective

Petty is used of people or actions that are less important , serious , or great than others.

- *Wilson was not a man who dealt with petty officials.*
- *...petty crime, such as handbag-snatching and minor break-ins.*

scarf

scarfs scarves

Explain

1. countable noun

A **scarf** is a piece of cloth that you wear round your neck or head, usually to keep yourself warm

- *He reached up to loosen the scarf around his neck.*

several

Explain

1. determiner

Several is used to refer to an imprecise number of people or things that is not large but is greater than two. **Several** is also a quantifier . **Several** is also a pronoun.

- *I had lived two doors away from this family for several years.*
- *Several blue plastic boxes under the window were filled with record albums.*
- *Several hundred students gathered on campus.*
- *Several of the delays were caused by the new high-tech baggage system.*
- *According to several of their friends, their 25-year marriage has suffered some difficulties.*
- *No one drug will suit or work for everyone and sometimes several may have to be tried.*
- *Ben's case is not unique but one of several I have come up against during the past few years.*

schedule

schedules scheduling scheduled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **schedule** is a plan that gives a list of events or tasks and the times at which each one should happen or be done.

- *He has been forced to adjust his schedule.*
- *We both have such hectic schedules.*

2. uncountable noun

You can use **schedule** to refer to the time or way something is planned to be done. For example

, if something is completed **on schedule** , it is completed at the time planned.

- *The jet arrived in Johannesburg two minutes ahead of schedule.*
- *Everything went according to schedule.*
- *It will be completed several weeks behind schedule.*

3. verb

If something **is scheduled** to happen at a particular time, arrangements are made for it to happen at that time.

- *The space shuttle had been scheduled to blast off at 04:38.*
- *A presidential election was scheduled for last December.*
- *No new talks are scheduled.*

4. countable noun

A **schedule** is a written list of things, for example a list of prices , details , or conditions .

5. countable noun

A **schedule** is a list of all the times when trains , boats , buses , or aircraft are supposed to arrive at or leave a particular place.

- *...a bus schedule.*

6. countable noun

In a school or college , a **schedule** is a diagram that shows the times in the week at which particular subjects are taught .

small

smaller smallest

Explain

1. adjective

A **small** person, thing, or amount of something is not large in physical size.

- *She is small for her age.*

- *The window was far too small for him to get through.*
- *Next door to the garage is a small orchard area.*
- *Stick them on using a small amount of glue.*

2. adjective

A **small** group or quantity consists of only a few people or things.

- *A small group of students meets regularly to learn Japanese.*
- *Guns continued to be produced in small numbers.*

3. adjective

A **small** child is a very young child.

- *I have a wife and two small children.*
- *What were you like when you were small?*

4. adjective

You use **small** to describe something that is not significant or great in degree .

- *It's quite easy to make quite small changes to the way that you work.*
- *No detail was too small to escape her attention.*
- *He believes this to be a relatively small problem.*

5. adjective

Small businesses or companies employ a small number of people and do business with a small number of clients .

- *...shops, restaurants and other small businesses.*
- *Tool companies here are generally small.*

6. graded adjective

If someone speaks in a **small** voice , they speak in a quiet , high voice because they are frightened or ashamed .

- *'I'm scared,' she said in a very small voice.*

7. adjective

If someone makes you look or feel **small** , they make you look or feel stupid or ashamed.

- *This may just be another of her schemes to make me look small.*
- *When your children misbehave tell them without making them feel small.*

8. singular noun

The **small of** your **back** is the bottom part of your back that curves in slightly .

- *Place your hands on the small of your back and breathe in.*

serial

serials

Explain

1. countable noun

A **serial** is a story which is broadcast on television or radio or is published in a magazine or newspaper in a number of parts over a period of time.

- *...one of BBC television's most popular serials, Eastenders.*
- *Maupin's novels have all appeared originally as serials.*

2. adjective

Serial killings or attacks are a series of killings or attacks committed by the same person. This person is known as a **serial** killer or attacker.

- *...serial murders.*
- *The serial killer claimed to have killed 400 people.*

soccer

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Soccer is a game played by two teams of eleven players using a round ball. Players kick the ball to each other and try to score goals by kicking the ball into a large net . Outside the USA, this game is also referred to as football .

swift

swifter swiftest swifts

Explain

1. adjective

A **swift** event or process happens very quickly or without delay .

- *Our task is to challenge the U.N. to make a swift decision.*
- *The police were swift to act.*

2. adjective

Something that is **swift** moves very quickly.

- *With a swift movement, Matthew Jerrold sat upright.*

3. countable noun

A **swift** is a small bird with long curved wings.

stamp

stamps stamping stamped

Explain

1. countable noun

A **stamp** or a **postage stamp** is a small piece of paper which you stick on an envelope or package before you post it to pay for the cost of the postage.

- *...a book of stamps.*

- *It's FREEPOST, so there's no need for a stamp.*
 - *...two first class stamps.*
2. countable noun
A **stamp** is a small block of wood or metal which has a pattern or a group of letters on one side. You press it onto a pad of ink and then onto a piece of paper in order to produce a mark on the paper. The mark that you produce is also called a **stamp** .
- *...a date stamp and an ink pad.*
 - *You may live only where the stamp in your passport says you may.*
3. verb
If you **stamp** a mark or word on an object, you press the mark or word onto the object using a stamp or other device.
- *Car manufacturers stamp a vehicle identification number in several places.*
 - *When a gift voucher is exchanged it's stamped with the details of the store.*
 - *'Eat before JULY 14' was stamped on the label.*
4. verb
If you **stamp** or **stamp** your **foot** , you lift your foot and put it down very hard on the ground, for example because you are angry or because your feet are cold . **Stamp** is also a noun .
- *Often he teased me till my temper went and I stamped and screamed.*
 - *His foot stamped down on the accelerator.*
 - *She stamped her feet on the pavement to keep out the cold.*
 - *...hearing the creak of a door and the stamp of cold feet.*
5. verb
If you **stamp** somewhere , you walk there putting your feet down very hard on the ground because you are angry.
- *'I'm going before things get any worse!' he shouted as he stamped out of the bedroom.*
 - *Overweight and sweating in the humid weather, she stamped from room to room.*
6. verb
If you **stamp on** something, you put your foot down on it very hard.
- *He received the original ban last week after stamping on the referee's foot during the supercup final.*
7. singular noun
If something bears **the stamp of** a particular quality or person, it clearly has that quality or was done by that person.
- *...lawns and flowerbeds that bore the stamp of years of confident care.*
 - *Most of us want to put the stamp of our personality on our home.*
8. verb
A quality, feature, or action that **stamps** someone or something **as** a particular thing shows clearly that they are this thing.
- *Chris Boardman stamped himself as the 4,000m favourite by setting the world's fastest outdoor time in Barcelona last night.*

that

Explain

1. pronoun
You use **that** to refer back to an idea or situation expressed in a previous sentence or sentences. **That** is also a determiner .
- *They said you particularly wanted to talk to me. Why was that?*
 - *'Hey, is there anything the matter with my sisters?'—'Is that why you're phoning?'*

- *Some feared Germany might raise its interest rates. That could have set the scene for a confrontation with the U.S.*
 - *Their main aim is to support you when making a claim for medical treatment. For that reason the claims procedure is as simple and helpful as possible.*
2. determiner
You use **that** to refer to someone or something already mentioned.
- *The Commissioners get between £50,000 and £60,000 a year in various allowances. But that amount can soar to £90,000 a year.*
 - *The biggest increase was on the cheapest model, the CRX-HF. That car had a 1990 base price of 9,145.*
3. determiner
When you have been talking about a particular period of time, you use **that** to indicate that you are still referring to the same period. You use expressions such as **that morning** or **that afternoon** to indicate that you are referring to an earlier period of the same day.
- *The story was published in a Sunday newspaper later that week.*
 - *That morning I had put on a pair of black slacks and a long-sleeved black blouse.*
4. pronoun
You use **that** in expressions such as **that of** and **that which** to introduce more information about something already mentioned, instead of repeating the noun which refers to it.
- *The cool air and green light made the atmosphere curiously like that of an aquarium.*
 - *Pollution falls into two categories, that which we can see or smell, and that which is invisible and odourless.*
5. pronoun
You use **that** in front of words or expressions which express agreement, responses, or reactions to what has just been said.
- *'She said she'd met you in England.'—'That's true.'*
 - *'I've never been to Paris.'—'That's a pity. You should go one day.'*
6. determiner
You use **that** to introduce a person or thing that you are going to give details or information about. **That which** is used to introduce a subject in very general terms.
- *In my case I chose that course which I considered right.*
 - *That person who violates the law and discriminates should suffer in his career.*
 - *Too much time is spent worrying over that which one can't change.*
7. determiner
You use **that** when you are referring to someone or something which is a distance away from you in position or time, especially when you indicate or point to them. When there are two or more things near you, **that** refers to the more distant one. **That** is also a pronoun.
- *Look at that guy. He's got red socks.*
 - *Where did you get that hat?*
 - *You see that man over there, that man who has just walked into the room?*
 - *Leo, what's that you're writing?*
 - *That looks heavy. May I carry it for you?*
8. pronoun
You use **that** when you are identifying someone or asking about their identity.
- *That's my wife you were talking to.*
 - *That's John Martin, operations chief for the company.*
 - *'Who's that with you?'—'A friend of mine.'*

- *I answered the phone and this voice went, 'Hello? Is that Alison?'*

9. determiner

You can use **that** when you expect the person you are talking to to know what or who you are referring to, without needing to identify the particular person or thing fully . **That** is also a pronoun.

- *I really thought I was something when I wore that hat and my patent leather shoes.*
- *Did you get that cheque I sent?*
- *That idiot porter again knocked on my door!*
- *That was a terrible case of blackmail in the paper today.*
- *That was a good year, wasn't it?*

10. adverb

If something is **not that** bad , funny , or expensive for example , it is not as bad, funny, or expensive as it might be or as has been suggested .

- *Not even Gary, he said, was that stupid.*
- *It isn't that funny.*
- *He didn't look that bad.*
- *Kids don't change that fast.*

11. adverb

You can use **that** to emphasize the degree of a feeling or quality.

- *I would have walked out, I was that angry.*
- *Do I look that stupid?*
- *They actually moved down from upstairs because the rent's that expensive.*

12. and that/and all that

13. at that

14. that is/that is to say

15. that is it

16. that's it

17. just like that

18. that is that

ultraviolet

Explain

1. adjective

Ultraviolet light or radiation is what causes your skin to become darker in colour after you have been in sunlight . In large amounts ultraviolet light is harmful .

- *The sun's ultraviolet rays are responsible for both tanning and burning.*

succession

successions

Explain

1. singular noun

A **succession of** things of the same kind is a number of them that exist or happen one after the other.

- *Adams took a succession of jobs which have stood him in good stead.*
- *Scoring three goals in quick succession, he made it 10-8.*
- *She has won the championship for the third year in succession.*

2. uncountable noun

Succession is the fact or right of being the next person to have an important job or position.

- *She is now seventh in line of succession to the throne.*

upper

uppers

Explain

1. adjective

You use **upper** to describe something that is above something else.

- *There is a smart restaurant on the upper floor.*
- *Students travel on the cheap lower deck and tourists on the upper.*

2. adjective

You use **upper** to describe the higher part of something.

- *...the upper part of the foot.*
- *...the muscles of the upper back and chest.*
- *...the upper rungs of the ladder.*

3. the upper hand

4. countable noun

The **upper** of a shoe is the top part of it, which is attached to the sole and the heel .

- *Wear well-fitting, lace-up shoes with soft uppers.*
- *Leather uppers allow the feet to breathe.*

5. countable noun

Uppers are drugs that make you feel very happy , excited , and full of energy .

- *...people crazy on uppers and downers.*
- *I'd taken a handful of uppers.*

tense

tenser tensest tenses tensing tensed

Explain

1. adjective

A **tense** situation or period of time is one that makes people anxious , because they do not know what is going to happen next .

- *This gesture of goodwill did little to improve the tense atmosphere at the talks.*

- *After three very tense weeks he phoned again.*

- *There was a tense silence.*

2. adjective

If you are **tense** , you are anxious and nervous and cannot relax .

- *Dart, who had at first been very tense, at last relaxed.*

3. adjective

If your body is **tense** , your muscles are tight and not relaxed.

- *She lay, eyes shut, body tense.*
- *A bath can relax tense muscles.*

4. verb

If your muscles **tense** , if you **tense** , or if you **tense** your muscles, your muscles become tight and stiff , often because you are anxious or frightened . **Tense up** means the same as tense .

- *Newman's stomach muscles tensed.*
- *He tensed as the big guy gripped his shoulder.*
- *Jane tensed her muscles to stop them from shaking.*
- *When we are under stress our bodies tend to tense up.*
- *I tried not to tense up, or become obviously wary.*
- *Tense up the muscles in both of your legs.*

5. countable noun

The **tense** of a verb group is its form, which usually shows whether you are referring to past, present, or future time. Compare aspect [sense 4]

- *It was as though Corinne was already dead: they were speaking of her in the past tense.*

worse

Explain

1. **Worse** is the comparative of bad .
2. **Worse** is the comparative of badly .
3. **Worse** is used to form the comparative of compound adjectives beginning with ' bad ' and 'badly.' For example , the comparative of 'badly off' is 'worse off'.
4. to go from bad to worse
5. sb could do worse
6. to change for the worse
7. the worse/none the worse for sth

ton

tons

Explain

1. countable noun
A **ton** is a unit of weight that is equal to 2240 pounds in Britain and to 2000 pounds in the United States .
 - *Hundreds of tons of oil spilled into the sea.*
 - *Getting rid of rubbish can cost 100atons.*
2. countable noun
A **ton** is the same as a tonne .
3. to come down on somebody like a ton of bricks
4. weigh a ton

worst

Explain

1. **Worst** is the superlative of bad .
2. **Worst** is the superlative of badly .

3. singular noun

The worst is the most unpleasant or unfavourable thing that could happen or does happen.

- *Though mine safety has much improved, miners' families still fear the worst.*
- *The country had come through the worst of the recession.*

4. **Worst** is used to form the superlative of compound adjectives beginning with 'bad' and 'badly'. For example , the superlative of 'badly-affected' is 'worst-affected'.
5. worst of all
6. at (the) worst
7. at one's worst
8. if the worst comes to the worst
9. to do one's worst

village

villages

Explain

1. countable noun
A **village** consists of a group of houses, together with other buildings such as a church and a school , in a country area.
 - *He lives quietly in the country in a village near Lahti.*
 - *...the village school.*

artistic

Explain

1. adjective
Someone who is **artistic** is good at drawing or painting , or arranging things in a beautiful way.

- *They encourage boys to be sensitive and artistic.*
- *Mary's got it all so nice—you remember how artistic she always was with colors.*

2. adjective

Artistic means relating to art or artists.

- *...the campaign for artistic freedom.*
- *...their 1,300 year old artistic traditions.*

3. adjective

An **artistic** design or arrangement is beautiful.

- *...an artistic arrangement of stone paving.*

address

addresses addressing addressed

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **address** is the number of the house, flat, or apartment and the name of the street and the town where you live or work.

- *The address is 2025 M Street, Northwest, Washington, DC, 20036.*
- *We require details of your name and address.*

2. verb

If a letter, envelope, or parcel **is addressed to** you, your name and address have been written on it.

- *Applications should be addressed to: The business affairs editor.*

3. countable noun

The **address** of a website is its location on the internet, for example <http://www.collinsdictionary.com>.

- *Internet addresses are also known as URLs.*

4. countable noun

The **address** of a cell on a computer spreadsheet refers to the particular row and column number where it is located, for example 'C2' or 'N63'.

5. verb

If you **address** a group of people, you give a speech to them. **Address** is also a noun.

- *He is due to address a conference on human rights next week.*
- *The President gave an address to the American people.*

6. verb

If you **address** someone or **address** a remark to them, you say something to them.

- *The two foreign ministers did not address each other directly when they last met.*
- *He addressed his remarks to Eleanor, ignoring Maria.*

7. verb

If you **address** someone by a name or a title such as 'sir', you call them that name or title when you talk or write to them.

- *I heard him address her as darling.*
- *The Duchess should be addressed as Your Grace.*

8. verb

If you **address** a problem or task or if you **address yourself to** it, you try to understand it or deal with it.

- *Mr King sought to address those fears when he spoke at the meeting.*
- *Throughout the book we have addressed ourselves to the problem of ethics.*

catholic

Catholics

Explain

1. adjective

The **Catholic** Church is the branch of the Christian Church that accepts the Pope as its leader and is based in the Vatican in Rome .

- ...the Catholic Church.
- ...Catholic priests.
- ...the Catholic faith.

2. countable noun

A **Catholic** is a member of the Catholic Church.

- At least nine out of ten Mexicans are baptised Catholics.

3. adjective

If you describe a collection of things or people as **catholic** , you are emphasizing that they are very varied .

- He was a man of catholic tastes, a lover of grand opera, history and the fine arts.

audience

audiences

Explain

1. countable noun

The **audience** at a play, concert, film, or public meeting is the group of people watching or listening to it.

- The entire audience broke into loud applause.
- He was speaking to an audience of students at the Institute for International Affairs.

2. countable noun

The **audience** for a television or radio programme consists of all the people who watch or listen to it.

- The concert will be relayed to a worldwide television audience.

3. countable noun

The **audience** of a writer or artist is the people who read their books or look at their work.

- Merle's writings reached a wide audience during his lifetime.
- She began to find a receptive audience for her work.

4. countable noun

If you have an **audience with** someone important , you have a formal meeting with them.

- The Prime Minister will seek an audience with the Queen later this morning.

crude

cruder crudest crudes

Explain

1. adjective

A **crude** method or measurement is not exact or detailed , but may be useful or correct in a rough , general way.

- Measurements of blood pressure are a crude way of assessing the risk of heart disease.
- Birthplace data are only the crudest indicator of actual migration paths.

2. adjective

If you describe an object that someone has made as **crude** , you mean that it has been made in a very simple way or from very simple parts.

- ...crude wooden boxes.

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **crude** , you disapprove of them because they speak or behave in a rude , offensive , or unsophisticated way.

- Nev! Must you be quite so crude?
- ...crude language.
- ...crude sexual jokes.

4. adjective

Crude substances are in a natural or unrefined state, and have not yet been used in manufacturing processes.

- *...8.5 million tonnes of crude steel.*

5. variable noun

Crude is the same as crude oil .

author

authors authoring authored

Explain

1. countable noun

The **author of** a piece of writing is the person who wrote it.

- *She is the joint author of a booklet on Integrated Education.*

2. countable noun

An **author** is a person whose job is writing books.

- *...Philip Pullman, the best-selling author of children's fiction.*

3. countable noun

The **author of** a plan or proposal is the person who thinks of it and works out the details .

- *The authors of the plan believe they can reach this point within about two years.*

4. verb

To **author** something means to be the author of it.

- *Then he opened a restaurant, authored a book, and landed his own radio show.*

customary

Explain

1. adjective

Customary is used to describe things that people usually do in a particular society or in particular circumstances .

- *It is customary to offer a drink or a snack to guests.*
- *At Christmas it was customary for the children to perform bits of poetry.*
- *They interrupted the customary one minute's silence with jeers and shouts.*

2. adjective

Customary is used to describe something that a particular person usually does or has.

- *The king carried himself with his customary elegance.*
- *Yvonne took her customary seat behind her desk.*

barn

barns

Explain

1. countable noun

A **barn** is a building on a farm in which crops or animal food can be kept .

dominant

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **dominant** is more powerful , successful , influential , or noticeable than other people or things.

- *...a change which would maintain his party's dominant position in Scotland.*

- *She was a dominant figure in the French film industry.*

2. adjective

A **dominant** gene is one that produces a particular characteristic, whether a person has only one of these genes from one parent , or two genes, one from each parent. Compare recessive .

- *Dimples are quite rare and caused by one dominant gene*

benefit

benefits benefiting benefitting benefited benefitted

Explain

1. variable noun

The **benefit of** something is the help that you get from it or the advantage that results from it.

- *Each family farms individually and reaps the benefit of its labor.*
- *I'm a great believer in the benefits of this form of therapy.*
- *For maximum benefit, use your treatment every day.*

2. uncountable noun

If something is **to** your **benefit** or is **of benefit to** you, it helps you or improves your life.

- *This could now work to Albania's benefit.*
- *I hope what I have written will be of benefit to someone else who may feel the same way.*

3. verb

If you **benefit from** something or if it **benefits** you, it helps you or improves your life.

- *Both sides have benefited from the talks.*
- *...a variety of government programs benefiting children.*

4. uncountable noun

If you have the **benefit of** some information, knowledge , or equipment , you are able to use it so that you can achieve something.

- *Steve didn't have the benefit of a formal college education.*
- *With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear we ought to have done more.*
- *This remarkable achievement took place without the benefit of modern technology.*

5. variable noun

Benefit is money that is given by the government to people who are poor , ill, or unemployed.

- *...the removal of benefit from school-leavers.*
- *I was told that in order to get benefit payments I would have to answer some questions.*

6. countable noun

A **benefit** , or a **benefit** concert or dinner , is an event that is held in order to raise money for a particular charity or person.

- *I am organising a benefit gig in Bristol to raise these funds.*

7. the benefit of the doubt

8. for the benefit of sb

extensive

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **extensive** covers or includes a large physical area.

- *...an extensive tour of Latin America.*
- *When built, the palace and its grounds were more extensive than the city itself.*

2. adjective

Something that is **extensive** covers a wide range of details , ideas , or items .

- *There was extensive coverage of World Book Day on the BBC.*
- *...the extensive research into public attitudes to science.*
- *The facilities available are very extensive.*

3. adjective

If something is **extensive** , it is very great.

- *The blast caused extensive damage, shattering the ground-floor windows.*
- *The security forces have extensive powers of search and arrest.*
- *Mr Marr makes extensive use of exclusively Scottish words.*

body

bodies

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **body** is all your physical parts, including your head, arms, and legs.

- *The largest organ in the body is the liver.*

2. countable noun

You can also refer to the main part of your body, except for your arms, head, and legs, as your **body** .

- *Lying flat on the floor, twist your body on to one hip and cross your upper leg over your body.*

3. countable noun

You can refer to a person's dead body as a **body** .

- *Officials said they had found no traces of violence on the body of the politician.*

4. countable noun

A **body** is an organized group of people who deal with something officially .

- *...the chairperson of the police representative body, the Police Federation.*
- *...the main trade union body, COSATU, Congress of South African Trade Unions.*

5. countable noun

A **body of** people is a group of people who are together or who are connected in some way.

- *...that large body of people which teaches other people how to teach.*

6. singular noun

The **body of** something such as a building or a document is the main part of it or the largest part of it.

- *The main body of the church had been turned into a massive television studio.*
- *Give an introduction, followed by the body of the material, then a brief summary.*

7. countable noun

The **body** of a car or aeroplane is the main part of it, not including its engine, wheels , or wings.

- *The only shade was under the body of the plane.*

8. countable noun

A **body of** water is a large area of water, such as a lake or a sea.

- *It is probably the most polluted body of water in the world.*

9. countable noun

A **body of** information is a large amount of it.

- *An increasing body of evidence suggests that all of us have cancer cells in our bodies at times during our lives.*

10. uncountable noun

If you say that an alcoholic drink has **body** , you mean that it has a full and strong flavour .

- *...a dry wine with good body.*

11. countable noun
A **body** is the same as a bodysuit .
12. over sb's dead body
13. body and soul
14. to keep body and soul together

feminine

Explain

1. adjective
Feminine qualities and things relate to or are considered typical of women, in contrast to men.
 - *Women all over the world are abandoning traditional feminine roles.*
 - *...a manufactured ideal of feminine beauty.*
2. adjective
Someone or something that is **feminine** has qualities that are considered typical of women, especially being pretty or gentle .
 - *I've always been attracted to very feminine, delicate women.*
 - *The bedroom has a light, feminine look.*
3. adjective
In some languages, a **feminine** noun, pronoun , or adjective has a different form from a masculine or neuter one, or behaves in a different way.

bulk

bulks bulking bulked

Explain

1. singular noun
You can refer to something's **bulk** when you want to emphasize that it is very large.
 - *The truck pulled out of the lot, its bulk unnerving against the dawn.*

- *...the shadowy bulk of an ancient barn.*

2. singular noun
You can refer to a large person's body or to their weight or size as their **bulk** .

- *Bannol lowered his bulk carefully into the chair.*
- *Despite his bulk, he moved lightly on his feet.*

3. quantifier
The **bulk of** something is most of it. **Bulk** is also a pronoun .

- *The bulk of the text is essentially a review of these original documents.*
- *The vast bulk of imports and exports are carried by sea.*
- *They come from all over the world, though the bulk is from the Indian subcontinent.*

4. uncountable noun
If you buy or sell something **in bulk** , you buy or sell it in large quantities .

- *Buying in bulk is more economical than shopping for small quantities.*
- *...bulk purchasing.*

futile

Explain

1. adjective
If you say that something is **futile** , you mean there is no point in doing it, usually because it has no chance of succeeding .
 - *He brought his arm up in a futile attempt to ward off the blow.*
 - *It would be futile to sustain his life when there is no chance of any improvement.*

composition

compositions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

When you talk about the **composition** of something, you are referring to the way in which its various parts are put together and arranged .

- *Television has transformed the size and composition of audiences.*
- *Forests vary greatly in composition from one part of the country to another.*

2. countable noun

The **compositions** of a composer , painter , or other artist are the works of art that they have produced.

- *Mozart's compositions are undoubtedly amongst the world's greatest.*

3. countable noun

A **composition** is a piece of written work that children write at school.

4. uncountable noun

Composition is the technique or skill involved in creating a work of art.

- *He taught the piano, organ and composition.*
- *The course is designed to help students with colour and composition.*

5. uncountable noun

Composition is the act of composing something such as a piece of music or a poem .

- *These plays are arranged in their order of composition.*

ignorant

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **ignorant** , you mean that they do not know things they should know. If someone is **ignorant of** a fact , they do not know it.

- *People don't like to ask questions for fear of appearing ignorant.*
- *Many people are worryingly ignorant of the facts about global warming.*
- *...ignorant peasants.*

2. adjective

People are sometimes described as **ignorant** when they do something that is not polite or kind . Some people think that it is not correct to use **ignorant** with this meaning .

- *I met some very ignorant people who called me all kinds of names.*

compromise

compromises compromising compromised

Explain

1. variable noun

A **compromise** is a situation in which people accept something slightly different from what they really want , because of circumstances or because they are considering the wishes of other people.

- *Encourage your child to reach a compromise between what he wants and what you want.*
- *Be ready and willing to make compromises between your needs and those of your partner.*
- *The government's policy of compromise is not universally popular.*

2. verb

If you **compromise with** someone, you reach an agreement with them in which you both give up something that you originally wanted. You can also say that two people or groups **compromise** .

- *The government has compromised with its critics over monetary policies.*

- *'Nine,' said I. 'Nine thirty,' tried he. We compromised on 9.15.*
- *Israel had originally wanted 1billioninaid, butcompromisedonthe650 million.*

3. verb

If someone **compromises** themselves or **compromises** their beliefs , they do something which damages their reputation for honesty , loyalty , or high moral principles .

- *He compromised himself by accepting a bribe.*
- *He would rather shoot himself than compromise his principles.*

illegal

illegals

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **illegal** , the law says that it is not allowed .

- *It is illegal to intercept radio messages.*
- *Birth control was illegal there until 1978.*
- *He has been charged with membership of an illegal organisation.*
- *...illegal drugs.*
- *...an illegal action.*

2. adjective

Illegal immigrants or workers have travelled into a country or are working without official permission . Illegal immigrants or workers are sometimes referred to as **illegals** .

- *...a clothing factory where many illegals worked.*

confusion

confusions

Explain

1. variable noun

If there is **confusion** about something, it is not clear what the true situation is, especially because people believe different things.

- *There's still confusion about the number of casualties.*
- *Omissions in my recent article must have caused confusion.*

2. uncountable noun

Confusion is a situation in which everything is in disorder, especially because there are lots of things happening at the same time.

- *There was confusion when a man fired shots.*
- *The rebel leader appears to have escaped in the confusion.*

3. variable noun

If your mind is in a state of **confusion** , you do not know what to believe or what you should do.

- *We always left his office in a state of confusion.*
- *...the pressures and confusions of puberty.*

immense

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **immense** , you mean that it is extremely large or great .

- *...an immense cloud of smoke.*
- *With immense relief I stopped running.*

corn

corns

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Corn is used to refer to crops such as wheat and barley . It can also be used to refer to the seeds from these plants.

- *...fields of corn.*
- *He filled the barn to the roof with corn.*

2. uncountable noun

Corn is the same as maize .

- *...rows of corn in an Iowa field.*

3. countable noun

Corns are small, painful areas of hard skin which can form on your foot, especially near your toes .

impatient

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **impatient** , you are annoyed because you have to wait too long for something.

- *He is impatient as the first hour passes and then another.*
- *The big clubs are becoming increasingly impatient at the rate of progress.*

2. adjective

If you are **impatient** , you are easily irritated by things.

- *Beware of being too impatient with others.*
- *He threw it aside with an impatient gesture and another oath and walked off.*

3. adjective

If you are **impatient to** do something or **impatient for** something to happen , you are eager to do it or for it to happen and do not want to wait.

- *He was impatient to get home.*
- *They are impatient for jobs and security.*

crop

crops cropping cropped

Explain

1. countable noun

Crops are plants such as wheat and potatoes that are grown in large quantities for food.

- *Rice farmers here still plant and harvest their crops by hand.*
- *The main crop is wheat and this is grown even on the very steep slopes.*

2. countable noun

The plants or fruits that are collected at harvest time are referred to as a **crop** .

- *Each year it produces a fine crop of fruit.*
- *This year's corn crop should be about 8 percent more than last year.*
- *In the Middle Ages, years of crop failure were always followed by terrible disease.*

3. singular noun

You can refer to a group of people or things that have appeared together as a **crop of** people or things.

- *The present crop of books and documentaries about Marilyn Monroe exploit the thirtieth anniversary of her death.*
- *Some of this year's crop of graduates are on a fast-track recruitment scheme.*

4. verb

When a plant **crops** , it produces fruits or parts which people want .

- *Although these vegetables adapt well to our temperate climate, they tend to crop poorly.*

5. verb

When you **crop** something that you have planted, you collect the fruits or parts that you want from it.

- *I started cropping my beans in July.*

6. verb

When an animal such as a cow or horse **crops** leaves or plants, it eats them.

- *I let the horse drop his head to crop the spring grass.*

7. verb

To **crop** someone's hair means to cut it short.

- *She cropped her hair and dyed it blonde.*

8. countable noun

A **crop** is a short hairstyle.

- *She had her long hair cut into a boyish crop.*

9. verb

If you **crop** a photograph , you cut part of it off, in order to get rid of part of the picture or to be able to frame it.

- *I decided to crop the picture just above the water line.*
- *Her husband was cropped from the photograph.*

impossible

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **impossible** cannot be done or cannot happen . **The impossible** is something which is impossible.

- *It was impossible for anyone to get in because no one knew the password.*
- *He thinks the tax is impossible to administer.*
- *You shouldn't promise what's impossible.*
- *Keller is good at describing music—an almost impossible task to do well.*
- *They were expected to do the impossible.*
- *No one can achieve the impossible.*

2. adjective

An **impossible** situation or an **impossible** position is one that is very difficult to deal with.

- *The Government was now in an almost impossible position.*

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **impossible** , you are annoyed that their bad behaviour or strong views make them difficult to deal with.

- *The woman is impossible, thought Frannie.*

dictation

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Dictation is the speaking or reading aloud of words for someone else to write down.

- *...taking dictation from the dean of the Faculty.*
- *He had had an arm amputated and relied on her to take down his books from dictation.*

2. uncountable noun

Dictation is the giving of orders in a forceful and commanding way .

- *She was unwilling to accept dictation from anyone.*

incredible

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **incredible**, you like them very much or are impressed by them, because they are extremely or unusually good.

- *The wildflowers will be incredible after this rain.*
- *Thanks for taking me, I had an incredible time.*
- *You're always an incredible help on these cases.*

2. adjective

If you say that something is **incredible**, you mean that it is very unusual or surprising, and you cannot believe it is really true, although it may be.

- *It seemed incredible that people would still want to play football during a war.*
- *We should not dismiss as lies the incredible stories that children may tell us.*

3. adjective

You use **incredible** to emphasize the degree, amount, or intensity of something.

- *We import an incredible amount of cheese from the Continent.*
- *There was an incredible din.*
- *It's incredible how much Francesca wants her father's approval.*
- *His panic was incredible.*

difficulty

difficulties

Explain

1. countable noun

A **difficulty** is a problem.

- *...the difficulty of getting accurate information.*
- *The country is facing great economic difficulties.*

2. uncountable noun

If you have **difficulty** doing something, you are not able to do it easily.

- *Do you have difficulty getting up?*
- *The injured man mounted his horse with difficulty.*

3. in difficulty

individual

individuals

Explain

1. adjective

Individual means relating to one person or thing, rather than to a large group.

- *They wait for the group to decide rather than making individual decisions.*
- *Aid to individual countries would be linked to progress towards democracy.*
- *Divide the vegetables among four individual dishes.*

2. countable noun

An **individual** is a person.

- *...anonymous individuals who are doing good things within our community.*
- *...the rights and responsibilities of the individual.*
- *A child's awareness of being an individual grows in stages during the pre-school years.*

3. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **individual** , you mean that you admire them because they are very unusual and do not try to imitate other people or things.

- *It was really all part of her very individual personality.*
- *The language is highly individual.*

dwelling

dwellings

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dwelling** or a **dwelling place** is a place where someone lives.

- *Some 3,500 new dwellings are planned for the area.*

inevitable

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **inevitable** , it is certain to happen and cannot be prevented or avoided . **The inevitable** is something which is inevitable.

- *If the case succeeds, it is inevitable that other trials will follow.*
- *The defeat had inevitable consequences for British policy.*
- *'It's just delaying the inevitable,' he said.*

infinite

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **infinite** , you are

emphasizing that it is extremely great in amount or degree .

- *...an infinite variety of landscapes.*
- *With infinite care, John shifted position.*
- *The choice is infinite.*

2. adjective

Something that is **infinite** has no limit, end, or edge . **The infinite** is something which is infinite.

- *...an infinite number of atoms.*
- *Obviously, no company has infinite resources.*
- *...God's infinite mercy.*
- *...pondering on the infinite.*

finance

finances financing financed

Explain

1. verb

When someone **finances** something such as a project or a purchase , they provide the money that is needed to pay for them. **Finance** is also a noun .

- *The fund has been used largely to finance the construction of federal prisons.*
- *Government expenditure is financed by taxation and by borrowing.*
- *They are seeking finance for a major scientific project.*

2. uncountable noun

Finance is the commercial or government activity of managing money, debt , credit, and investment .

- *...a major player in the world of high finance.*

- *The report recommends an overhaul of public finances.*
- *A former Finance Minister and five senior civil servants are accused of fraud.*

3. variable noun

You can refer to the amount of money that you have and how well it is organized as your **finances** .

- *Be prepared for unexpected news concerning your finances.*
- *Finance is usually the biggest problem for students.*

innumerable

Explain

1. adjective

Innumerable means very many, or too many to be counted .

- *He has invented innumerable excuses, told endless lies.*

grain

grains

Explain

1. countable noun

A **grain of** wheat, rice , or other cereal crop is a seed from it.

- *...a grain of wheat.*
- *...rice grains.*

2. variable noun

Grain is a cereal crop, especially wheat or corn , that has been harvested and is used for food or in trade.

- *...a bag of grain.*
- *...the best grains.*

3. countable noun

A **grain of** something such as sand or salt is a tiny hard piece of it.

- *...a grain of sand.*

4. singular noun

A **grain of** a quality is a very small amount of it.

- *There's more than a grain of truth in that.*

5. singular noun

The grain of a piece of wood is the direction of its fibres . You can also refer to the pattern of lines on the surface of the wood as **the grain** .

- *Brush the paint generously over the wood in the direction of the grain.*

6. go against the grain

irrespective

Explain

1. irrespective of

hearing

hearings

Explain

1. uncountable noun

A person's or animal's **hearing** is the sense which makes it possible for them to be aware of sounds.

- *His mind still seemed clear and his hearing was excellent.*

2. countable noun

A **hearing** is an official meeting which is held in order to collect facts about an incident or problem .

- *The judge adjourned the hearing until next Tuesday.*
3. a fair hearing
 4. in/within sb's hearing

married

Explain

1. adjective
If you are **married** , you have a husband or wife.
 - *We have been married for 14 years.*
 - *She is married to an Englishman.*
 - *...a married man with two children.*
2. adjective
Married means relating to marriage or to people who are married.
 - *For the first ten years of our married life we lived in a farmhouse.*
3. adjective
If you say that someone is **married to** their work or another activity , you mean that they are very involved with it and have little interest in anything else.
 - *She was a very strict Christian who was married to her job.*
 - *I'm married to my cricket.*

hope

hopes hoping hoped

Explain

1. verb
If you **hope** that something is true , or if you **hope for** something, you want it to be true or to happen , and you usually believe that it is possible or likely .

- *She had decided she must go on as usual, follow her normal routine, and hope and pray.*
- *He hesitates before leaving, almost as though he had been hoping for conversation.*
- *I hope to get a job within the next two weeks.*
- *The researchers hope that such a vaccine could be available in about ten years' time.*
- *'We'll speak again.'*—*'I hope so.'*
- *'Will it happen again?'*—*'I hope not, but you never know.'*

2. verb

If you say that you cannot **hope for** something, or if you talk about the only thing that you can **hope to** get , you mean that you are in a bad situation, and there is very little chance of improving it. **Hope** is also a noun .

- *Things aren't ideal, but that's the best you can hope for.*
- *I always knew it was too much to hope for.*
- *...these mountains, which no one can hope to penetrate.*
- *The only hope for underdeveloped countries is to become, as far as possible, self-reliant.*
- *The car was smashed beyond any hope of repair.*

3. uncountable noun

Hope is a feeling of desire and expectation that things will go well in the future.

- *Now that he has become President, many people once again have hope for genuine changes in the system.*
- *But Kevin hasn't given up hope of being fit.*
- *Consumer groups still hold out hope that the president will change his mind.*
- *Thousands of childless couples are to be given new hope by the government.*

4. countable noun

If someone wants something to happen, and considers it likely or possible, you can refer to their **hopes of** that thing, or to their **hope that** it will happen.

- *They have hopes of increasing trade between the two regions.*
- *The delay in the programme has dashed Japan's hopes of commercial success in space.*
- *My hope is that, in the future, I will go over there and marry her.*

5. countable noun

If you think that the help or success of a particular person or thing will cause you to be successful or to get what you want, you can refer to them as your **hope** .

- *...England's last hope in the English Open Table Tennis Championships.*
- *He was one of our best hopes for a gold at the Commonwealth Games.*

6. to hope for the best

7. get/build your hopes up

8. not a hope in hell

9. high/great hopes

10. hope against hope

11. I hope

12. I hope

13. I hope

14. in the hope of/that

15. live in hope

16. some hope/not a hope

marxist

Marxists

Explain

1. adjective

Marxist means based on Marxism or relating to Marxism.

- *...a Marxist state.*

- *...Marxist ideology.*

2. countable noun

A **Marxist** is a person who believes in Marxism or who is a member of a Marxist party .

housing

housings

Explain

1. uncountable noun

You refer to the buildings in which people live as **housing** when you are talking about their standard, price , or availability.

- *...a shortage of affordable housing.*

- *Poor housing and family stress can affect both physical and mental health.*

2. uncountable noun

Housing is the job of providing houses for people to live in.

- *...graduate courses in housing and public administration.*

- *If you are a council tenant call the housing department about it.*

3. countable noun

A **housing** is a case or covering which protects parts of a machine.

- *Both housings are waterproof to a depth of two metres.*

naive

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **naive** , you think they lack experience and so expect things to be easy or people to be honest or kind .

- *It's naive to think that teachers are always tolerant.*
- *I must have been naive to think we would get my parents' blessing.*
- *...naive idealists.*
- *Their view was that he had been politically naive.*

identity

identities

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **identity** is who you are.

- *Abu is not his real name, but it's one he uses to disguise his identity.*
- *The police soon established his true identity and he was quickly found.*

2. variable noun

The **identity** of a person or place is the characteristics they have that distinguish them from others.

- *I wanted a sense of my own identity.*
- *...the distinct cultural, religious and national identity of many Italians.*

obsolete

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **obsolete** is no longer needed because something better has been invented .

- *So much equipment becomes obsolete almost as soon as it's made.*

implication

implications

Explain

1. countable noun

The implications of something are the things that are likely to happen as a result .

- *The Attorney General was aware of the political implications of his decision to prosecute.*
- *The low level of current investment has serious implications for future economic growth.*

2. countable noun

The implication of a statement , event , or situation is what it implies or suggests is the case .

- *The implication was obvious: vote for us or it will be very embarrassing for you.*

opaque

Explain

1. adjective

If an object or substance is **opaque** , you cannot see through it.

- *You can always use opaque glass if you need to block a street view.*

2. adjective

If you say that something is **opaque** , you mean that it is difficult to understand.

- ...the opaque language of the inspector's reports.

locality

localities

Explain

1. countable noun

A **locality** is a small area of a country or city.

- *Following the discovery of the explosives the president cancelled his visit to the locality.*
- *To find out what is available in your locality, see the website.*

oral

orals

Explain

1. adjective

Oral communication is spoken rather than written.

- *...the written and oral traditions of ancient cultures.*
- *...an oral agreement.*

2. countable noun

An **oral** is an examination, especially in a foreign language, that is spoken rather than written.

- *I spoke privately to the candidate after the oral.*

3. adjective

You use **oral** to indicate that something is done with a person's mouth or relates to a person's mouth.

- *...good oral hygiene.*

4. adjective

Oral medicines are taken by mouth.

- *...oral contraceptives.*

location

locations

Explain

1. countable noun

A **location** is the place where something happens or is situated .

- *The first thing he looked at was his office's location.*
- *Macau's newest small luxury hotel has a beautiful location.*

2. countable noun

The **location** of someone or something is their exact position.

- *She knew the exact location of The Eagle's headquarters.*

3. variable noun

A **location** is a place away from a studio where a film or part of a film is made.

- *...an art movie with dozens of exotic locations.*
- *We're shooting on location.*

patent

patents patenting patented

Explain

1. countable noun

A **patent** is an official right to be the only person or company allowed to make or sell a new product for a certain period of time.

- *PG applied for a patent on its cookies.*
- *He held a number of patents for his many innovations.*

- *It sued Centrocorp for patent infringement.*
- 2. verb
If you **patent** something, you obtain a patent for it.
 - *He patented the idea that the atom could be split.*
 - *The invention has been patented by the university.*
 - *...a patented process for disinfecting liquids.*
- 3. adjective
You use **patent** to describe something, especially something bad, in order to indicate in an emphatic way that you think its nature or existence is clear and obvious.
 - *This was patent nonsense.*
 - *...a patent lie.*

needle

needles needling needled

Explain

1. countable noun
A **needle** is a small, very thin piece of polished metal which is used for sewing. It has a sharp point at one end and a hole in the other for a thread to go through.
2. countable noun
Knitting **needles** are thin sticks that are used for knitting. They are usually made of plastic or metal and have a point at one end.
3. countable noun
A **needle** is a thin hollow metal rod with a sharp point, which is part of a medical instrument called a syringe. It is used to put a drug into someone's body, or to take blood out.
4. countable noun
A **needle** is a thin metal rod with a point which is put into a patient's body during acupuncture.

5. countable noun
On a record player, the **needle** is the small pointed device that touches the record and picks up the sound signals.
 - *She took the needle off the record and turned the lights out.*
6. countable noun
On an instrument which measures something such as speed or weight, the **needle** is the long strip of metal or plastic on the dial that moves backwards and forwards, showing the measurement.
 - *She kept looking at the dial on the boiler. The needle had reached 250 degrees.*
7. countable noun
The **needles** of a fir or pine tree are its thin, hard, pointed leaves.
 - *The carpet of pine needles was soft underfoot.*
8. verb
If someone **needles** you, they annoy you continually, especially by criticizing you.
 - *Blake could see he had needled Jerrold, which might be unwise.*

personal

Explain

1. adjective
A **personal** opinion, quality, or thing belongs or relates to one particular person rather than to other people.
 - *He learned this lesson the hard way—from his own personal experience.*
 - *That's my personal opinion.*
 - *...books, furniture, and other personal belongings.*
 - *The President arrived, followed by his personal bodyguard.*

- ...an estimated personal fortune of almost seventy million dollars.

2. adjective

If you give something your **personal** care or attention , you deal with it yourself rather than letting someone else deal with it.

- ...a business that requires a great deal of personal contact.
- ...a personal letter from the President's secretary.
- People do not mind paying a bit extra for the personal touch.

3. adjective

Personal matters relate to your feelings , relationships , and health .

- ...teaching young people about marriage and personal relationships.
- You never allow personal problems to affect your performance.
- We sacrifice our personal lives to our work.
- Mr Knight said that he had resigned for personal reasons.

4. adjective

Personal comments refer to someone's appearance or character in an offensive way.

- Newspapers resorted to personal abuse.
- Myra was attacking something I'd written, and her attack got a little personal.

5. adjective

Personal care involves looking after your body and appearance.

- ...people who take time and care over personal hygiene.

6. adjective

A **personal** relationship is one that is not connected with your job or public life.

- He was a personal friend whom I've known for many years.

- What began as a professional relationship became a personal one pretty quickly.

pin

pins pinning pinned

Explain

1. countable noun

Pins are very small thin pointed pieces of metal. They are used in sewing to fasten pieces of material together until they have been sewn.

- ...needles and pins.
- Use pins to keep the braid in place as you work.

2. verb

If you **pin** something **on** or **to** something, you attach it with a pin, a drawing pin, or a safety pin.

- They pinned a notice to the door.
- Everyone was supposed to dance with the bride and pin money on her dress.
- He had pinned up a map of Finland.

3. verb

If someone **pins** you to something, they press you against a surface so that you cannot move.

- I pinned him against the wall.
- He fought at the bulk that pinned him.

4. countable noun

A **pin** is any long narrow piece of metal or wood that is not sharp, especially one that is used to fasten two things together.

- ...the 18-inch steel pin holding his left leg together.
- ...a two-pin continental adaptor.

5. verb

If someone tries to **pin** something **on** you or to **pin the blame on** you, they say , often unfairly, that you were responsible for something bad or illegal .

- *They're trying to pin it on us.*
- *The trade unions are pinning the blame for the violence on the government.*

6. verb

If you **pin** your hopes **on** something or **pin** your faith **on** something, you hope very much that it will produce the result you want .

- *The Democrats are pinning their hopes on the next election.*

7. verb

If someone **pins** their **hair** up or **pins** their **hair** back, they arrange their hair away from their face using hair pins.

- *Cleanse your face thoroughly and pin back your hair.*
- *In an effort to look older she has pinned her hair into a bun.*

8. countable noun

A **pin** is something worn on your clothing, for example as jewellery , which is fastened with a pointed piece of metal.

- *...necklaces, bracelets, and pins.*

9. countable noun

A **pin** is the part of a hand grenade that is pulled out in order to make the grenade explode .

10. you could have heard a pin drop

reckless

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone is **reckless** , you mean that they act in a way which shows that they

do not care about danger or the effect their behaviour will have on other people.

- *She loved to ride; on horseback, she was reckless and utterly without fear.*
- *He is charged with causing death by reckless driving.*

position

positions positioning positioned

Explain

1. countable noun

The **position** of someone or something is the place where they are in relation to other things.

- *The ship was identified, and its name and position were reported to the coastguard.*
- *This conservatory enjoys an enviable position overlooking a leafy expanse.*

2. countable noun

When someone or something is in a particular **position** , they are sitting , lying, or arranged in that way.

- *Hold the upper back and neck in an erect position to give support for the head.*
- *Ensure the patient is turned into the recovery position.*
- *Mr. Dambar had raised himself to a sitting position.*

3. verb

If you **position** something somewhere , you put it there carefully, so that it is in the right place or position.

- *Position trailing plants near the edges and in the sides of the basket to hang down.*
- *Place the pastry circles on to a baking sheet and position one apple on each circle.*

4. countable noun

Your **position** in society is the role and the importance that you have in it.

- *...the position of older people in society.*

5. countable noun

A **position** in a company or organization is a job.

- *He left a career in teaching to take up a position with the Arts Council.*
- *Hyundai said this week it is scaling back its U.S. operations by eliminating 50 positions.*

6. countable noun

Your **position** in a race or competition is how well you did in relation to the other competitors or how well you are doing.

- *Agassi and Sampras resumed their battle for the world's No. 1 position, both winning their opening matches.*
- *By the ninth hour the car was running in eighth position.*

7. countable noun

You can describe your situation at a particular time by saying that you are in a particular **position**.

- *He's going to be in a very difficult position indeed if things go badly for him.*
- *Companies should be made to reveal more about their financial position.*
- *It was not the only time he found himself in this position.*

8. countable noun

Your **position on** a particular matter is your attitude towards it or your opinion of it.

- *He could be depended on to take a moderate position on most of the key issues.*
- *Mr Howard is afraid to state his true position on the republic, which is that he is opposed to it.*

9. singular noun

If you are **in a position to** do something, you are able to do it. If you are **in no position to** do something, you are unable to do it.

- *The U.N. system will be in a position to support the extensive relief efforts needed.*
- *I am not in a position to comment.*

10. in position

royal

royals

Explain

1. adjective

Royal is used to indicate that something is connected with a king, queen, or emperor, or their family. A **royal** person is a king, queen, or emperor, or a member of their family.

- *...an invitation to a royal garden party.*
- *The Spanish royal couple were to attend a celebration of Shakespeare and Cervantes.*

2. adjective

Royal is used in the names of institutions or organizations that are officially appointed or supported by a member of a royal family.

- *...the Royal Academy of Music.*
- *...several pilots of the Royal Navy's 846 Squadron.*

3. countable noun

Members of the royal family are sometimes referred to as **royals**.

- *The royals have always been patrons of charities pulling in large donations.*

profit

profits profiting profited

Explain

1. variable noun

A **profit** is an amount of money that you gain when you are paid more for something than it cost you to make, get , or do it.

- *The bank made pre-tax profits of £3.5 million.*
- *You can improve your chances of profit by sensible planning.*
- *The profit motive is inherently at odds with principles of fairness and equity.*

2. verb

If you **profit from** something, you earn a profit from it.

- *Footballers are accustomed to profiting handsomely from bonuses.*
- *He has profited by selling his holdings to other investors.*
- *The dealers profited shamefully at the expense of my family.*

3. verb

If you **profit from** something, or it **profits** you, you gain some advantage or benefit from it. **Profit** is also a noun .

- *Jennifer wasn't yet totally convinced that she'd profit from a more relaxed lifestyle.*
- *So far the French alliance had profited the rebels little.*
- *Whom would it profit to terrify or to kill this man?*
- *The artist found much to his profit in the Louvre.*

rural

Explain

1. adjective

Rural places are far away from large towns or cities.

- *These plants have a tendency to grow in the more rural areas.*
- *...the closure of rural schools.*

2. adjective

Rural means having features which are typical of areas that are far away from large towns or cities.

- *...the old rural way of life.*
- *He spoke with a heavy rural accent.*

property

properties

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Someone's **property** is all the things that belong to them or something that belongs to them.

- *Richard could easily destroy her personal property to punish her for walking out on him.*
- *Security forces searched thousands of homes, confiscating weapons and stolen property.*

2. variable noun

A **property** is a building and the land belonging to it.

- *Cecil inherited a family property near Stamford.*
- *This vehicle has been parked on private property.*

3. countable noun

The **properties** of a substance or object are the ways in which it behaves in particular conditions.

- *A radio signal has both electrical and magnetic properties.*

thirsty

thirstier thirstiest

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **thirsty** , you feel a need to drink something.

- *If a baby is thirsty, it feeds more often.*
- *Drink whenever you feel thirsty during exercise.*

2. adjective

If you are **thirsty for** something, you have a strong desire for it.

- *People should understand how thirsty for revenge they are.*

residence

residences

Explain

1. countable noun

A **residence** is a house where people live .

- *...hotels and private residences.*
- *She travels constantly, moving among her several residences around the world.*

2. uncountable noun

Your place of **residence** is the place where you live.

- *...differences among women based on age, place of residence and educational levels.*

3. uncountable noun

Someone's **residence** in a particular place is the fact that they live there or that they are officially allowed to live there.

- *They had entered the country and had applied for permanent residence.*

- *He arrived discreetly on 13 November, and took up residence in Carisbrooke Castle.*

4. in residence

5. in residence

timely

Explain

1. adjective

A **timely** event happens at a moment when it is useful , effective , or relevant .

- *The recent outbreak is a timely reminder that this disease is a serious health hazard.*
- *The exhibition is timely, since 'self-taught' art is catching on in a big way.*

revenue

revenues

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Revenue is money that a company , organization , or government receives from people.

- *...a boom year at the cinema, with record advertising revenue and the highest ticket sales since 1980.*

- *One study said the government would gain about 12billionintaxrevenuesoverfiveyears.*

uneasy

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **uneasy** , you feel anxious, afraid , or embarrassed , because you think that something is wrong or that there is danger .

- *He said nothing but gave me a sly grin that made me feel terribly uneasy.*
- *He looked uneasy and refused to answer questions.*
- *I had an uneasy feeling that he was going to spoil it.*

2. adjective

If you are **uneasy about** doing something, you are not sure that it is correct or wise .

- *Richard was uneasy about how best to approach his elderly mother.*
- *Scientists feel uneasy about giving a positive answer.*

3. adjective

If you describe a situation or relationship as **uneasy** , you mean that the situation is not settled and may not last .

- *An uneasy calm has settled over the city.*
- *The uneasy alliance between these two men offered a glimmer of hope.*
- *There is an uneasy relationship between us and the politicians.*

4. adjective

If you describe a book or music as **uneasy** , you are critical of it because it is difficult to read or listen to.

- *These ballads are deeply uneasy listening, and compelling for that reason.*
- *This is an uneasy travel book.*
- *...an uneasy mix of thudding bass, drums and screaming guitar.*

site

sites siting sited

Explain

1. countable noun

A **site** is a piece of ground that is used for a particular purpose or where a particular thing happens .

- *He became a hod carrier on a building site.*
- *...a bat sanctuary with special nesting sites.*

2. countable noun

The site of an important event is the place where it happened.

- *...the site of the worst ecological disaster on Earth.*
- *Plymouth Hoe is renowned as the site where Drake played bowls before tackling the Spanish Armada.*

3. countable noun

A **site** is a piece of ground where something such as a statue or building stands or used to stand.

- *...the site of Moses' tomb.*
- *...the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which is regarded by some as Christianity's holiest site.*

4. countable noun

A **site** is the same as a website .

5. verb

If something **is sited** in a particular place or position, it is put there or built there.

- *He said chemical weapons had never been sited in this country.*
- *...a damp, old castle, romantically sited on a river estuary.*

6. on site

7. off site

unlike

Explain

1. preposition

If one thing is **unlike** another thing, the two things have different qualities or characteristics from each other.

- *This was a foreign country, so unlike San Jose.*
- *She was unlike him in every way except for her coal black eyes.*

2. preposition

You can use **unlike** to contrast two people, things, or situations , and show how they are different.

- *Unlike aerobics, walking entails no expensive fees for classes or clubs.*

3. preposition

If you describe something that a particular person has done as being **unlike** them, you mean that you are surprised by it because it is not typical of their character or normal behaviour .

- *It was so unlike him to say something like that, with such intensity, that I was astonished.*
- *'We'll all be arrested!' Thomas yelled, which was most unlike him.*

stadium

stadiums stadia

Explain

1. countable noun

A **stadium** is a large sports ground with rows of seats all round it.

- *...a baseball stadium.*
- *...Wembley Stadium.*

unusual

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **unusual** , it does not happen very often or you do not see it or hear it very often.

- *They have replanted many areas with rare and unusual plants.*
- *To be appreciated as a parent is quite unusual.*

2. adjective

If you describe someone as **unusual** , you think that they are interesting and different from other people.

- *He was an unusual man with great business talents.*

tent

tents

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tent** is a shelter made of canvas or nylon which is held up by poles and ropes, and is used mainly by people who are camping.

vague

vaguer vaguest

Explain

1. adjective

If something written or spoken is **vague** , it does not explain or express things clearly.

- *A lot of the talk was apparently vague and general.*
- *The description was pretty vague.*

- ...vague information.

2. adjective

If you have a **vague** memory or idea of something, the memory or idea is not clear.

- *They have only a vague idea of the amount of water available.*
- *Waite's memory of that first meeting was vague.*

3. adjective

If you are **vague** about something, you deliberately do not tell people much about it.

- *He was vague, however, about just what U.S. forces might actually do.*
- *Democratic leaders under election pressure tend to respond with vague promises of action.*
- *Christopher's answer was deliberately vague.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **vague**, you mean that they do not seem to be thinking clearly.

- *She had married a charming but rather vague Englishman.*
- *His eyes were always so vague when he looked at her.*

5. adjective

If something such as a feeling is **vague**, you experience it only slightly.

- *He was conscious of that vague feeling of irritation again.*
- *He had a vague impression of rain pounding on the packed earth.*

6. adjective

A **vague** shape or outline is not clear and is therefore not easy to see.

- *He looked at her vague shape through the frosted glass.*
- *The bus was a vague shape in the distance.*

treasure

treasures treasuring treasured

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Treasure is a collection of valuable old objects such as gold coins and jewels that has been hidden or lost.

- *It was here, the buried treasure, she knew it was.*

2. countable noun

Treasures are valuable objects, especially works of art and items of historical value.

- *The house was large and full of art treasures.*

3. verb

If you **treasure** something that you have, you keep it or care for it carefully because it gives you great pleasure and you think it is very special. **Treasure** is also a noun.

- *She treasures her memories of those joyous days.*
- *His greatest treasure is his collection of rock records.*

4. countable noun

If you say that someone is a **treasure**, you mean that they are very helpful and useful to you.

- *Charlie? Oh, he's a treasure, loves children.*

wholesome

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **wholesome**, you approve of it because you think it is likely to have a positive influence on people's behaviour.

or mental state, especially because it does not involve anything sexually immoral .

- *...good, wholesome fun.*
 - *...a very decent and wholesome bunch of lads.*
2. adjective
- If you describe food as **wholesome** , you approve of it because you think it is good for your health.
- *...fresh, wholesome ingredients.*
 - *The food is filling and wholesome.*

uncle

uncles

Explain

1. countable noun
- Someone's **uncle** is the brother of their mother or father, or the husband of their aunt.
- *My uncle was the mayor of Memphis.*
 - *A text from Uncle Fred arrived.*
 - *Uncle, pa wants to see you.*

wooden

Explain

1. adjective
- Wooden** objects are made of wood.
- *...the shop's bare brick walls and faded wooden floorboards.*
2. adjective
- If you describe an actor as **wooden** , you are critical of them because their performance is not at all lively or natural.

wealth

Explain

1. uncountable noun
- Wealth** is the possession of a large amount of money, property, or other valuable things. You can also refer to a particular person's money or property as their **wealth** .
- *Economic reform has brought relative wealth to peasant farmers.*
 - *His own wealth grew.*
2. singular noun
- If you say that someone or something has **a wealth of** good qualities or things, you are emphasizing that they have a very large number or amount of them.
- *...such a wealth of creative expertise.*
 - *The city boasts a wealth of beautiful churches.*

abnormal

Explain

1. adjective
- Someone or something that is **abnormal** is unusual , especially in a way that is worrying .
- *...abnormal heart rhythms and high anxiety levels.*
 - *...a child with an abnormal fear of strangers.*

angle

angles angling angled

Explain

1. countable noun
- An **angle** is the difference in direction between

two lines or surfaces. Angles are measured in degrees.

- *The boat is now leaning at a 30 degree angle.*
- 2. countable noun
An **angle** is the shape that is created where two lines or surfaces join together.
 - *...the angle of the blade.*
 - *...brackets to adjust the steering wheel's angle.*
- 3. countable noun
An **angle** is the direction from which you look at something.
 - *Thanks to the angle at which he stood, he could just see the sunset.*
 - *His face will be discreetly concealed by camera angles.*
- 4. countable noun
You can refer to a way of presenting something or thinking about it as a particular **angle** .
 - *We had to do the scene over and over again, from different angles.*
 - *He was considering the idea from all angles.*
- 5. verb
If someone **is angling for** something, they are trying to get it without asking for it directly .
 - *It sounds as if he's just angling for sympathy.*
- 6. ergative verb
If you **angle** something or if it **angles** in a particular direction, it faces or points in that direction.
 - *You can open the slats for a bright light or angle them for more shade.*
 - *The path angled downhill and northwards.*
 - *He drove down the long, steeply angled driveway.*
- 7. at an angle

central

Explain

1. adjective
Something that is **central** is in the middle of a place or area.
 - *...Central America's Caribbean coast.*
 - *Wild camels are a problem in central Australia.*
 - *...a rich woman living in central London.*
2. adjective
A place that is **central** is easy to reach because it is in the centre of a city, town, or particular area.
 - *...a central location in the capital.*
3. adjective
A **central** group or organization makes all the important decisions that are followed throughout a larger organization or a country.
 - *There is a lack of trust towards the central government in Rome.*
 - *...the central committee of the Cuban communist party.*
4. adjective
The **central** person or thing in a particular situation is the most important one.
 - *Black dance music has been central to mainstream pop since the early '60s.*
 - *...a central part of their culture.*

band

bands banding banded

Explain

1. countable noun
A **band** is a small group of musicians who play popular music such as jazz, rock, or pop.

- *He was a drummer in a rock band.*
 - *Local bands provide music for dancing.*
2. countable noun
A **band** is a group of musicians who play brass and percussion instruments.
- *Bands played German marches.*
3. countable noun
A **band of** people is a group of people who have joined together because they share an interest or belief.
- *Bands of criminals have been roaming some neighborhoods.*
 - *...a small but growing band of Japanese companies taking their first steps into American publishing.*
4. countable noun
A **band** is a flat, narrow strip of cloth which you wear round your head or wrists , or which forms part of a piece of clothing.
- *Almost all hospitals use a wrist-band of some kind with your name and details on it.*
5. countable noun
A **band** is a strip of something such as colour, light, land, or cloth which contrasts with the areas on either side of it.
- *...bands of natural vegetation between strips of crops.*
 - *A band of light glowed in the space between floor and door.*
6. countable noun
A **band** is a strip or loop of metal or other strong material which strengthens something, or which holds several things together.
- *Surgeons placed a metal band around the knee cap to help it knit back together.*
 - *...a strong band of flat muscle tissue.*

7. countable noun
A **band** is a range of numbers or values within a system of measurement .
- *For an initial service, a 10 megahertz-wide band of frequencies will be needed.*
 - *...a tax band of 20p in the pound on the first £2,000 of taxable income.*
8. verb
If something such as a tax **is banded** , it is divided into bands according to the value of the thing being taxed.
- *They appear to have ruled out banding the tax so higher earners would pay more.*
 - *...a banding system based on property values.*
 - *The choice will be between a flat-rate or a banded charge.*

chemical

chemicals

Explain

1. adjective
Chemical means involving or resulting from a reaction between two or more substances, or relating to the substances that something consists of.
- *...chemical reactions that cause ozone destruction.*
 - *...the chemical composition of the ocean.*
 - *...chemical weapons.*
2. countable noun
Chemicals are substances that are used in a chemical process or made by a chemical process.
- *The whole food chain is affected by the over-use of chemicals in agriculture.*
 - *...a chemicals company.*
 - *...the chemical industry.*

civil

Explain

1. adjective

You use **civil** to describe events that happen within a country and that involve the different groups of people in it.

- *...civil unrest.*

2. adjective

You use **civil** to describe people or things in a country that are not connected with its armed forces.

- *...the U.S. civil aviation industry.*

3. adjective

You use **civil** to describe things that are connected with the state rather than with a religion .

- *They were married on August 9 in a civil ceremony in Venice.*
- *...Jewish civil and religious law.*

4. adjective

You use **civil** to describe the rights that people have within a society .

- *...a United Nations covenant on civil and political rights.*

5. adjective

Someone who is **civil** is polite in a formal way, but not particularly friendly .

- *As visitors, the least we can do is be civil to the people in their own land.*

bath

baths bathing bathed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bath** is a container, usually a long rectangular one, which you fill with water and sit in while you wash your body.

- *In those days, only quite wealthy families had baths of their own.*

2. countable noun

When you have or take a **bath** , or when you are in the **bath** , you sit or lie in a bath filled with water in order to wash your body.

- *...if you have a bath every morning.*
- *Take a shower instead of a bath.*
- *...a bath and shower gel.*

3. verb

If you **bath** someone, especially a child, you wash them in a bath. **Bath** is also a noun .

- *Don't feel you have to bath your child every day.*
- *The midwife gave him a warm bath.*

4. verb

When you **bath** , you have a bath.

- *The three children all bath in the same bath water.*

5. countable noun

A **bath** or a **baths** is a public building containing a swimming pool, and sometimes other facilities that people can use to have a wash or a bath.

- *One of the most important buildings in this ruined city is a public bath.*
- *As well as a Roman amphitheatre and baths, the town has two superb museums.*

6. countable noun

A **bath** is a container filled with a particular liquid, such as a dye or an acid, in which particular objects are placed, usually as part of a manufacturing or chemical process.

- ...a developing photograph placed in a bath of fixer.

cognitive

Explain

1. adjective

Cognitive means relating to the mental process involved in knowing , learning , and understanding things.

- *As children grow older, their cognitive processes become sharper.*
- *...Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development.*

bed

beds bedding bedded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bed** is a piece of furniture that you lie on when you sleep.

- *She went into her bedroom and lay down on the bed.*
- *We finally went to bed at about 4am.*
- *By the time we got back from dinner, Nona was already in bed.*
- *When she had gone, Sam and Robina put the children to bed.*

2. countable noun

If a place such as a hospital or a hotel has a particular number of **beds** , it is able to hold that number of patients or guests .

3. countable noun

A **bed** in a garden or park is an area of ground that has been specially prepared so that plants can be grown in it.

- *The geraniums in the flower bed looked bedraggled from the heavy rain.*
- *...beds of strawberries and rhubarb.*

4. countable noun

A **bed** of shellfish or plants is an area in the sea or in a lake where a particular type of shellfish or plant is found in large quantities.

- *Fishermen fear valuable oyster and mussel beds could be decimated.*
- *The whole lake was rimmed with thick beds of reeds.*

5. countable noun

The sea **bed** or a river **bed** is the ground at the bottom of the sea or of a river.

- *For three weeks a big operation went on to recover the wreckage from the sea bed.*
- *...the bare bed of a dry stream.*

6. countable noun

A **bed** of rock is a layer of rock that is found within a larger area of rock.

- *Between the white limestone and the greyish pink limestone is a thin bed of clay.*
- *...a sandstone bed.*

7. countable noun

If a recipe or a menu says that something is served on a **bed of** a food such as rice or vegetables , it means it is served on a layer of that food.

- *Heat the curry thoroughly and serve it on a bed of rice.*

8. get sb into bed

9. go to bed

10. in bed

11. in bed

12. made one's bed...lie in it

13. make the bed/make sb's bed/make a bed

14. got out of bed on the wrong side

comparative

comparatives

Explain

1. adjective

You use **comparative** to show that you are judging something against a previous or different situation . For example , **comparative** calm is a situation which is calmer than before or calmer than the situation in other places.

- *...those who manage to reach the comparative safety of Fendel.*
- *The task was accomplished with comparative ease.*

2. adjective

A **comparative** study is a study that involves the comparison of two or more things of the same kind .

- *...a comparative study of the dietary practices of people from various regions.*
- *...a professor of English and comparative literature.*

3. adjective

In grammar , the **comparative** form of an adjective or adverb shows that something has more of a quality than something else has. For example, ' bigger ' is the comparative form of 'big', and 'more quickly' is the comparative form of 'quickly'. Compare superlative . **Comparative** is also a noun .

- *The comparative of 'pretty' is 'prettier'.*

belly

bellies

Explain

1. countable noun

The **belly** of a person or animal is their stomach or abdomen. In British English, this is an informal or literary use.

- *She laid her hands on her swollen belly.*
- *You'll eat so much your belly'll be like a barrel.*

2. belly up

car

cars

Explain

1. countable noun

A **car** is a motor vehicle with room for a small number of passengers.

- *He had left his tickets in his car.*
- *They arrived by car.*

2. countable noun

A **car** is one of the separate sections of a train .

- *Tour buses have replaced railway cars.*

3. countable noun

Railway carriages are called **cars** when they are used for a particular purpose .

- *He made his way into the dining car for breakfast.*

dental

Explain

1. adjective

Dental is used to describe things that relate to teeth or to the care and treatment of teeth.

- *You can get free dental treatment.*
- *...the dental profession.*

condition

conditions conditioning conditioned

Explain

1. singular noun

If you talk about the **condition** of a person or thing, you are talking about the state that they are in, especially how good or bad their physical state is.

- *He remains in a critical condition in a California hospital.*
- *I received several compliments on the condition of my skin.*
- *The two-bedroom chalet is in good condition.*
- *You can't drive in that condition.*

2. plural noun

The **conditions** under which something is done or happens are all the factors or circumstances which directly affect it.

- *This change has been timed under laboratory conditions.*
- *The mild winter has created the ideal conditions for an ant population explosion.*
- *The conditions are ripe for the spread of disease.*

3. plural noun

The **conditions** in which people live or work are the factors which affect their comfort , safety , or health.

- *People are living in appalling conditions.*
- *He could not work in these conditions any longer.*
- *The conditions in the camp are just awful.*

4. singular noun

The **condition** of a group of people is their situation in life, especially with regard to the difficulties they have.

- *The condition of the people could be elevated by a programme of social reform.*
- *The government has encouraged its people to better their condition.*
- *...the human condition.*

5. countable noun

A **condition** is something which must happen or be done in order for something else to be possible , especially when this is written into a contract or law.

- *...economic targets set as a condition for loan payments.*
- *...terms and conditions of employment.*
- *Egypt had agreed to a summit subject to certain conditions.*

6. countable noun

If someone has a particular **condition** , they have an illness or other medical problem.

- *Doctors suspect he may have a heart condition.*
- *...a rare condition that causes degeneration of the brain tissue.*

7. verb

If someone **is conditioned** by their experiences or environment , they are influenced by them over a period of time so that they do certain things or think in a particular way.

- *We are all conditioned by early impressions and experiences.*
- *You have been conditioned to believe that it is weak to be scared.*
- *People are conditioned into believing that they have no power over their situation.*
- *...a conditioned response.*

8. verb

To **condition** your hair or skin means to put something on it which will keep it in good condition.

- ...a protein which is excellent for conditioning dry and damaged hair.

9. in no condition
10. on condition that
11. out of condition

conscience

consciences

Explain

1. guilty conscience
2. uncountable noun
Conscience is doing what you believe is right even though it might be unpopular , difficult , or dangerous .
 - *He refused for reasons of conscience to sign a new law legalising abortion.*
 - *...the law on freedom of conscience and religious organizations.*
3. uncountable noun
Conscience is a feeling of guilt because you know you have done something that is wrong.
 - *I'm so glad he had a pang of conscience.*
 - *They have shown a ruthless lack of conscience.*
4. in good conscience/in all conscience
5. on your conscience

enormous

Explain

1. adjective
Something that is **enormous** is extremely large in size or amount.
 - *The main bedroom is enormous.*

- *There is, of course, an enormous amount to see.*

2. adjective
You can use **enormous** to emphasize the great degree or extent of something.

- *It was an enormous disappointment.*

corner

corners cornering cornered

Explain

1. countable noun
A **corner** is a point or an area where two or more edges, sides, or surfaces of something join.
 - *He saw the corner of a magazine sticking out from under the blanket.*
 - *Write 'By Airmail' in the top left-hand corner.*
2. countable noun
The **corner** of a room, box, or similar space is the area inside it where its edges or walls meet.
 - *...a card table in the corner of the living room.*
 - *The ball hurtled into the far corner of the net.*
 - *Finally I spotted it, in a dark corner over by the piano.*
3. countable noun
The **corner of** your mouth or eye is the side of it.
 - *She flicked a crumb off the corner of her mouth.*
 - *Out of the corner of her eye she saw that a car had stopped.*
4. countable noun
The **corner** of a street is the place where one of its sides ends as it joins another street.

- *She would spend the day hanging round street corners.*
- *We can't have police officers on every corner.*
- *He waited until the man had turned a corner.*

5. countable noun

A **corner** is a bend in a road.

- *...a sharp corner.*
- *The road is a succession of hairpin bends, hills, and blind corners.*

6. countable noun

If you talk about the **corners of** the world, a country, or some other place, you are referring to places that are far away or difficult to get to.

- *Buyers came from all corners of the world.*
- *The group has been living in a remote corner of the Cambodian jungle.*

7. countable noun

In football , hockey , and some other sports, a **corner** is a free shot or kick taken from the corner of the pitch .

8. verb

If you **corner** a person or animal, you force them into a place they cannot escape from.

- *A police motor-cycle chased his car twelve miles, and cornered him near Rome.*
- *He was still sitting huddled like a cornered animal.*

9. verb

If you **corner** someone, you force them to speak to you when they have been trying to avoid you.

- *Golan managed to corner the young producer-director for an interview.*

10. verb

If a company or place **corners** an area of trade, they gain control over it so that no one else can have any success in that area.

- *This restaurant has cornered the Madrid market for specialist paellas.*
- *Zurich's affluence came initially from cornering a sizeable chunk of the 14th Century silk trade.*

11. verb

If a car, or the person driving it, **corners** in a particular way, the car goes round bends in roads in this way.

- *Peter drove jerkily, cornering too fast and fumbling the gears.*

12. around the corner

13. around the corner/round the corner

14. to cut corners

15. the four corners of

16. in a corner/in a tight corner

fair

fairer fairest fairs

Explain

1. adjective

Something or someone that is **fair** is reasonable , right, and just.

- *It didn't seem fair to leave out her father.*
- *Do you feel they're paying their fair share?*
- *Independent observers say the campaign's been very much fairer than expected.*
- *I wanted them to get a fair deal.*
- *He claims that he would not get a fair trial.*

2. adjective

A **fair** amount, degree, size, or distance is quite a large amount, degree, size, or distance.

- *My neighbours across the street travel a fair amount.*

- *My mother's brother lives a fair distance away so we don't see him and his family very often.*

3. adjective

A **fair** guess or idea about something is one that is likely to be correct .

- *It's a fair guess to say that the damage will be extensive.*
- *I have a fair idea of how difficult things can be.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **fair** , you mean that they are average in standard or quality, neither very good nor very bad .

- *Reimar had a fair command of English.*

5. adjective

Someone who is **fair** , or who has **fair** hair, has light-coloured hair. **Fair** is also a combining form.

- *Both children were very like Robina, but were much fairer than she was.*
- *...a tall, fair-haired Englishman.*

6. adjective

Fair skin is very pale and usually burns easily . **Fair** is also a combining form.

- *It's important to protect my fair skin from the sun.*
- *Fair-skinned people shouldn't spend a great deal of time in the sun.*

7. adjective

When the weather is **fair** , it is quite sunny and not raining .

- *Weather conditions were fair.*

8. countable noun

A county, state, or country **fair** is an event where there are, for example, displays of goods and animals, and amusements, games, and competitions .

9. countable noun

A **fair** is the same as a funfair .

10. countable noun

A **fair** is an event at which people display and sell goods, especially goods of a particular type.

- *...an antiques fair.*

11. (to) be fair

12. fair enough

13. fair enough

14. to play fair

15. it's fair to say

16. fair and square

delight

delights delighting delighted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Delight is a feeling of very great pleasure.

- *Throughout the house, the views are a constant source of surprise and delight.*
- *Andrew roared with delight when he heard Rachel's nickname for the baby.*
- *To my great delight, it worked perfectly.*

2. take delight in/take a delight in

3. countable noun

You can refer to someone or something that gives you great pleasure or enjoyment as a **delight** .

- *Isn't she a delight?*
- *The aircraft was a delight to fly.*
- *Sampling the local cuisine is one of the delights of a holiday abroad.*

4. verb

If something **delights** you, it gives you a lot of pleasure.

- *She has created a style of music that has delighted audiences all over the world.*
- *The report has delighted environmentalists.*

5. verb

If you **delight in** something, you get a lot of pleasure from it.

- *Generations of adults and children have delighted in the story.*
- *He delighted in sharing his love of birds with children.*

fierce

fiercer fiercest

Explain

1. adjective

A **fierce** animal or person is very aggressive or angry .

- *They look like the teeth of some fierce animal.*

2. adjective

Fierce feelings or actions are very intense or enthusiastic , or involve great activity.

- *Standards are high and competition is fierce.*
- *The town was captured after a fierce battle with rebels at the weekend.*
- *He inspires fierce loyalty in his friends.*

3. adjective

Fierce conditions are very intense, great, or strong.

- *The climbers were trapped by a fierce storm which went on for days.*

desert

deserts deserting deserted

Explain

1. variable noun

A **desert** is a large area of land, usually in a hot region, where there is almost no water, rain , trees, or plants.

- *...the Sahara Desert.*
- *...the burning desert sun.*
- *The vehicles have been modified to suit conditions in the desert.*

2. countable noun

If you refer to a place or situation as a **desert** , you think it is bad for people because it is not interesting, exciting , or useful in any way.

- *They live in 12 high-rise apartment buildings that sit in a desert of concrete.*

3. verb

If people or animals **desert** a place, they leave it and it becomes empty .

- *Farmers are deserting their fields and coming here looking for jobs.*
- *After the show, the audience deserts the Blackpool streets.*

4. verb

If someone **deserts** you, they go away and leave you, and no longer help or support you.

- *Mrs Roding's husband deserted her years ago.*
- *He has been deserted by most of his advisers.*

5. verb

If you **desert** something that you support, use, or are involved with, you stop supporting it, using it, or being involved with it.

- *The paper's price rise will encourage readers to desert in even greater numbers.*
- *He was pained to see many youngsters deserting kibbutz life.*
- *Discerning shoppers are deserting supermarkets for artisan bakers.*

6. verb

If a quality or skill that you normally have **deserts** you, you suddenly find that you do not have it when you need it or want it.

- *Even when he appeared to be depressed, a dry sense of humour never deserted him.*
- *She lost the next five games, and the set, as her confidence abruptly deserted her.*

7. verb

If someone **deserts**, or **deserts** a job, especially a job in the armed forces, they leave that job without permission.

- *He was a second-lieutenant in the army until he deserted.*
- *He deserted from army intelligence last month.*

8. to get your just deserts

diet

diets dieting dieted

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **diet** is the type and range of food that you regularly eat.

- *It's never too late to improve your diet.*
- *...a healthy diet rich in fruit and vegetables.*
- *Poor diet and excess smoking will seriously damage the health of your hair.*

2. countable noun

If a doctor puts someone on a **diet**, he or she makes them eat a special type or range of foods in order to improve their health.

- *He was put on a diet of milky food.*
- *...a special diet for children with high cholesterol.*

3. variable noun

If you are on a **diet**, you eat special kinds of food or you eat less food than usual because you are trying to lose weight.

- *Have you been on a diet? You've lost a lot of weight.*
- *Diet and exercise will alter your shape.*
- *I've only lost sixteen pounds since I started this diet.*

4. verb

If you **are dieting**, you eat special kinds of food or you eat less food than usual because you are trying to lose weight.

- *I've been dieting ever since the birth of my fourth child.*
- *Most of us have dieted at some time in our lives.*

5. adjective

Diet drinks or foods have been specially produced so that they do not contain many calories.

- *...sugar-free diet drinks.*
- *...diet margarine.*

6. countable noun

If you are fed on a **diet of** something, especially something unpleasant or of poor quality, you receive or experience a very large amount of it.

- *The radio had fed him a diet of pop songs.*
- *People are rejecting this constant diet of despair.*

gigantic

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **gigantic** , you are emphasizing that it is extremely large in size, amount, or degree.

- *...gigantic rocks.*
- *A gigantic task of national reconstruction awaits us.*

disaster

disasters

Explain

1. countable noun

A **disaster** is a very bad accident such as an earthquake or a plane crash , especially one in which a lot of people are killed .

- *It was the second air disaster in the region in less than two months.*
- *Many had lost all in the disaster and were destitute.*

2. countable noun

If you refer to something as a **disaster** , you are emphasizing that you think it is extremely bad or unacceptable .

- *The whole production was just a disaster!*
- *It would be a disaster for them not to reach the semi-finals.*
- *'This tax is a disaster waiting to happen,' said an angry Tory backbencher.*

3. uncountable noun

Disaster is something which has very bad consequences for you.

- *The government brought itself to the brink of fiscal disaster.*

- *'The potential for disaster is enormous,' he says.*

4. a recipe for disaster

handy

handier handiest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **handy** is useful .

- *The book gives handy hints on looking after indoor plants.*
- *Credit cards can be handy—they mean you do not have to carry large sums of cash.*

2. come in handy

3. adjective

A thing or place that is **handy** is nearby and therefore easy to get or reach.

- *It would be good to have a pencil and paper handy.*
- *Keep handy a lightweight sweater or cardigan.*
- *This lively town is handy for Londoners.*

4. adjective

Someone who is **handy with** a particular tool is skilful at using it.

- *If you're handy with a needle you could brighten up your sweater with giant daisies.*

ditch

ditches ditching ditched

Explain

1. countable noun

A **ditch** is a long narrow channel cut into the ground at the side of a road or field .

2. verb

If you **ditch** something that you have or are responsible for, you abandon it or get rid of it, because you no longer want it.

- *I decided to ditch the sofa bed.*

3. verb

If someone **ditches** someone, they end a relationship with that person.

- *I can't bring myself to ditch him and start again.*

4. verb

If a pilot **ditches** an aircraft or if it **ditches** , the pilot makes an emergency landing .

- *One American pilot was forced to ditch his jet in the Gulf.*
- *A survivor was knocked unconscious when the helicopter ditched.*

- *He is writing a historical novel about nineteenth-century France.*

- *...another great Eisenstein historical film.*

3. adjective

Historical information , research , and discussion is related to the study of history.

- *...historical records.*
- *...modern historical research.*

4. adjective

If you look at an event within a **historical** context , you look at what was happening at that time and what had happened previously, in order to judge the event and its importance .

- *It was this kind of historical context that Morris brought to his work.*
- *The Telegraph puts the union in a historical perspective.*

historical

Explain

1. adjective

Historical people, situations , or things existed in the past and are considered to be a part of history.

- *...an important historical figure.*
- *...the historical impact of Western capitalism on the world.*
- *In Buda, several historical monuments can be seen.*

2. adjective

Historical books, films, or pictures describe or represent people, situations, or things that existed in the past.

elbow

elbows elbowing elbowed

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **elbow** is the part of your arm where the upper and lower halves of the arm are joined .

- *He slipped and fell, badly bruising an elbow.*

2. verb

If you **elbow** people **aside** or **elbow** your **way** somewhere , you push people with your elbows in order to move somewhere.

- *They also claim that the security team elbowed aside a steward.*
- *Mr Smith elbowed me in the face.*
- *Brand elbowed his way to the centre of the group of bystanders.*

3. verb

If someone or something **elbows** their way somewhere, or **elbows** other people or things **out of the way** , they achieve success by being aggressive and determined .

- *Non-state firms gradually elbow aside the inefficient state-owned ones.*
- *Environmental concerns will elbow their way right to the top of the agenda.*

huge

huger hugest

Explain

1. adjective

Something or someone that is **huge** is extremely large in size.

- *...a tiny little woman with huge black glasses.*
- *Several painters were working on a huge piece of canvas which would serve as the scenery.*
- *Our driver strolled up, huge and swarthy.*

2. adjective

Something that is **huge** is extremely large in amount or degree .

- *I have a huge number of ties because I never throw them away.*

3. adjective

Something that is **huge** exists or happens on a very large scale , and involves a lot of different people or things.

- *Another team is looking at the huge problem of debts between companies.*
- *The result was human suffering on a huge scale.*

finish

finishes finishing finished

Explain

1. verb

When you **finish** doing or dealing with something, you do or deal with the last part of it, so that there is no more for you to do or deal with. **Finish up** means the same as finish .

- *As soon as he'd finished eating, he excused himself.*
- *Mr Gould was given a standing ovation and loud cheers when he finished his speech.*
- *I've practically finished the ironing.*
- *We waited a few minutes outside his office while he finished up his meeting.*

2. verb

When you **finish** something that you are making or producing, you reach the end of making or producing it, so that it is complete. **Finish off** and, in American English, **finish up** mean the same as finish .

- *The consultants had been working to finish a report this week.*
- *Now she is busy finishing off a biography of Queen Caroline.*
- *...the amount of stuff required to finish up a movie.*

3. verb

When something such as a course, film, or sale **finishes** , especially at a planned time, it ends.

- *The teaching day finishes at around 4pm.*
- *When a play finishes its run, the costumes are hired out to amateur dramatics companies.*

4. verb

You say that someone or something **finishes** a period of time or an event in a particular way to

indicate what the final situation was like. You can also say that a period of time or an event **finishes** in a particular way.

- *The two of them finished by kissing each other goodbye.*
- *The evening finished with the welcoming of three new members.*
- *They finished the meal with a fresh fruit salad.*
- *He finished the day two holes up.*
- *The last track finishes this compilation beautifully.*

5. verb

If someone **finishes** second, for example , in a race or competition , they are in second place at the end of the race or competition.

- *He finished second in the championship four years in a row.*

6. verb

To **finish** means to reach the end of saying something.

- *Her eyes flashed, but he held up a hand. 'Let me finish.'*

7. singular noun

The **finish** of something is the end of it or the last part of it.

- *I intend to continue it and see the job through to the finish.*
- *From start to finish he believed in me, often more than I did myself.*

8. countable noun

The **finish** of a race is the end of it.

- *Win a trip to see the finish of the Tour de France!*
- *It was a close finish but I won.*

9. countable noun

If the surface of something that has been made has a particular kind of **finish** , it has the appearance or texture mentioned .

- *The finish and workmanship of the woodwork was excellent.*

10. fight to the finish

11. the finishing touch

illiterate

illiterates

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **illiterate** does not know how to read or write. An **illiterate** is someone who is illiterate.

- *A large percentage of the population is illiterate.*
- *...an educational centre for illiterates.*

2. adjective

If you describe someone as musically, technologically, or economically **illiterate** , you mean that they do not know much about music, technology , or economics .

interval

intervals

Explain

1. countable noun

An **interval** between two events or dates is the period of time between them.

- *The ferry service has restarted after an interval of 12 years.*
- *There was a long interval of silence.*

2. countable noun

An **interval** during a film, concert, show , or game is a short break between two of the parts.

- *During the interval, wine was served.*
- *England were two goals behind at the interval.*

3. countable noun

In music , an **interval** is the difference in pitch between two musical notes.

4. at intervals

5. at intervals

inner

Explain

1. adjective

The **inner** parts of something are the parts which are contained or are enclosed inside the other parts, and which are closest to the centre.

- *She got up and went into an inner office.*
- *Wade stepped inside and closed the inner door behind him.*

2. adjective

Your **inner** feelings are feelings which you have but do not show to other people.

- *Loving relationships will give a child an inner sense of security.*
- *Michael needed to express his inner tensions.*

island

islands

Explain

1. countable noun

An **island** is a piece of land that is completely surrounded by water.

- *...a wonderful day trip to the picturesque island of Gozo.*

- *We spent a day on Caldey Island.*
- *...the Canary Islands.*

interim

Explain

1. adjective

Interim is used to describe something that is intended to be used until something permanent is done or established .

- *She was sworn in as head of an interim government in March.*
- *...an interim report.*

2. in the interim

item

items

Explain

1. countable noun

An **item** is one of a collection or list of objects.

- *The most valuable item on show will be a Picasso drawing.*
- *The menu includes the occasional off-beat item.*

2. countable noun

An **item** is one of a list of things for someone to do, deal with, or talk about.

- *The other item on the agenda is the tour.*

3. countable noun

An **item** is a report or article in a newspaper or magazine , or on television or radio .

- *There was an item in the paper about him.*

4. singular noun

If you say that two people are an **item** , you mean that they are having a romantic or sexual relationship.

- *She and Gino were an item.*

interior

interiors

Explain

1. countable noun

The **interior** of something is the inside part of it.

- *The interior of the house was furnished with heavy, old-fashioned pieces.*
- *The boat's interior badly needed painting.*

2. adjective

You use **interior** to describe something that is inside a building or vehicle .

- *The interior walls were painted green.*
- *There is more interior space than in some rival cars.*
- *He pulled the car over, turned on the interior light, examined the map.*

3. singular noun

The **interior** of a country or continent is the central area of it.

- *...a 5-day hike into the interior.*
- *...the unknown interior of South America.*
- *The Yangzi river would give access to much of China's interior.*

4. adjective

A country's **interior** minister , ministry , or department deals with affairs within that country, such as law and order.

- *The French Interior Minister has intervened in a scandal over the role of a secret police force.*

5. singular noun

A country's minister or ministry of **the interior** deals with affairs within that country, such as law and order.

- *An official from the Ministry of the Interior said six people had died.*

6. adjective

Interior thoughts or processes go on inside someone's head and are not expressed aloud .

- *We need some sort of interior life if we are to be happy.*
- *...the mind's interior space.*

liver

livers

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **liver** is a large organ in your body which processes your blood and helps to clean unwanted substances out of it.

2. variable noun

Liver is the liver of some animals, especially lambs , pigs , and cows , which is cooked and eaten .

- *...grilled calves' liver.*

intermediate

intermediates

Explain

1. adjective

An **intermediate** stage, level , or position is one that occurs between two other stages, levels, or positions.

- *You should consider breaking the journey with intermediate stopovers at airport hotels.*
- *...hourly trains to Perugia, Assisi, and intermediate stations.*

2. adjective

Intermediate learners of something have some knowledge or skill but are not yet advanced . An **intermediate** is an intermediate learner.

- *The Badminton Club holds coaching sessions for beginners and intermediate players on Friday evenings.*
- *The ski school coaches beginners, intermediates, and advanced skiers.*

nothing

nothings

Explain

1. pronoun

Nothing means not a single thing, or not a single part of something.

- *I've done nothing much since coffee time.*
- *The man knows nothing of history or sociology.*
- *He was dressed in jeans and nothing else.*
- *There is nothing wrong with the car.*

2. pronoun

You use **nothing** to indicate that something or someone is not important or significant . **Nothing** is also a noun .

- *Because he had always had money, it meant nothing to him.*

- *This cold snap is nothing compared to a real winter.*
- *She kept bursting into tears over nothing at work.*
- *Do our years together mean nothing?*
- *It is the picture itself that is the problem; so small, so dull. It's a nothing, really.*
- *All it took was a word here, a word there, to convince him that he was a nothing.*

3. pronoun

If you say that something cost **nothing** or is worth **nothing** , you are indicating that it cost or is worth a surprisingly small amount of money .

- *The furniture was threadbare; he'd obviously picked it up for nothing.*
- *His net UK estate was worth nothing after debts were taken into account.*

4. pronoun

You use **nothing** before an adjective or 'to'- infinitive to say that something or someone does not have the quality indicated.

- *Around the lake the countryside generally is nothing special.*
- *There was nothing remarkable about him.*
- *All kids her age do silly things; it's nothing to worry about.*

5. pronoun

You can use **nothing** before 'so' and an adjective or adverb , or before a comparative , to emphasize how strong or great a particular quality is.

- *Youngsters learn nothing so fast as how to beat the system.*
- *I consider nothing more important in my life than songwriting.*
- *There's nothing better than a good cup of hot coffee.*

6. all or nothing

7. to be better than nothing
8. nothing but
9. nothing doing
10. there is nothing for it
11. nothing if not
12. it's nothing
13. nothing in it/nothing to it
14. nothing to it/nothing in it
15. nothing in it
16. nothing less than
17. not for nothing
18. something for nothing
19. nothing of the sort

internal

Explain

1. adjective
Internal is used to describe things that exist or happen inside a country or organization.
 - *The country stepped up internal security.*
 - *We now have a Europe without internal borders.*
2. adjective
Internal is used to describe things that exist or happen inside a particular person, object, or place.
 - *...massive internal bleeding.*
 - *Some of the internal walls of my house are made of plasterboard.*

pebble

pebbles

Explain

1. countable noun
 A **pebble** is a small, smooth, round stone which is found on beaches and at the bottom of rivers
 -

kind

kinds

Explain

1. countable noun
 If you talk about a particular **kind of** thing, you are talking about one of the types or sorts of that thing.
 - *The party needs a different kind of leadership.*
 - *Had Jamie ever been in any kind of trouble?*
 - *I'm not the kind of person to get married.*
 - *This book prize is the biggest of its kind in the world.*
 - *Ear pain of any kind must never be ignored.*
2. countable noun
 If you refer to someone's **kind**, you are referring to all the other people that are like them or that belong to the same class or set.
 - *I hate Lewis and his kind just as much as you do.*
 - *I can take care of your kind.*
3. all kinds of
4. kind of
5. of a kind
6. one of a kind
7. two/three/four of a kind
8. in kind
9. in kind

petrol

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Petrol is a liquid which is used as a fuel for motor vehicles.

literary

Explain

1. adjective

Literary means concerned with or connected with the writing, study, or appreciation of literature.

- *Her literary criticism focuses on the way great literature suggests ideas.*
- *She's the literary editor of the 'Sunday Review'.*
- *...a literary masterpiece.*

2. adjective

Literary words and expressions are often unusual in some way and are used to create a special effect in a piece of writing such as a poem , speech , or novel .

pitch

pitches pitching pitched

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pitch** is an area of ground that is marked out and used for playing a game such as football , cricket, or hockey .

- *There was a swimming-pool, cricket pitches, and playing fields.*
- *Their conduct both on and off the pitch was excellent.*

2. verb

If you **pitch** something somewhere , you throw it with quite a lot of force, usually aiming it carefully.

- *Simon pitched the empty bottle into the lake.*

3. verb

To **pitch** somewhere means to fall forwards suddenly and with a lot of force.

- *The movement took him by surprise, and he pitched forward.*
- *Alan staggered sideways, pitched head-first over the low wall and fell into the lake.*
- *I was pitched into the water and swam ashore.*

4. verb

If someone **is pitched into** a new situation, they are suddenly forced into it.

- *They were being pitched into a new adventure.*
- *This could pitch the government into confrontation with the work-force.*

5. verb

In the game of baseball or rounders , when you **pitch** the ball, you throw it to the batter for them to hit it.

- *We passed long, hot afternoons pitching a baseball.*

6. uncountable noun

The **pitch** of a sound is how high or low it is.

- *He raised his voice to an even higher pitch.*

7. verb

If a sound **is pitched at** a particular level, it is produced at the level indicated.

- *His cry is pitched at a level that makes it impossible to ignore.*
- *His voice was pitched high, the words muffled by his crying.*

- *Her voice was well pitched and brisk.*

8. verb

If something is **pitched at** a particular level or degree of difficulty , it is set at that level.

- *I think the material is pitched at too high a level for our purposes.*
- *The government has pitched High Street interest rates at a new level.*

9. singular noun

If something such as a feeling or a situation rises to a high **pitch** , it rises to a high level.

- *No other emotion is able to keep the body at a high pitch for such long periods.*
- *The hysteria reached such a pitch that police were deployed to reassure parents at the school gates.*

10. verb

If you **pitch** your **tent** , or **pitch camp** , you put up your tent in a place where you are going to stay .

- *He had pitched his tent in the yard.*
- *At dusk we pitched camp in the middle of nowhere.*

11. verb

If a boat **itches** , it moves violently up and down with the movement of the waves when the sea is rough .

- *The ship is pitching and rolling in what looks like about fifteen-foot seas.*

12. uncountable noun

Pitch is a black substance that is sticky when it is hot and very hard when it is dry. Pitch is used on the bottoms of boats and on the roofs of houses to prevent water getting in.

- *The timbers of similar houses were painted with pitch.*

13. make a pitch/make one's pitch

preface

prefaces prefacing prefaced

Explain

1. countable noun

A **preface** is an introduction at the beginning of a book, which explains what the book is about or why it was written.

2. verb

If you **preface** an action or speech **with** something else, you do or say this other thing first.

- *I will preface what I am going to say with a few lines from Shakespeare.*
- *The president prefaced his remarks by saying he has supported unemployment benefits all along.*

lunar

Explain

1. adjective

Lunar means relating to the moon.

- *The vast volcanic slope was eerily reminiscent of a lunar landscape.*
- *...a magazine article celebrating the anniversary of man's first lunar landing.*

role

roles

Explain

1. countable noun

If you have a **role** in a situation or in society , you have a particular position and function in it.

- *...the drug's role in preventing more serious effects of infection.*

- *...bitter disagreements about the role of the monarchy.*
- *Both sides have roles to play.*

2. countable noun

A **role** is one of the characters that an actor or singer can play in a film, play, or opera .

- *She has just landed the lead role in The Young Vic's latest production.*
- *Shakespearean women's roles were originally written to be played by men.*

manual

manuals

Explain

1. adjective

Manual work is work in which you use your hands or your physical strength rather than your mind .

- *...skilled manual workers.*
- *They have no reservations about taking factory or manual jobs.*

2. adjective

Manual is used to talk about movements which are made by someone's hands.

- *...toys designed to help develop manual dexterity.*

3. adjective

Manual means operated by hand, rather than by electricity or a motor .

- *There is a manual pump to get rid of the water.*

4. countable noun

A **manual** is a book which tells you how to do something or how a piece of machinery works.

- *...the instruction manual.*

sand

sands sanding sanded

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Sand is a substance that looks like powder , and consists of extremely small pieces of stone . Some deserts and many beaches are made up of sand.

- *They all walked barefoot across the damp sand to the water's edge.*
- *...grains of sand.*

2. plural noun

Sands are a large area of sand, for example a beach.

- *...miles of golden sands.*

3. verb

If you **sand** a wood or metal surface, you rub sandpaper over it in order to make it smooth or clean . **Sand down** means the same as sand .

- *Sand the surface softly and carefully.*
- *I was going to sand down the chairs and repaint them.*
- *Simply sand them down with a fine grade of sandpaper.*

4. shifting sands

medieval

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **medieval** relates to or was made in the period of European history between the end of the Roman Empire in 476 AD and about 1500 AD.

- *...a medieval castle.*
- *...the medieval chroniclers.*

snack

snacks snacking snacked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **snack** is a simple meal that is quick to cook and to eat.

- *Lunch was a snack in the fields.*

2. countable noun

A **snack** is something such as a chocolate bar that you eat between meals.

- *Do you eat sweets, cakes or sugary snacks?*

3. verb

If you **snack** , you eat snacks between meals.

- *Instead of snacking on crisps and chocolate, nibble on celery or carrot.*
- *She would improve her diet if she ate less fried food and snacked less.*

neutral

neutrals

Explain

1. adjective

If a person or country adopts a **neutral** position or remains **neutral** , they do not support anyone in a disagreement , war, or contest . A **neutral** is someone who is neutral.

- *Let's meet on neutral territory.*
- *Those who had tried to remain neutral now found themselves required to take sides.*
- *It was a good game to watch for the neutrals.*

2. adjective

If someone speaks in a **neutral** voice or if the expression on their face is **neutral** , they do not show what they are thinking or feeling.

- *Isabel put her magazine down and said in a neutral voice, 'You're very late, darling.'*
- *He told her about the death, describing the events in as neutral a manner as he could.*

3. adjective

If you say that something is **neutral** , you mean that it does not have any effect on other things because it lacks any significant qualities of its own, or it is an equal balance of two or more different qualities, amounts, or ideas .

- *Three in every five interviewed felt that the Budget was neutral and they would be no better off.*

4. graded adjective

If someone uses **neutral** language, they choose words which do not indicate that they approve or disapprove of something.

- *Both sides had agreed to use neutral terms in their references to each other.*
- *He had departed from his prepared testimony, which was considered to be neutral.*

5. uncountable noun

Neutral is the position between the gears of a vehicle such as a car, in which the gears are not connected to the engine.

- *Graham put the van in neutral and jumped out into the road.*

6. adjective

In an electrical device or system, the **neutral** wire is one of the three wires needed to complete the circuit so that the current can flow. The other two wires are called the earth wire and the live or positive wire.

7. colour

Neutral is used to describe things that have a pale colour such as cream or grey , or that have no colour at all.

- *At the horizon the land mass becomes a continuous pale neutral grey.*

- *Mary suggests using a neutral lip pencil.*

8. adjective

In physics , **neutral** is used to describe things such as atomic particles that have neither a positive nor a negative charge.

- *A neutron is simply a neutral particle in the nucleus of an atom.*

9. adjective

In chemistry , **neutral** is used to describe things that are neither acid nor alkaline.

- *Pure water is neutral with a pH of 7.*

space

spaces spacing spaced

Explain

1. variable noun

You use **space** to refer to an area that is empty or available . The area can be any size. For example , you can refer to a large area outside as a large open **space** or to a small area between two objects as a small **space** .

- *...bits of open space such as fields and small parks.*
- *...cutting down yet more trees to make space for houses.*
- *I had plenty of space to write and sew.*
- *The space underneath could be used as a storage area.*
- *He looked cautiously through a half-inch space between the curtains and saw an empty bedroom.*
- *The bird was enclosed in such a small space that it could not turn without bending its tail.*
- *List in the spaces below the specific changes you have made.*

2. variable noun

A particular kind of **space** is the area that is available for a particular activity or for putting a particular kind of thing in.

- *...the high cost of office space.*
- *You don't want your living space to look like a bedroom.*
- *Finding a parking space in the summer months is still a virtual impossibility.*
- *There is a communal space for people to gather.*

3. uncountable noun

If a place gives a feeling of **space** , it gives an impression of being large and open.

- *Large paintings can enhance the feeling of space in small rooms.*
- *The sense of space and emptiness is overwhelming.*

4. uncountable noun

If you give someone **space** to think about something or to develop as a person, you allow them the time and freedom to do this.

- *You need space to think everything over.*
- *We will give each other space to develop.*

5. uncountable noun

The amount of **space** for a topic to be discussed in a document is the number of pages available to discuss the topic.

- *We can't promise to publish a reply as space is limited.*
- *...some work which we couldn't include because of lack of space in this issue.*

6. singular noun

A **space of** time is a period of time.

- *They've come a long way in a short space of time.*
- *I have known dramatic changes occur in the space of a few minutes with this method.*

7. uncountable noun

Space is the area beyond the Earth's atmosphere, where the stars and planets are.

- *The six astronauts on board will spend ten days in space.*
- *...launching satellites into space.*
- *...developments in space technology.*
- *...outer space.*

8. uncountable noun

Space is the whole area within which everything exists.

- *She felt herself transcending time and space.*
- *The physical universe is finite in space and time.*

9. verb

If you **space** a series of things, you arrange them so that they are not all together but have gaps or intervals of time between them. **Space out** means the same as space .

- *Women once again are having fewer children and spacing them further apart.*
- *His voice was angry and he spaced the words for emphasis.*
- *He talks quite slowly and spaces his words out.*
- *I was spacing out the seedlings into divided trays.*
- *Their last four games are spaced out over three weeks.*

10. (staring) into space

11. waste of space

12. watch this space

owing

Explain

1. adjective

1. 2.

spy

spies spying spied

Explain

1. countable noun

A **spy** is a person whose job is to find out secret information about another country or organization.

- *He was jailed for five years as an alleged British spy.*
- *The spy ring passed secrets to the enemy.*

2. adjective

A **spy** satellite or **spy** plane obtains secret information about another country by taking photographs from the sky .

3. verb

Someone who **spies for** a country or organization tries to find out secret information about another country or organization.

- *The agent spied for the government for more than twenty years.*
- *East and West are still spying on one another.*
- *I never agreed to spy against the United States.*

4. verb

If you **spy on** someone, you watch them secretly.

- *That day he spied on her while pretending to work on the shrubs.*
- *If you were invisible, who would you spy on?*

5. verb

If you **spy** someone or something, you notice them.

- *He was walking down the street when he spied an old friend.*

public

Explain

1. singular noun

You can refer to people in general, or to all the people in a particular country or community, as **the public** .

- *Lauderdale House is now open to the public.*
- *Tickets go on sale to the general public on July 1st.*
- *Trade unions are regarding the poll as a test of the public's confidence in the government.*

2. singular noun

You can refer to a set of people in a country who share a common interest, activity, or characteristic as a particular kind of **public** .

- *Market research showed that 93*
- *...the American voting public.*

3. adjective

Public means relating to all the people in a country or community.

- *The President is attempting to drum up public support for his economic program.*

4. adjective

Public means relating to the government or state, or things that are done for the people by the state.

- *The social services account for a substantial part of public spending.*

5. adjective

Public buildings and services are provided for everyone to use.

- *...the New York Public Library.*
- *The new museum must be accessible by public transport.*
- *...a public health service available to all.*

6. adjective

A **public** place is one where people can go about freely and where you can easily be seen and heard .

- *...the heavily congested public areas of international airports.*
- *I avoid working in places which are too public.*

7. adjective

If someone is a **public figure** or in **public life** , many people know who they are because they are often mentioned in newspapers and on television .

- *The archbishop hit out at public figures who commit adultery.*
- *I'd like to see more women in public life, especially Parliament.*

8. adjective

Public is used to describe statements , actions, and events that are made or done in such a way that any member of the public can see them or be aware of them.

- *The National Heritage Committee has conducted a public inquiry to find the answer.*
- *The comments were the ministry's first detailed public statement on the subject.*
- *Marilyn made her last public appearance at Madison Square Garden.*

9. adjective

If a fact is made **public** or becomes **public** , it becomes known to everyone rather than being kept secret .

- *His will, made public yesterday, showed that he had amassed an estate with a net worth of £1,980,133.*
- *The facts could cause embarrassment if they ever became public.*

10. the public eye

11. go public

12. in public

state

states stating stated

Explain

1. countable noun

You can refer to countries as **states** , particularly when you are discussing politics .

- *A successful secular state is built on liberal democratic foundations.*
- *Some weeks ago I recommended to E.U. member states that we should have discussions with the Americans.*

2. countable noun

Some large countries such as the USA are divided into smaller areas called **states** .

- *Leaders of the Southern states are meeting in Louisville.*

3. proper noun

The USA is sometimes referred to as **the States** .

4. singular noun

You can refer to the government of a country as **the state** .

- *The state does not collect enough revenue to cover its expenditure.*
- *...the sale of major state-owned corporations.*

5. adjective

State industries or organizations are financed and organized by the government rather than private companies .

- *...reform of the state social-security system.*

6. adjective

A **state** occasion is a formal one involving the head of a country.

- *The president arrived in Britain last night for his official state visit.*

7. countable noun

When you talk about the **state of** someone or something, you are referring to the condition they are in or what they are like at a particular time.

- *For the first few months after Daniel died, I was in a state of clinical depression.*
- *When we moved here the walls and ceiling were in an awful state.*
- *Look at the state of my car!*

8. verb

If you **state** something, you say or write it in a formal or definite way .

- *Clearly state your address and telephone number.*
- *The police report stated that he was arrested for allegedly assaulting an officer.*
- *'Our relationship is totally platonic,' she stated.*
- *Buyers who do not apply within the stated period can lose their deposits.*

9. not in a fit state

10. in a state/into a state

11. to lie in state

reluctant

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **reluctant to** do something, you are unwilling to do it and hesitate before doing it, or do it slowly and without enthusiasm .

- *Mr Spero was reluctant to ask for help.*
- *The police are very reluctant to get involved in this sort of thing.*

steamer

steamers

Explain

1. countable noun
A **steamer** is a ship that has an engine powered by steam.
2. countable noun
A **steamer** is a special container used for steaming food such as vegetables and fish.

solar

Explain

1. adjective
Solar is used to describe things relating to the sun.
 - *A total solar eclipse is due to take place some time tomorrow.*
2. adjective
Solar power is obtained from the sun's light and heat .

suspicion

suspicious

Explain

1. variable noun
Suspicion or a **suspicion** is a belief or feeling that someone has committed a crime or done something wrong.
 - *There was a suspicion that this runner attempted to avoid the procedures for dope testing.*
 - *The police said their suspicions were aroused because Mr Owens had other marks on his body.*

- *Scotland Yard had assured him he was not under suspicion.*
- *... police arrested nineteen people on suspicion of burglary.*

2. variable noun

If there is **suspicion of** someone or something, people do not trust them or consider them to be reliable .

- *...the common British suspicion of psychotherapy.*
- *He may have had some suspicions of Michael Foster, the editor of the journal.*
- *I was always regarded in the Army with a certain amount of suspicion because of my left-wing tendencies.*

3. countable noun

A **suspicion** is a feeling that something is probably true or is likely to happen .

- *I have a sneaking suspicion that they are going to succeed.*
- *Astronomers will have to collect more spectra from these stars to confirm their suspicions.*

4. singular noun

A **suspicion of** something is a very small amount of it.

- *...large blooms of white with a suspicion of pale pink.*

tedious

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something such as a job , task , or situation as **tedious** , you mean it is boring and rather frustrating .

- *Such lists are long and tedious to read.*
- *...the tedious business of line-by-line programming.*

system

systems

Explain

1. countable noun

A **system** is a way of working, organizing , or doing something which follows a fixed plan or set of rules. You can use **system** to refer to an organization or institution that is organized in this way.

- *The present system of funding for higher education is unsatisfactory.*
- *...a flexible and relatively efficient filing system.*
- *...a multi-party system of government.*
- *The Court of Appeal has a pivotal role in the English legal system.*

2. countable noun

A **system** is a set of devices powered by electricity , for example a computer or an alarm .

- *Viruses tend to be good at surviving when a computer system crashes.*

3. countable noun

A **system** is a set of equipment or parts such as water pipes or electrical wiring , which is used to supply water, heat, or electricity.

- *...a central heating system.*

4. countable noun

A **system** is a network of things that are linked together so that people or things can travel from one place to another or communicate .

- *...Australia's road and rail system.*
- *...a news channel on a local cable system.*

5. countable noun

Your **system** is your body's organs and other parts that together perform particular functions.

- *He had slept for over fourteen hours, and his system seemed to have recuperated admirably.*
- *These gases would seriously damage the patient's respiratory system.*
- *...the reproductive system.*

6. countable noun

A **system** is a particular set of rules, especially in mathematics or science, which is used to count or measure things.

- *...the decimal system of metric weights and measures.*
- *...Trachtenberg's system of simplified mathematics.*

7. singular noun

People sometimes refer to the government or administration of a country as **the system** .

- *These feelings are likely to make people attempt to overthrow the system.*
- *He wants to be the tough rebel who bucks the system.*

8. get something out of one's system

tremendous

Explain

1. adjective

You use **tremendous** to emphasize how strong a feeling or quality is, or how large an amount is.

- *I felt a tremendous pressure on my chest.*
- *That's a tremendous amount of information.*

2. adjective

You can describe someone or something as **tremendous** when you think they are very good or very impressive .

- *He was a tremendous person.*
- *I thought it was absolutely tremendous.*

treaty

treaties

Explain

1. countable noun

A **treaty** is a written agreement between countries in which they agree to do a particular thing or to help each other.

- *A formal peace treaty was signed later that year.*
- *...a global treaty on cutting emissions.*

vast

vaster vastest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **vast** is extremely large.

- *...Afrikaner farmers who own vast stretches of land.*
- *The vast majority of the eggs would be cracked.*

turbine

turbines

Explain

1. countable noun

A **turbine** is a machine or engine which uses a stream of air, gas, water, or steam to turn a wheel and produce power.

widespread

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **widespread** exists or happens over a large area, or to a great extent.

- *There is widespread support for the new proposals.*
- *Food shortages are widespread.*

vicinity

Explain

1. singular noun

If something is **in the vicinity of** a particular place, it is near it.

- *There were a hundred or so hotels in the vicinity of the railway station.*
- *The immediate vicinity of the house remains cordoned off.*

accurate

Explain

1. adjective

Accurate information, measurements, and statistics are correct to a very detailed level. An **accurate** instrument is able to give you information of this kind.

- *Police have stressed that this is the most accurate description of the killer to date.*
- *... a quick and accurate way of monitoring the amount of carbon dioxide in the air.*
- *Quartz timepieces are very accurate, to a minute or two per year.*

2. adjective

An **accurate** statement or account gives a true or fair judgment of something.

- *It is too early to give an accurate assessment of his condition.*
- *They were accurate in their prediction that he would change her life drastically.*

3. adjective

You can use **accurate** to describe the results of someone's actions when they do or copy something correctly or exactly .

- *Marks were given for accurate spelling and punctuation.*
- *...his maliciously accurate imitation of the Prime Minister.*

4. adjective

An **accurate** weapon or throw reaches the exact point or target that it was intended to reach. You can also describe a person as **accurate** if they fire a weapon or throw something in this way .

- *The rifle was extremely accurate.*
- *The pilots, however, were not as accurate as they should be.*

accessory

accessories

Explain

1. countable noun

Accessories are items of equipment that are not usually essential , but which can be used with or added to something else in order to make it more efficient , useful , or decorative .

- *...an exclusive range of hand-made bedroom and bathroom accessories.*

2. countable noun

Accessories are articles such as belts and scarves which you wear or carry but which are not part of your main clothing .

3. countable noun

If someone is guilty of being an **accessory to** a crime, they helped the person who committed it, or knew it was being committed but did not tell the police .

- *She was charged with being an accessory to the embezzlement of funds.*

4. adjective

You can use **accessory** to describe something which is part of an activity or process, but not the most essential or important part of it.

- *Forster established that minerals are accessory food factors required for maintaining life.*

advisable

Explain

1. adjective

If you tell someone that **it is advisable to** do something, you are suggesting that they should do it, because it is sensible or is likely to achieve the result they want .

- *Because of the popularity of the region, it is advisable to book hotels in advance.*
- *It's not advisable to swim immediately after eating.*

allowance

allowances

Explain

1. countable noun

An **allowance** is money that is given to someone, usually on a regular basis , in order to help them pay for the things that they need .

- *He lives on a single parent's allowance of £70 a week.*

- *She gets an allowance for looking after Lillian.*

2. countable noun

A child's **allowance** is money that is given to him or her every week or every month by his or her parents .

3. countable noun

Your tax **allowance** is the amount of money that you are allowed to earn before you have to start paying income tax.

- *...those earning less than the basic tax allowance.*

4. countable noun

A particular type of **allowance** is an amount of something that you are allowed in particular circumstances .

- *Most of our flights have a baggage allowance of 44lbs per passenger.*

5. make allowances for sth

6. make allowances for sb

ambiguous

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **ambiguous** , you mean that it is unclear or confusing because it can be understood in more than one way.

- *This agreement is very ambiguous and open to various interpretations.*
- *They may not be fully aware of what they are voting for because of ambiguous language on the ballot paper.*

2. adjective

If you describe something as **ambiguous** , you mean that it contains several different ideas or attitudes that do not fit well together.

- *Students have ambiguous feelings about their role in the world.*

appendix

appendixes

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **appendix** is a small closed tube inside your body which is attached to your digestive system.

- *...a burst appendix.*

2. countable noun

An **appendix to** a book is extra information that is placed after the end of the main text .

ancient

ancients

Explain

1. adjective

Ancient means belonging to the distant past, especially to the period in history before the end of the Roman Empire.

- *They believed ancient Greece and Rome were vital sources of learning.*

2. adjective

Ancient means very old, or having existed for a long time.

- *...ancient Jewish tradition.*
- *...ancient fishing rights.*
- *...a few acres of ancient woodland.*

3. plural noun

The ancients are the people of an old civilization , especially classical Greece or Rome .

- *The ancients knew more than we do about the heavens.*

certificate

certificates

Explain

1. countable noun

A **certificate** is an official document stating that particular facts are true .

- ...birth certificates.
- ...share certificates.

2. countable noun

A **certificate** is an official document that you receive when you have completed a course of study or training . The qualification that you receive is sometimes also called a **certificate** .

- To the right of the fireplace are various framed certificates.
- ...the Post-Graduate Certificate of Education.

antique

antiques

Explain

1. countable noun

An **antique** is an old object such as a piece of china or furniture which is valuable because of its beauty or rarity .

- ...a genuine antique.
- ...antique silver jewellery.
- He finds material at auctions, antique shops and flea markets.

change

changes changing changed

Explain

1. variable noun

If there is a **change in** something, it becomes different.

- The ambassador appealed for a change in U.S. policy.
- What is needed is a change of attitude on the part of architects.
- There are going to have to be some drastic changes.
- ...a passionate, eloquent campaigner for political change in her home country.
- This is a time of change for the corporation.

2. singular noun

If you say that something is a **change** or **makes a change** , you mean that it is enjoyable because it is different from what you are used to.

- It is a complex system, but it certainly makes a change.
- Do you feel like you could do with a change?

3. verb

If you **change from** one thing **to** another, you stop using or doing the first one and start using or doing the second.

- His doctor increased the dosage but did not change to a different medication.
- He changed from voting against to abstaining.

4. verb

When something **changes** or when you **change** it, it becomes different.

- We are trying to detect and understand how the climates change.
- In the union office, the mood gradually changed from resignation to rage.
- She has now changed into a happy, self-confident woman.

- *They should change the law to make it illegal to own replica weapons.*
 - *Trees are changing colour earlier than last year.*
 - *He is a changed man since you left.*
 - *A changing world has put pressures on the corporation.*
5. verb
To **change** something means to replace it with something new or different. **Change** is also a noun .
- *I paid £80 to have my car radio fixed and I bet all they did was change a fuse.*
 - *If you want to change your doctor there are two ways of doing it.*
 - *A change of leadership alone will not be enough.*
6. verb
When you **change** your clothes or **change** , you take some or all of your clothes off and put on different ones.
- *Ben had merely changed his shirt.*
 - *They had allowed her to shower and change.*
 - *I changed into a tracksuit.*
 - *I've got to get changed first. I've got to put my uniform on.*
7. countable noun
A **change of** clothes is an extra set of clothes that you take with you when you go to stay somewhere or to take part in an activity.
- *He stuffed a bag with a few changes of clothing.*
8. verb
When you **change** a bed or **change** the sheets , you take off the dirty sheets and put on clean ones.
- *After changing the bed, I would fall asleep quickly.*
- *I changed the sheets on your bed today.*
9. verb
When you **change** a baby or **change** its nappy or diaper , you take off the dirty one and put on a clean one.
- *She criticizes me for the way I feed or change him.*
 - *He needs his nappy changed.*
10. verb
When you **change** buses, trains, or planes or **change** , you get off one bus, train, or plane and get on to another in order to continue your journey .
- *At Glasgow I changed trains for Greenock.*
 - *We were turned off the train at Hanover, where we had to change.*
11. verb
When you **change** gear or **change** into another gear, you move the gear lever on a car, bicycle , or other vehicle in order to use a different gear.
- *The driver tried to change gear, then swerved.*
 - *He looked up into the mirror as he changed through his gears.*
12. uncountable noun
Your **change** is the money that you receive when you pay for something with more money than it costs because you do not have exactly the right amount of money.
- *'There's your change.'—'Thanks very much.'*
 - *They told the shopkeeper to keep the change.*
13. uncountable noun
Change is coins, rather than paper money.
- *Thieves ransacked the office, taking a sack of loose change.*
 - *The man in the store won't give him change for the phone unless he buys something.*

14. uncountable noun

If you have **change for** larger notes, bills , or coins, you have the same value in smaller notes, bills, or coins, which you can give to someone in exchange.

- *The courier had change for a £10 note.*

15. verb

When you **change** money, you exchange it for the same amount of money in a different currency, or in smaller notes, bills, or coins.

- *You can expect to pay the bank a fee of around 1*
- *Find an agency that will change one foreign currency directly into another.*

16. for a change

- *Lionel built a coop so that they could raise chickens and have a supply of fresh eggs.*
- *...free-range chickens.*
- *...roast chicken with wild mushrooms.*
- *...chicken soup.*

2. countable noun

If someone calls you a **chicken** , they mean that you are afraid to do something. **Chicken** is also an adjective .

- *I'm scared of the dark. I'm a big chicken.*
- *Why are you so chicken, Gregory?*

3. count one's chickens

4. a chicken and egg situation

5. run around like a headless chicken/rush around like a headless chicken

applicable

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **applicable to** a particular situation is relevant to it or can be applied to it.

- *What is a reasonable standard for one family is not applicable for another.*
- *Appraisal was seen as most applicable to those in management jobs.*
- *It should include a review of energy usage and, where applicable, the production and disposal of waste.*

chicken

chickens chickening chickened

Explain

1. countable noun

Chickens are birds which are kept on a farm for their eggs and for their meat . **Chicken** is the flesh of this bird eaten as food.

controversial

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **controversial** , you mean that they are the subject of intense public argument , disagreement , or disapproval .

- *Immigration is a controversial issue in many countries.*
- *When it was first suggested that passive smoking was harmful, the idea was controversial and the evidence thin.*
- *The changes are bound to be controversial.*
- *...the controversial 19th century politician Charles Parnell.*

clinic

clinics

Explain

1. countable noun

A **clinic** is a building where people go to receive medical advice or treatment.

- ...a family planning clinic.

economical

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **economical** does not require a lot of money to operate . For example a car that only uses a small amount of petrol is **economical** .

- ...plans to trade in their car for something smaller and more economical.
- It is more economical to wash a full load.

2. adjective

Someone who is **economical** spends money sensibly and does not want to waste it on things that are unnecessary . A way of life that is **economical** does not need a lot of money.

- ...ideas for economical housekeeping.

3. adjective

Economical means using the minimum amount of time, effort, or language that is necessary .

- His gestures were economical, his words generally mild.

coupon

coupons

Explain

1. countable noun

A **coupon** is a piece of printed paper which allows you to pay less money than usual for a product , or to get it free.

- Bring the coupon below to any Tecno store and pay just £10.99.

- ...a 50p money-off coupon.

2. countable noun

A **coupon** is a small form, for example in a newspaper or magazine , which you send off to ask for information , to order something, or to enter a competition.

- Send the coupon with a cheque for £18.50, made payable to 'Good Housekeeping'.

- He was filling in his pools coupon.

edible

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **edible** , it is safe to eat and not poisonous .

- ...edible fungi.

criticism

criticisms

Explain

1. variable noun

Criticism is the action of expressing disapproval of something or someone. A **criticism** is a statement that expresses disapproval.

- This policy had repeatedly come under strong criticism on Capitol Hill.

- ...unfair criticism of his tactics.

- The criticism that the English do not truly care about their children was often voiced.

2. uncountable noun

Criticism is a serious examination and judgment of something such as a book or play.

- *She has published more than 20 books including novels, poetry and literary criticism.*

essential

essentials

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **essential** is extremely important or absolutely necessary to a particular subject, situation , or activity.

- *It was absolutely essential to separate crops from the areas that animals used as pasture.*
- *As they must also sprint over short distances, speed is essential.*
- *Jordan promised to trim the city budget without cutting essential services.*

2. countable noun

The **essentials** are the things that are absolutely necessary for the situation you are in or for the task you are doing.

- *The flat contained the basic essentials for bachelor life.*

3. adjective

The **essential** aspects of something are its most basic or important aspects.

- *Most authorities agree that play is an essential part of a child's development.*
- *In this trial two essential elements must be proven: motive and opportunity.*

4. plural noun

The **essentials** are the most important principles , ideas , or facts of a particular subject.

- *...the essentials of everyday life, such as eating and exercise.*
- *This has stripped the contest down to its essentials.*
- *...the bare essentials.*

curse

curses cursing cursed

Explain

1. verb

If you **curse** , you use rude or offensive language, usually because you are angry about something. **Curse** is also a noun .

- *I cursed and hobbled to my feet.*
- *He shot her an angry look and a curse.*

2. verb

If you **curse** someone, you say insulting things to them because you are angry with them.

- *Grandma protested, but he cursed her and rudely pushed her aside.*
- *He cursed himself for having been so careless.*

3. verb

If you **curse** something, you complain angrily about it, especially using rude language.

- *So we set off again, cursing the delay, towards the west.*
- *She silently cursed her own stupidity.*

4. countable noun

If you say that there is a **curse on** someone, you mean that there seems to be a supernatural power causing unpleasant things to happen to them.

- *Maybe there is a curse on my family.*
- *He's been the object of a voodoo curse.*

5. countable noun

You can refer to something that causes a great deal of trouble or harm as a **curse** .

- *Apathy is the long-standing curse of British local democracy.*
- *Summer colds are a terrible curse.*

extreme

extremes

Explain

1. adjective

Extreme means very great in degree or intensity.

- *The girls were afraid of snakes and picked their way along with extreme caution.*
- *...people living in extreme poverty.*
- *...the author's extreme reluctance to generalise.*

2. adjective

You use **extreme** to describe situations and behaviour which are much more severe or unusual than you would expect, especially when you disapprove of them because of this.

- *The extreme case was Poland, where 29 parties won seats.*
- *His punishment seemed a little extreme.*
- *The scheme has been condemned as extreme.*

3. adjective

You use **extreme** to describe opinions, beliefs, or political movements which you disapprove of because they are very different from those that most people would accept as reasonable or normal.

- *This extreme view hasn't captured popular opinion.*
- *...the racist politics of the extreme right.*

4. countable noun

You can use **extremes** to refer to situations or types of behaviour that have opposite qualities to each other, especially when each situation or type of behaviour has such a quality to the greatest degree possible.

- *...a 'middle way' between the extremes of success and failure.*

- *They can withstand extremes of temperature and weather without fading or cracking.*

5. adjective

The **extreme** end or edge of something is its furthest end or edge.

- *...the room at the extreme end of the corridor.*
- *...winds from the extreme north.*

6. go/take/carry (sthg) to extremes

7. in the extreme

dictionary

dictionaries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dictionary** is a book in which the words and phrases of a language are listed alphabetically, together with their meanings or their translations in another language.

- *...a Welsh-English dictionary.*

2. countable noun

A **dictionary** is an alphabetically ordered reference book on one particular subject or limited group of subjects.

- *...the Dictionary of National Biography.*

fairy

fairies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **fairy** is an imaginary creature with magical powers. Fairies are often represented as small people with wings .

2. countable noun

If someone describes a man as a **fairy** , they mean that he is a homosexual and they disapprove of this.

editorial

editorials

Explain

1. adjective

Editorial means involved in preparing a newspaper, magazine , or book for publication.

- *He is on the editorial staff of the magazine.*
- *I went to the editorial board meetings when I had the time.*

2. adjective

Editorial means involving the attitudes , opinions, and contents of something such as a newspaper, magazine, or television programme .

- *We are not about to change our editorial policy.*

3. countable noun

An **editorial** is an article in a newspaper which gives the opinion of the editor or owner on a topic or item of news .

- *An editorial in the London Evening Standard argued the police reaction was disproportionate to the threat.*

4. countable noun

An **editorial** on television or radio is an item which gives the opinion of the network or radio station .

fearful

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **fearful of** something, you are afraid of it.

- *Bankers were fearful of a world banking crisis.*
- *I had often been very fearful, very angry, and very isolated.*

2. adjective

You use **fearful** to emphasize how serious or bad a situation is.

- *The region is in a fearful recession.*
- *...the fearful consequences which might flow from unilateral military moves.*

3. adjective

Fearful is used to emphasize that something is very bad.

- *You gave me a fearful shock!*
- *'It sounds the most fearful hard work,' Sybil said later.*

effort

efforts

Explain

1. variable noun

If you make an **effort to** do something, you try very hard to do it.

- *He made no effort to hide his disappointment.*
- *Finding a cure requires considerable time and effort.*
- *...his efforts to reform Italian research.*

- *Despite the efforts of the United Nations, the problem of drug traffic continues to grow.*
- *But a concerted effort has begun to improve the quality of the urban air.*

2. uncountable noun

If you say that someone did something **with effort** or **with an effort**, you mean it was difficult for them to do.

- *She took a deep breath and sat up slowly and with great effort.*
- *With an effort she contained her irritation.*

3. countable noun

An **effort** is a particular series of activities that is organized by a group of people in order to achieve something.

- *...a famine relief effort in Angola.*

4. singular noun

If you say that something is **an effort**, you mean that an unusual amount of physical or mental energy is needed to do it.

- *He's very stooped and it's an effort to lift his head.*

5. make the effort

6. an effort of will

7. worth the effort

feasible

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **feasible**, it can be done, made, or achieved.

- *She questioned whether it was feasible to stimulate investment in these regions.*
- *That may be fine for the U.S., but it's not feasible for a mass European market.*

endurance

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Endurance is the ability to continue with an unpleasant or difficult situation, experience, or activity over a long period of time.

- *The exercise obviously will improve strength and endurance.*
- *...his powers of endurance.*

formal

formals

Explain

1. adjective

Formal speech or behaviour is very correct and serious rather than relaxed and friendly, and is used especially in official situations.

- *He wrote a very formal letter of apology to Douglas.*
- *Business relationships are necessarily a bit more formal.*

2. adjective

A **formal** action, statement, or request is an official one.

- *U.N. officials said a formal request was passed to American authorities.*
- *No formal announcement had been made.*
- *...a formal application.*

3. adjective

Formal occasions are special occasions at which people wear smart clothes and behave according to a set of accepted rules. **Formal** is also a noun.

- *One evening the film company arranged a formal dinner after the play.*

- ...a wide array of events, including school formals and speech nights, weddings, and balls.

4. adjective

Formal clothes are very smart clothes that are suitable for formal occasions.

- *They wore ordinary ties instead of the more formal high collar and cravat.*

5. graded adjective

Something that is done, written, or studied in a **formal** way has a very ordered, organized method or style.

- *This does not encourage the child to analyse the environment in a formal way.*
- *Classic Greek drama was written in verse, usually in an elevated and formal style.*
- *...a formal methodology.*

6. adjective

Formal education or training is given officially, usually in a school, college, or university.

- *Although his formal education stopped after primary school, he was an avid reader.*
- *Leroy didn't have any formal dance training.*

7. adjective

A **formal** garden or room is arranged in a very regular and controlled way, especially according to certain rules of design.

- *...a formal herb garden.*
- *The Coronata wallpaper lends a formal air to the dining room.*

facility

facilities

Explain

1. countable noun

Facilities are buildings, pieces of equipment, or services that are provided for a particular purpose.

- *What recreational facilities are now available?*
- *The problem lies in getting patients to a medical facility as soon as possible.*

2. countable noun

A **facility** is something such as an additional service provided by an organization or an extra feature on a machine which is useful but not essential.

- *It is very useful to have an overdraft facility.*
- *One of the new models has the facility to reproduce speech as well as text.*

3. countable noun

If you have a **facility for** something, for example learning a language, you find it easy to do.

- *He and Marcia shared a facility for languages.*
- *Smell is a very basic sense but humans have lost much of the facility to use it properly.*

former

Explain

1. adjective

Former is used to describe someone who used to have a particular job, position, or role, but no longer has it.

- *The unemployed executives include former sales managers, directors and accountants.*
- *...former President Richard Nixon.*
- *He pleaded not guilty to murdering his former wife.*

2. adjective

Former is used to refer to countries which no longer exist or whose boundaries have changed.

- ...*the former Soviet Union.*
- ...*the former Yugoslavia.*

3. adjective

Former is used to describe something which used to belong to someone or which used to be a particular thing.

- ...*the former home of Sir Christopher Wren.*
- ...*a former monastery.*

4. adjective

Former is used to describe a situation or period of time which came before the present one.

- *He would want you to remember him as he was in former years.*

5. pronoun

When two people, things, or groups have just been mentioned, you can refer to the first of them as **the former** .

- *If there is a choice between using fresh vegetables and canned foods, always choose the former.*
- *Voters want personal prosperity and public spending. They will not sacrifice the former to the latter.*

intelligible

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **intelligible** can be understood.

- *The language of Darwin was intelligible to experts and non-experts alike.*
- *The woman moaned faintly but made no intelligible response.*

lovely

lovelier loveliest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **lovely** , you mean that they are very beautiful and therefore pleasing to look at or listen to.

- *You look lovely, Marcia.*
- *He had a lovely voice.*
- *It was just one of those lovely old English gardens.*

2. adjective

If you describe something as **lovely** , you mean that it gives you pleasure .

- *Mary! How lovely to see you!*
- *It's a lovely day.*
- *What a lovely surprise!*

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **lovely** , you mean that they are friendly , kind , or generous .

- *Laura is a lovely young woman.*
- *She's a lovely child.*

innovation

innovations

Explain

1. countable noun

An **innovation** is a new thing or a new method of doing something.

- *The vegetarian burger was an innovation which was rapidly exported to Britain.*
- *...the transformation wrought by the technological innovations of the industrial age.*

2. uncountable noun

Innovation is the introduction of new ideas , methods, or things.

- *We must promote originality and encourage innovation.*

inspiration

inspirations

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Inspiration is a feeling of enthusiasm you get from someone or something, which gives you new and creative ideas.

- *My inspiration comes from poets like Baudelaire and Jacques Prévert.*
- *What better way of finding inspiration for your own garden than by visiting others.*

2. singular noun

If you describe someone or something good as **an inspiration** , you mean that they make you or other people want to do or achieve something.

- *Powell's unusual journey to high office is an inspiration to millions.*
- *My father was a great inspiration.*

3. singular noun

If something or someone is the **inspiration** for a particular book , work of art , or action, they are the source of the ideas in it or act as a model for it.

- *India's myths and songs are the inspiration for her books.*

4. countable noun

If you suddenly have an **inspiration** , you suddenly think of an idea of what to do or say .

- *Alison had an inspiration.*

native

natives

Explain

1. adjective

Your **native** country or area is the country or area where you were born and brought up.

- *It was his first visit to his native country since 1948.*
- *Mother Teresa visited her native Albania.*

2. countable noun

A **native of** a particular country or region is someone who was born in that country or region.

Native is also an adjective .

- *Dr Aubin is a native of St Blaise.*
- *...two Dutch volunteer workmen, natives of Tilburg.*
- *Joshua Halpern is a native Northern Californian.*
- *...men and women native to countries such as Japan.*

3. countable noun

Some European people use **native** to refer to a person living in a non-Western country who belongs to the race or tribe that the majority of people there belong to. This use could cause offence . **Native** is also an adjective.

- *They used force to banish the natives from the more fertile land.*
- *Native people were allowed to retain some sense of their traditional culture and religion.*

4. adjective

Your **native** language or tongue is the first language that you learned to speak when you were a child .

- *She spoke not only her native language, Swedish, but also English and French.*

- *French is not my native tongue.*

5. adjective

Plants or animals that are **native to** a particular region live or grow there naturally and were not brought there. **Native** is also a noun .

- *...a project to create a 50 acre forest of native Caledonian pines.*
- *Many of the plants are native to Brazil.*
- *The coconut palm is a native of Malaysia.*

6. adjective

A **native** ability or quality is one that you possess naturally without having to learn it.

- *We have our native inborn talent, yet we hardly use it.*

7. go native

jam

jams jamming jammed

Explain

1. variable noun

Jam is a thick sweet food that is made by cooking fruit with a large amount of sugar, and that is usually spread on bread .

- *...home-made jam.*

2. verb

If you **jam** something somewhere , you push or put it there roughly .

- *He picked his cap up off the ground and jammed it on his head.*
- *Pete jammed his hands into his pockets.*

3. verb

If something such as a part of a machine **jams** , or if something **jams** it, the part becomes fixed in position and is unable to move freely or work properly.

- *The second time he fired his gun jammed.*

- *A rope jammed the boat's propeller.*

- *Cracks appeared in the wall and a door jammed shut.*

- *The intake valve was jammed open.*

- *Every few minutes the motor cut out as the machinery became jammed.*

4. verb

If vehicles **jam** a road, there are so many of them that they cannot move. **Jam** is also a noun .

- *Hundreds of departing motorists jammed the roads.*

- *Trucks sat in a jam for ten hours waiting to cross the bridge.*

5. verb

If a lot of people **jam** a place, or **jam into** a place, they are pressed tightly together so that they can hardly move.

- *Hundreds of people jammed the boardwalk to watch.*

- *They jammed into buses provided by the Red Cross and headed for safety.*

6. verb

To **jam** a radio or electronic signal means to interfere with it and prevent it from being received or heard clearly .

- *They will try to jam the transmissions electronically.*

7. verb

If callers **are jamming** phone lines, there are so many callers that the people answering the phones find it difficult to deal with them all.

- *Hundreds of callers jammed the BBC switchboard for more than an hour.*

- *The telephone exchange has been jammed all day with people wanting to buy season tickets.*

8. singular noun

If someone is **in a jam** , they are in a very difficult situation.

- *They were in a real jam, Bob thought glumly.*

9. verb

When jazz or rock musicians **are jamming** , they are informally playing music that has not been written down or planned in advance. **Jam** is also a noun.

- *He was jamming with his saxophone.*
- *...a free-form jazz jam.*
- *...a jam session.*

natural

naturals

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that it is **natural** for someone to act in a particular way or for something to happen in that way, you mean that it is reasonable in the circumstances .

- *It is only natural for youngsters to crave the excitement of driving a fast car.*
- *It is only natural that he should resent you.*
- *A period of depression can be a perfectly natural response to certain aspects of life.*

2. adjective

Natural behaviour is shared by all people or all animals of a particular type and has not been learned.

- *...the insect's natural instinct to feed.*
- *Anger is the natural reaction we experience when we feel threatened or frustrated.*

3. adjective

Someone with a **natural** ability or skill was born with that ability and did not have to learn it.

- *She has a natural ability to understand the motives of others.*

- *He had a natural flair for business.*

4. countable noun

If you say that someone is **a natural** , you mean that they do something very well and very easily.

- *He's a natural with any kind of engine.*
- *She proved to be a natural on camera.*

5. adjective

If someone's behaviour is **natural** , they appear to be relaxed and are not trying to hide anything.

- *Bethan's sister was as friendly and natural as the rest of the family.*
- *Hannah's natural manner reassured her, and she relaxed.*

6. adjective

Natural things exist or occur in nature and are not made or caused by people.

- *It has called the typhoon the worst natural disaster in South Korea in many years.*
- *The gigantic natural harbour of Poole is a haven for boats.*

7. adjective

Someone's **natural** parent is their biological father or mother , as opposed to an adult who is looking after them or has adopted them. Someone's **natural** child is their biological son or daughter , as opposed to a child they are looking after or have adopted.

- *She has been reunited with her natural mother.*
- *His commitments to the stepchildren will not reduce his obligation to his natural children.*

8. adjective

In music, a **natural** note is the ordinary note, not its sharp or flat form. **Natural** is also a noun .

- ...*B natural*.
- *Is that F a natural or a sharp?*

9. natural causes

king

kings

Explain

1. title noun

A **king** is a man who is the most important member of the royal family of his country, and who is considered to be the Head of State of that country.

- ...*the king and queen of Spain*.
- *In 1154, Henry II became King of England*.
- ...*King Albert*.

2. countable noun

If you describe a man as **the king of** something, you mean that he is the most important person doing that thing or he is the best at doing it.

- *He's the king of unlicensed boxing*.
- *He was the king of the big love song*.

3. countable noun

A **king** is a playing card with a picture of a king on it.

- ...*the king of diamonds*.

4. countable noun

In chess, the **king** is the most important piece. When you are in a position to capture your opponent's king, you win the game.

5. live like a king

negligible

Explain

1. adjective

An amount or effect that is **negligible** is so small that it is not worth considering or worrying about.

- *The pay that the soldiers received was negligible*.
- *Senior managers are convinced that the strike will have a negligible impact*.

normal

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **normal** is usual and ordinary, and is what people expect.

- *He has occasional injections to maintain his good health but otherwise he lives a normal life*.
- *The two countries resumed normal diplomatic relations*.
- *Some of the shops were closed but that's quite normal for a Thursday afternoon*.
- *In November, Clean's bakery produced 50 percent more bread than normal*.
- *Life here will continue as normal*.

2. adjective

A **normal** person has no serious physical or mental health problems.

- *Normal people just don't react like that*.
- *Will the baby be normal?*

layer

layers layering layered

Explain

1. countable noun

A **layer** of a material or substance is a quantity or piece of it that covers a surface or that is between two other things.

- *A fresh layer of snow covered the street.*
- *...the depletion of the ozone layer.*
- *Arrange all the vegetables except the potatoes in layers.*

2. countable noun

If something such as a system or an idea has many **layers** , it has many different levels or parts.

- *...an astounding ten layers of staff between the factory worker and the chief executive.*
- *Critics and the public puzzle out the layers of meaning in his photos.*

3. verb

If you **layer** something, you arrange it in layers.

- *Layer the potatoes, asparagus and salmon in the tin.*
- *By lifting and layering her hair, Michael created a lighter frame for her face.*

optional

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **optional** , you can choose whether or not you do it or have it.

- *A holiday isn't an optional extra. In this stressful, frantic world it's a must.*
- *Sex education is a sensitive area for some parents, and thus it should remain optional.*

obstruction

obstructions

Explain

1. countable noun

An **obstruction** is something that blocks a road or path .

- *John was irritated by drivers parking near his house and causing an obstruction.*

2. variable noun

An **obstruction** is something that blocks a passage in your body.

- *The boy was suffering from a bowel obstruction and he died.*

3. uncountable noun

Obstruction is the act of deliberately delaying something or preventing something from happening , usually in business, law , or government.

- *Mr Guest refused to let them in and now faces a criminal charge of obstruction.*

pathetic

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe a person or animal as **pathetic** , you mean that they are sad and weak or helpless , and they make you feel very sorry for them.

- *...a pathetic little dog with a curly tail.*
- *The small group of onlookers presented a pathetic sight.*
- *She now looked small, shrunken and pathetic.*

2. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **pathetic** , you mean that they make you feel impatient or angry , often because they are weak or not very good .

- *What pathetic excuses.*
- *'This area is pathetic,' he says. 'It has so few hotels.'*

- *...the pathetic attempts at public speaking made by members of all parties.*
- *Don't be so pathetic.*

patch

patches patching patched

Explain

1. countable noun

A **patch** on a surface is a part of it which is different in appearance from the area around it.

- *...the bald patch on the top of his head.*
- *There was a small patch of blue in the grey clouds.*
- *...two big damp patches on the carpet.*

2. countable noun

A **patch of** land is a small area of land where a particular plant or crop grows.

- *...a patch of land covered in forest.*
- *...the little vegetable patch in her backyard.*
- *...a patch of wild cornflowers.*

3. countable noun

A **patch** is a piece of material which you use to cover a hole in something.

- *...jackets with patches on the elbows.*
- *...trying to fix the flat tire by putting a patch on it.*

4. countable noun

A **patch** is a small piece of material which you wear to cover an injured eye.

- *She went to the hospital and found him lying down with a patch over his eye.*

5. verb

If you **patch** something that has a hole in it, you mend it by fastening a patch over the hole.

- *He and Walker patched the barn roof.*

- *One of the mechanics took off the damaged tyre, and took it back to the station to be patched.*
- *...their patched clothes.*

6. countable noun

A **patch** is a piece of computer program code written as a temporary solution for dealing with a virus in computer software and distributed by the makers of the original program.

- *Older machines will need a software patch to be loaded to correct the date.*

7. a bad patch/a rough patch

8. not a patch on sb/sth

peculiar

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **peculiar**, you think that they are strange or unusual, sometimes in an unpleasant way.

- *Mr Kennet has a rather peculiar sense of humour.*
- *Rachel thought it tasted peculiar.*

2. adjective

If something is **peculiar to** a particular thing, person, or situation, it belongs or relates only to that thing, person, or situation.

- *The problem is by no means peculiar to America.*

3. graded adjective

If you say that you **feel peculiar**, you mean that you feel slightly ill or unsteady.

- *All this has made me feel quite peculiar.*

possible

possibles

Explain

1. adjective

If it is **possible** to do something, it can be done.

- *If it is possible to find out where your brother is, we shall.*
- *Everything is possible if we want it enough.*
- *This morning he had tried every way possible to contact her.*
- *Live as you like, leave home if you want—that was never possible when I was young.*
- *It's been a beautiful evening and you have made it all possible.*

2. adjective

A **possible** event is one that might happen.

- *The families are meeting lawyers to discuss possible action against the police.*
- *Her family is discussing a possible move to America.*
- *One possible solution, if all else fails, is to take legal action.*
- *Is this not a possible outcome of the development of genetically modified food?*

3. adjective

If you say that it is **possible that** something is true or correct, you mean that although you do not know whether it is true or correct, you accept that it might be.

- *It is possible that there's an explanation for all this.*
- *Of course it's possible that a severe shake-up would make your husband realize how much you really mean to him.*

4. adjective

If you do something **as soon as possible**, you do it as soon as you can. If you get **as much as possible** of something, you get as much of it as you can.

- *Please make your decision as soon as possible.*

- *I want to learn as much as possible about the industry so that I'm better prepared.*

- *Michael sat down as far away from her as possible.*

- *Buy fresh produce as often as possible.*

5. adjective

You use **possible** with superlative adjectives to emphasize that something has more or less of a quality than anything else of its kind.

- *They have joined the job market at the worst possible time.*

- *We expressed in the clearest possible way our disappointment, hurt and anger.*

- *He is doing the best job possible.*

6. adjective

You use **possible** in expressions such as ' **if possible** ' and ' **if at all possible** ' when stating a wish or intention, to show that although this is what you really want, you may have to accept something different.

- *I need to see you, right away if possible.*

- *...the moral duty to uphold peace if at all possible.*

7. adjective

If you describe someone as, for example, a **possible** Prime Minister, you mean that they may become Prime Minister. **Possible** is also a noun.

- *It seems that the studio saw her as a possible successor to Bette Davis.*

- *Bradley has been considered a possible presidential contender himself.*

- *Kennedy was tipped as a presidential possible.*

- *He had been on the Nobel Prize committee's list of possibles.*

8. singular noun

The possible is everything that can be done in a situation .

- *He is a democrat with the skill, nerve, and ingenuity to push the limits of the possible.*

socialism

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Socialism is a set of left-wing political principles whose general aim is to create a system in which everyone has an equal opportunity to benefit from a country's wealth. Under socialism, the country's main industries are usually owned by the state.

raw

rawer rawest

Explain

1. adjective

Raw materials or substances are in their natural state before being processed or used in manufacturing.

- *We import raw materials and energy and export mainly industrial products.*
- *...two ships carrying raw sugar from Cuba.*

2. adjective

Raw food is food that is eaten uncooked , that has not yet been cooked, or that has not been cooked enough.

- *...a popular dish made of raw fish.*
- *This versatile vegetable can be eaten raw or cooked.*
- *Half of it is burned and half of it is raw.*

3. adjective

If a part of your body is **raw** , it is red and painful , perhaps because the skin has come off or has been burnt .

- *...the drag of the rope against the raw flesh of my shoulders.*
- *Her feet hurt and her hands were rubbed raw from unaccustomed work.*

4. adjective

Raw emotions are strong basic feelings or responses which are not weakened by other influences.

- *...the raw passions of nationalism.*
- *Her grief was still raw and he did not know how to help her.*

5. adjective

If you describe something as **raw** , you mean that it is simple , powerful , and real .

- *...the raw power of instinct.*
- *...the raw vitality of his earlier painting.*

6. adjective

Raw data is facts or information that has not yet been sorted , analysed , or prepared for use.

- *Analyses were conducted on the raw data.*
- *...a statistical model that fully adjusts the census's raw figures.*

7. adjective

If you describe someone in a new job as **raw** , or as a **raw** recruit , you mean that they lack experience in that job.

- *...replacing experienced men with raw recruits.*
- *Davies is still raw but his potential shows.*

8. adjective

Raw weather feels unpleasantly cold.

- *Once they cleared the housetops, the wind was raw and biting.*

- ...a raw December morning.

9. adjective

Raw sewage is sewage that has not been treated to make it cleaner .

- ...contamination of bathing water by raw sewage.

10. a raw deal

11. in the raw

society

societies

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Society is people in general , thought of as a large organized group.

- *This reflects attitudes and values prevailing in society.*
- *He maintains Islam must adapt to modern society.*

2. variable noun

A **society** is the people who live in a country or region, their organizations, and their way of life.

- *We live in a capitalist society.*
- *...the impact of advertising on the moral fabric of our society.*
- *...the complexities of South African society.*

3. countable noun

A **society** is an organization for people who have the same interest or aim .

- *...the North of England Horticultural Society.*
- *...the historical society.*

4. uncountable noun

Society is the rich , fashionable people in a particular place who meet on social occasions .

- *The couple quickly became a fixture of society pages.*

- *...the high season for society weddings.*

sane

saner sanest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **sane** is able to think and behave normally and reasonably, and is not mentally ill .

- *He seemed perfectly sane.*
- *It wasn't the act of a sane person.*

2. adjective

If you refer to a **sane** person, action, or system, you mean one that you think is reasonable and sensible .

- *No sane person wishes to see conflict or casualties.*
- *...a sane and safe energy policy.*

sociology

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Sociology is the study of society or of the way society is organized .

stereotype

stereotypes stereotyping stereotyped

Explain

1. countable noun

A **stereotype** is a fixed general image or set of characteristics that a lot of people believe represent a particular type of person or thing.

- *There's always been a stereotype about successful businessmen.*
- *Many men feel their body shape doesn't live up to the stereotype of the ideal man.*

2. verb

If someone **is stereotyped** as something, people form a fixed general idea or image of them, so that it is assumed that they will behave in a particular way.

- *He was stereotyped by some as a rebel.*
- *I get very worked up about the way women are stereotyped in a lot of mainstream films.*
- *You are likely to find many people who have stereotyped ideas about women.*

thrift

thrifts

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Thrift is the quality and practice of being careful with money and not wasting things.

- *They were rightly praised for their thrift and enterprise.*

2. countable noun

A **thrift** or a **thrift institution** is a kind of savings bank.

subsidy

subsidies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **subsidy** is money that is paid by a government or other authority in order to help an industry or business, or to pay for a public service.

- *European farmers are planning a massive demonstration against farm subsidy cuts.*
- *They've also slashed state subsidies to utilities and transportation.*

twin

twins twinning twinned

Explain

1. countable noun

If two people are **twins**, they have the same mother and were born on the same day.

- *Sarah was looking after the twins.*
- *I think there are many positive aspects to being a twin.*
- *She had a twin brother and a younger brother.*

2. adjective

Twin is used to describe a pair of things that look the same and are close together.

- *...the twin spires of the cathedral.*
- *...the world's largest twin-engined aircraft.*

3. adjective

Twin is used to describe two things or ideas that are similar or connected in some way.

- *...the twin concepts of liberty and equality.*
- *Nothing was done to save these women from the twin evils of begging or the workhouse.*

4. verb

When a place or organization in one country **is twinned with** a place or organization in another country, a special relationship is formally established between them.

- *My son's state primary school is twinned with a school near Johannesburg.*
- *The busy commercial town is twinned with Truro.*

5. adjective

Twin towns or cities are twinned with each other.

- *The thirty Germans were visiting their UK twin town.*

supplement

supplements supplementing supplemented

Explain

1. verb

If you **supplement** something, you add something to it in order to improve it. **Supplement** is also a noun .

- *...people doing extra jobs outside their regular jobs to supplement their incomes.*
- *I suggest supplementing your diet with vitamins E and A.*
- *Business sponsorship must be a supplement to, not a substitute for, public funding.*

2. countable noun

A **supplement** is a pill that you take or a special kind of food that you eat in order to improve your health .

- *...a multiple vitamin and mineral supplement.*
- *I took regular supplements and exercised every day.*

3. countable noun

A **supplement** is a separate part of a magazine or newspaper, often dealing with a particular topic .

- *...a special supplement to a monthly financial magazine.*

4. countable noun

A **supplement to** a book is an additional section, written some time after the main text and published either at the end of the book or separately.

- *...the supplement to the Encyclopedia Britannica.*

5. countable noun

A **supplement** is an extra amount of money that you pay in order to obtain special facilities or services, for example when you are travelling or staying at a hotel .

- *If you are travelling alone, the single room supplement is £11 a night.*

6. countable noun

A **supplement** is an extra amount of money that is paid to someone, in addition to their normal pension or income .

- *Some people may be entitled to a housing benefit supplement.*
- *...people who need a supplement to their basic pension.*

ugly

uglier ugliest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone or something is **ugly** , you mean that they are very unattractive and unpleasant to look at.

- *...an ugly little hat.*
- *She makes me feel dowdy and ugly.*

2. adjective

If you refer to an event or situation as **ugly** , you mean that it is very unpleasant, usually because it involves violent or aggressive behaviour .

- *There have been some ugly scenes.*
- *The confrontation turned ugly.*
- *...an ugly publicity stunt.*

tail

tails tailing tailed

Explain

1. countable noun

The **tail** of an animal, bird , or fish is the part extending beyond the end of its body.

- *The cattle were swinging their tails to disperse the flies.*
- *...a black dog with a long tail.*

2. countable noun

You can use **tail** to refer to the end or back of something, especially something long and thin .

- *...the horizontal stabilizer bar on the plane's tail.*
- *Elsie tugged her father's coat tail.*
- *...a comet tail.*

3. plural noun

If a man is wearing **tails** , he is wearing a formal jacket which has two long pieces hanging down at the back.

4. verb

To **tail** someone means to follow close behind them and watch where they go and what they do.

- *Officers had tailed the gang from London during a major undercover inquiry.*
- *He trusted her so little that he had her tailed.*

5. countable noun

A **tail** is someone who is paid to watch and to follow another person.

- *He checked behind. No tail.*

6. adverb

If you toss a coin and it comes down **tails** , you can see the side of it that does not have a picture of a head on it.

7. the tail is wagging the dog

8. with your tail between your legs

9. turn tail

unlikely

unlikelier unlikelyest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **unlikely** to happen or **unlikely** to be true , you believe that it will not happen or that it is not true, although you are not completely sure .

- *A military coup seems unlikely.*
- *As with many technological revolutions, you are unlikely to be aware of it.*
- *It's now unlikely that future parliaments will bring back the death penalty.*
- *In the unlikely event of anybody phoning, could you just scribble a message down?*

testimony

testimonies

Explain

1. variable noun

In a court of law, someone's **testimony** is a formal statement that they make about what they saw someone do or what they know of a situation , after having promised to tell the truth.

- *His testimony was an important element of the Prosecution case.*
- *Prosecutors may try to determine if Robb gave false testimony when he appeared before the grand jury.*

2. uncountable noun

If you say that one thing is **testimony to** another, you mean that it shows clearly that the second thing has a particular quality.

- *This book is testimony to a very individual kind of courage.*
- *Her living room is filled with books and papers, a testimony to her dedication to her work.*

weird

weirder weirdest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **weird**, you mean that they are strange.

- *That first day was weird.*
- *He's different. He's weird.*
- *In the 70s, we did a lot of creative things but also some weird things.*
- *It must be really weird to be rich.*
- *It felt weird going back to Liverpool.*

vocabulary

vocabularies

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **vocabulary** is the total number of words you know in a particular language.

- *His speech is immature, his vocabulary limited.*
- *We read to improve our vocabularies.*

2. singular noun

The **vocabulary** of a language is all the words in it.

- *...a new word in the German vocabulary.*

3. variable noun

The **vocabulary** of a subject is the group of words that are typically used when discussing it.

- *...the vocabulary of natural science.*

wretched

Explain

1. adjective

You describe someone as **wretched** when you feel sorry for them because they are in an unpleasant situation or have suffered unpleasant experiences.

- *These wretched people had seen their homes going up in flames.*

2. adjective

You use **wretched** to describe someone or something that you dislike or feel angry with.

- *Of course this wretched woman was unforgivably irresponsible.*
- *Reality started to hit about four months after we had bought the wretched place.*

adjective

Someone who feels **wretched** feels very unhappy.

- *I feel really confused and wretched.*
- *The wretched look on the little girl's face made him sorry.*

graded adjective

If you describe something as **wretched**, you are emphasizing that it is very bad or of very poor quality.

- *What a wretched excuse.*
- *The pay has always been wretched.*

graded adjective

You describe someone as **wretched** when you feel sorry for them because they are in an unpleasant situation or have suffered unpleasant experiences.

- You have built up a huge property empire by buying from wretched people who had to sell or starve.

angry

angrier angriest

Explain

1. adjective

When you are **angry**, you feel strong dislike or impatience about something.

- She had been very angry at the person who stole her new bike.
- Are you angry with me for some reason?
- I was angry about the rumours.
- He's angry that people have called him a racist.
- An angry mob gathered outside the courthouse.

2. graded adjective

An **angry** wound or rash is red and painful.

- He was badly concussed, the glass leaving two angry cuts across his forehead.

3. graded adjective

If you describe the sky or sea as **angry**, you mean that it is dark and stormy.

- Under the angry red sky he ran, into the thickening darkness.

adolescent

adolescents

Explain

1. adjective

Adolescent is used to describe young people who are no longer children but who have not yet become adults. It also refers to their behaviour. An **adolescent** is an adolescent boy or girl.

- It is important that an adolescent boy should have an adult in whom he can confide.
- He spent his adolescent years playing guitar in the church band.
- ...adolescent rebellion.
- Young adolescents are happiest with small groups of close friends.

another

Explain

1. determiner

Another thing or person means an additional thing or person of the same type as one that already exists. **Another** is also a pronoun.

- Mrs. Madrigal buttered another piece of toast.
- We're going to have another baby.
- The demand generated by one factory required the construction of another.

2. determiner

You use **another** when you want to emphasize that an additional thing or person is different to one that already exists. **Another** is also a pronoun.

- I think he's just going to deal with this problem another day.
- The counsellor referred her to another therapist.

- *It appeared to mean one thing but in fact meant quite another.*
- *He didn't really believe that any human being could read another's mind.*

3. determiner

You use **another** at the beginning of a statement to link it to a previous statement.

- *Another time of great excitement for us boys was when war broke out.*
- *Another change that Sue made was to install central heating.*

4. determiner

You use **another** before a word referring to a distance, length of time, or other amount, to indicate an additional amount.

- *Continue down the same road for another 2 kilometres.*
- *He believes prices will not rise by more than another 4 per cent.*

5. determiner

You use **another** in front of the name of a well-known person, place, or event to indicate that you think someone or something is just like that person, place, or event.

- *You may never be another Hemingway, but you can learn to write well.*

6. one another

7. one thing after another

8. or another

bronze

bronzes

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Bronze is a yellowish-brown metal which is a mixture of copper and tin.

- *The bronze statue of Mars is a copy of a famous statue found just outside Todi in 1837.*

2. countable noun

A **bronze** is a statue or sculpture made of bronze.

- *...a bronze of Napoleon on horseback.*

3. countable noun

A **bronze** is a bronze medal.

4. colour

Something that is **bronze** is yellowish-brown in colour.

- *Her hair shone bronze and gold.*
- *...huge bronze chrysanthemums.*

chief

chiefs

Explain

1. countable noun

The **chief** of an organization is the person who is in charge of it.

- *...a commission appointed by the police chief.*
- *...Putin's chief of security.*

2. countable noun

The **chief** of a tribe is its leader.

- *...Sitting Bull, chief of the Sioux tribes of the Great Plains.*

3. adjective

Chief is used in the job titles of the most senior worker or workers of a particular kind in an organization.

- ...the chief test pilot.

4. adjective

The **chief** cause, part, or member of something is the most important one.

- Financial stress is well established as a chief reason for divorce.
- The job went to one of his chief rivals.

bruise

bruises bruising bruised

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bruise** is an injury which appears as a purple mark on your body, although the skin is not broken.

- How did you get that bruise on your cheek?
- She was treated for cuts and bruises.

2. verb

If you **bruise** a part of your body, a bruise appears on it, for example because something hits you. If you **bruise** easily, bruises appear when something hits you only slightly.

- I had only bruised my knee.
- Some people bruise more easily than others.

3. verb

If a fruit, vegetable, or plant **bruises** or **is bruised**, it is damaged by being handled roughly, making a mark on the skin. **Bruise** is also a noun.

- Choose a warm, dry day to cut them off the plants, being careful not to bruise them.

- ...bruised tomatoes and cucumbers.

- Be sure to store them carefully as they bruise easily.

- ...bruises on the fruit's skin.

4. verb

If you **are bruised** by an unpleasant experience, it makes you feel unhappy or upset.

- The government will be severely bruised by yesterday's events.
- Their egos are so easily bruised.

diplomatic

Explain

1. adjective

Diplomatic means relating to diplomacy and diplomats.

- ...before the two countries resume full diplomatic relations.
- Efforts are being made to avert war and find a diplomatic solution.
- These diplomatic skills led to her appointment as the President of the United Nations General Assembly.

2. adjective

Someone who is **diplomatic** is able to be careful to say or do things without offending people.

- She is very direct. I tend to be more diplomatic, I suppose.

burden

burdens burdening burdened

Explain

1. countable noun

If you describe a problem or a responsibility as a **burden**, you mean that it causes someone a lot of difficulty, worry, or hard work.

- The developing countries bear the burden of an enormous external debt.
- They don't go around with the burdens of the world on their shoulders the whole time.
- Her death will be an impossible burden on Paul.
- The financial burden will be more evenly shared.

2. countable noun

A **burden** is a heavy load that is difficult to carry.

3. verb

If someone **burdens** you **with** something that is likely to worry you, for example a problem or a difficult decision, they tell you about it.

- We decided not to burden him with the news.

4. burden of proof

eastern

Explain

1. adjective

Eastern means in or from the east of a region, state, or country.

- ...Eastern Europe.
- ...Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore.
- ...France's eastern border with Germany.

2. adjective

Eastern means coming from or associated with the people or countries of the East, such as India, China, or Japan.

- In many Eastern countries massage was and is a part of everyday life.

button

buttons buttoning buttoned

Explain

1. countable noun

Buttons are small hard objects sewn on to shirts, coats, or other pieces of clothing. You fasten the clothing by pushing the buttons through holes called buttonholes.

- ...a coat with brass buttons.

2. verb

If you **button** a shirt, coat, or other piece of clothing, you fasten it by pushing its buttons through the buttonholes. **Button up** means the same as button.

- Ferguson stood up and buttoned his coat.
 - I buttoned up my coat; it was chilly.
 - The young man slipped on the shirt and buttoned it up.
 - It was freezing out there even in his buttoned-up overcoat.
- ### 3. countable noun
- A **button** is a small object on a machine or electrical device that you press in order to operate it.
- He reached for the remote control and pressed the 'play' button.

4. countable noun

A **button** is a small piece of metal or plastic which you wear in order to show that you support a particular movement, organization, or person. You fasten a button to your clothes with a pin .

5. press/push the right button

electric

Explain

1. adjective

An **electric** device or machine works by means of electricity, rather than using some other source of power.

- ...her electric guitar.

2. adjective

An **electric** current , voltage , or charge is one that is produced by electricity.

3. adjective

Electric plugs , sockets , or power lines are designed to carry electricity.

4. adjective

Electric is used to refer to the supply of electricity.

- An average electric bill might go up 2 or 3 per month.

5. adjective

If you describe the atmosphere of a place or event as **electric** , you mean that people are in a state of great excitement .

- The mood in the hall was electric.

cash

cash *cashing* *cash* *ed*

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Cash is money in the form of notes and coins rather than cheques .

- ...two thousand pounds in cash.

2. uncountable noun

Cash means the same as money, especially money which is immediately available.

- ...a state-owned financial-services group with plenty of cash.

electrical

Explain

1. adjective

Electrical goods, equipment , or appliances work by means of electricity.

- ...shipments of electrical equipment.

- ...electrical appliances.

2. adjective

Electrical systems or parts supply or use electricity.

3. adjective

Electrical energy is energy in the form of electricity.

4. adjective

Electrical industries , engineers , or workers are involved in the production and supply of electricity or electrical goods.

circuit

circuit *s*

Explain

1. countable noun

An electrical **circuit** is a complete route which an electric current can flow around.

- Any attempts to cut through the cabling will break the electrical circuit.

2. countable noun

A **circuit** is a series of places that are visited regularly by a person or group, especially as a part of their job .

- He joined the professional circuit.
- It's a common problem, the one I'm asked about most when I'm on the lecture circuit.

3. countable noun

A racing **circuit** is a track on which cars , motorbikes , or cycles race.

4. countable noun

A **circuit of** a place or area is a journey all the way round it.

- She made a slow circuit of the room.

electronic

Explain

1. adjective

An **electronic** device has transistors or silicon chips which control and change the electric current passing through the device.

- ...expensive electronic equipment.

2. adjective

An **electronic** process or activity involves the use of electronic devices.

- ...electronic surveillance.
- ...electronic music.

climax

climaxes climaxing climaxed

Explain

1. countable noun

The **climax of** something is the most exciting or important moment in it, usually near the end .

- For Pritchard, getting a medal was the climax of her career.
- It was the climax to 24 hours of growing anxiety.
- The last golf tournament of the European season is building up to a dramatic climax.

2. verb

The event that **climaxes** a sequence of events is an exciting or important event that comes at the end. You can also say that a sequence of events **climaxes with** a particular event.

- The demonstration climaxed two weeks of strikes.

- They've just finished a sell-out U.K. tour that climaxed with a three-night stint at Brixton Academy.

3. variable noun

A **climax** is an orgasm .

4. verb

When someone **climaxes** , they have an orgasm .

- Often, a man can enjoy making love but may not be sufficiently aroused to climax.

exciting

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **exciting** , it makes you feel very happy or enthusiastic .

- The race itself is very exciting.
- This voyage was the most exciting adventure of their lives.
- Jackie was an exciting player to watch.

complaint

complaints

Explain

1. variable noun

A **complaint** is a statement in which you express your dissatisfaction with a particular situation .

- There's been a record number of complaints about the standard of service on Britain's railways.
- People have been reluctant to make formal complaints to the police.
- If you feel you have any cause for complaint about the service you should write to the Hospital Administrator.

2. countable noun

A **complaint** is a reason for complaining.

- If you have a complaint about shoes bought from a shop covered by the Footwear Code, there are several ways of putting the matter right.
- I've got no complaints about them.

- My main complaint is that we can't go out on the racecourse anymore.

3. countable noun

You can refer to an illness as a **complaint** , especially if it is not very serious .

- Eczema is a common skin complaint which often runs in families.

exterior

exteriors

Explain

1. countable noun

The **exterior** of something is its outside surface.

- In one ad the viewer scarcely sees the car's exterior.
- The exterior of the building was elegant and graceful.

2. countable noun

You can refer to someone's usual appearance or behaviour as their **exterior** , especially when it is very different from their real character.

- According to Mandy, Pat's tough exterior hides a shy and sensitive soul.

3. adjective

You use **exterior** to refer to the outside parts of something or things that are outside something.

- The exterior walls were made of pre-formed concrete.

- ...the oven's exterior surfaces.

doll

dolls dolling dollled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **doll** is a child's toy which looks like a small person or baby .

external

Explain

1. adjective

External is used to indicate that something is on the outside of a surface or body, or that it exists, happens , or comes from outside.

- ...a much reduced heat loss through external walls.
- ...internal and external allergic reactions.

2. adjective

External means involving or intended for foreign countries.

- ...the commissioner for external affairs.
- ...Jamaica's external debt.
- ...the republic's external borders.

3. adjective

External means happening or existing in the world in general and affecting you in some way.

- ...a reaction to external events.
- Such events occur only when the external conditions are favorable.

4. external examiner

5. for external use

donkey

donkeys

Explain

1. countable noun

A **donkey** is an animal which is like a horse but which is smaller and has longer ears .

2. donkey's years

extinct

Explain

1. adjective

A species of animal or plant that is **extinct** no longer has any living members, either in the world or in a particular place.

- It is 250 years since the wolf became extinct in Britain.
- ...the bones of extinct animals.

2. adjective

If a particular kind of worker , way of life, or type of activity is **extinct** , it no longer exists , because of changes in society .

- Herbalism had become an all but extinct skill in the Western world.

3. adjective

An **extinct** volcano is one that does not erupt or is not expected to erupt any more.

- Its tallest volcano, long extinct, is Olympus Mons.

drawer

drawers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **drawer** is part of a desk , chest, or other piece of furniture that is shaped like a box and is designed for putting things in. You pull it towards you to open it.

- He opened a drawer in his writing-table.

2. plural noun

Drawers are underpants, especially ones worn by women.

flat

flats flatter flattest

Explain

1. countable noun

A **flat** is a set of rooms for living in, usually on one floor and part of a larger building. A flat usually includes a kitchen and bathroom .

- Sara lives with her partner and children in a flat in central London.
- ... a block of flats
- Later on, Victor from flat 10 called.

2. adjective

Something that is **flat** is level, smooth, or even, rather than sloping, curved, or uneven .

- Tiles can be fixed to any surface as long as it's flat, firm and dry.
- After a moment his right hand moved across the cloth, smoothing it flat.
- ...windows which a thief can reach from a drainpipe or flat roof.
- The sea was calm, perfectly flat.

3. adjective

Flat means horizontal and not upright .

- Two men near him threw themselves flat.
- As heartburn is usually worse when you're lying down, you should avoid lying flat.

4. adjective

A **flat** object is not very tall or deep in relation to its length and width .

- Ellen is walking down the drive with a square flat box balanced on one hand.

5. adjective

Flat land is level, with no high hills or other raised parts.

- To the north lie the flat and fertile farmlands of the Solway plain.
- The landscape became wider, flatter and very scenic.
- The highway stretched out flat and straight ahead.

6. countable noun

A low flat area of uncultivated land, especially an area where the ground is soft and wet , can be referred to as **flats** or a **flat** .

- The salt marshes and mud flats attract large numbers of waterfowl.

7. countable noun

You can refer to one of the broad flat surfaces of an object as **the flat of** that object.

- He slammed the counter with the flat of his hand.
- ...eight cloves of garlic crushed with the flat of a knife.

8. adjective

Flat shoes have no heels or very low heels. **Flats** are flat shoes.

- People wear slacks, sweaters, flat shoes, and all manner of casual attire for travel.
- His mother looked ten years younger in jeans and flats.

9. adjective
A **flat** tyre, ball, or balloon does not have enough air in it.
10. countable noun
A **flat** is a tyre that does not have enough air in it.
 - Then, after I finally got back on the highway, I developed a flat.
11. adjective
A drink that is **flat** is no longer fizzy.
 - Could this really stop the champagne from going flat?
12. adjective
A **flat** battery has lost some or all of its electrical charge.
 - His car alarm had been going off for two days and, as a result, the battery was flat.
13. adjective
If you have **flat** feet, the arches of your feet are too low.
 - The condition of flat feet runs in families.
14. adjective
A **flat** denial or refusal is definite and firm, and is unlikely to be changed.
 - The Foreign Ministry has issued a flat denial of any involvement.
 - She is likely to give you a flat refusal.
15. adjective
If you say that something happened , for example, in ten seconds **flat** or ten minutes **flat** , you are emphasizing that it happened surprisingly quickly and only took ten seconds or ten minutes.
 - You're sitting behind an engine that'll move you from 0 to 60mph in six seconds flat.
- I had it all explained to me in two minutes flat.
16. adjective
A **flat** rate, price, or percentage is one that is fixed and which applies in every situation.
 - Fees are charged at a flat rate, rather than on a percentage basis.
 - Sometimes there's a flat fee for carrying out a particular task.
17. adjective
If trade or business is **flat** , it is slow and inactive, rather than busy and improving or increasing.
 - Sales of big pickups were up 14
 - For the country overall, house prices have remained flat.
18. adjective
If you describe something as **flat** , you mean that it is dull and not exciting or interesting.
 - The past few days have seemed comparatively flat and empty.
 - The party leader delivered a dreadfully flat speech.
19. adjective
You use **flat** to describe someone's voice when they are saying something without expressing any emotion.
 - 'Whatever you say,' he said in a deadly flat voice. 'I'll sit here and wait.'
 - Her voice was flat, with no question or hope in it.
20. adjective
Flat is used after a letter representing a musical note to show that the note should be played or sung half a tone lower than the note which otherwise matches that letter. **Flat** is often represented by the symbol \flat after the letter.

- ...Schubert's *B flat Piano Trio* (Opus 99).

21. *adverb*

If someone sings **flat** or if a musical instrument is **flat**, their singing or the instrument is slightly lower in pitch than it should be. **Flat** is also an adjective.

- Her vocal range was limited, and she had a tendency to sing flat.
- He had been fired because his singing was flat.

22. *flat as a pancake*

23. *to fall flat*

24. *to fall flat*

25. *flat broke*

26. *flat out*

27. *flat out*

28. *on the flat*

environment

environments

Explain

1. *variable noun*

Someone's **environment** is all the circumstances, people, things, and events around them that influence their life.

- Pupils in our schools are taught in a safe, secure environment.
- The moral characters of men are formed not by heredity but by environment.
- The twins were separated at birth and brought up in entirely different environments.

2. *countable noun*

Your **environment** consists of the particular natural surroundings in which you live or exist, considered in relation to their physical characteristics or weather conditions.

- If our environment cools, then messages from the skin alert the body's thermostat.
- ...the maintenance of a safe environment for marine mammals.

3. *singular noun*

The environment is the natural world of land, sea, air, plants, and animals.

- ...persuading people to respect the environment.

foreign

Explain

1. *adjective*

Something or someone that is **foreign** comes from or relates to a country that is not your own.

- ...a huge attraction for foreign visitors.
- She was on her first foreign holiday without her parents.
- ...a foreign language.
- It is the largest ever private foreign investment in the Bolivian mining sector.

2. *adjective*

In politics and journalism, **foreign** is used to describe people, jobs, and activities relating to countries that are not the country of the person or government concerned.

- ...the German foreign minister.
- I am the foreign correspondent in Washington of La Tribuna newspaper of Honduras.

- ...the effects of U.S. foreign policy in the 'free world'.

3. adjective

A **foreign** object is something that has got into something else, usually by accident, and should not be there.

- The patient's immune system would reject the transplanted organ as a foreign object.

4. adjective

Something that is **foreign to** a particular person or thing is not typical of them or is unknown to them.

- The very notion of price competition is foreign to many schools.
- The whole thing is foreign to us.

expression

expressions

Explain

1. variable noun

The **expression** of ideas or feelings is the showing of them through words, actions, or artistic activities.

- Laughter is one of the most infectious expressions of emotion.
- From Cairo came expressions of regret at the attack.
- ...the rights of the individual to freedom of expression.
- Her concern has now found expression in the new environmental protection act.

2. variable noun

Your **expression** is the way that your face looks at a particular moment. It shows what you are thinking or feeling.

- The civil servant's expression, however, did not change, not so much as by a flicker.

- Levin sat there, an expression of sadness on his face.

- The face is entirely devoid of expression.

3. uncountable noun

Expression is the showing of feeling when you are acting, singing, or playing a musical instrument.

- I put more expression into my lyrics than a lot of other singers do.

4. countable noun

An **expression** is a word or phrase.

- She spoke in a quiet voice but used remarkably coarse expressions.

5. countable noun

In mathematics, an **expression** is a symbol or equation which represents a quantity or problem.

- This forms the basis for our mathematical expression for the electric field.

hasty

hastier hastiest

Explain

1. adjective

A **hasty** movement, action, or statement is sudden, and often done in reaction to something that has just happened.

- He started screaming insults so I made a hasty escape.

2. adjective

A **hasty** event or action is one that is completed more quickly than normal.

- *After the hasty meal, the men had moved forward to take up their positions.*

3. adjective

If you describe a person or their behaviour as **hasty** , you mean that they are acting too quickly, without thinking carefully, for example because they are angry .

- *So let's not be hasty. After all, he can't run away.*
- *A number of the United States' allies had urged him not to take a hasty decision.*

- *It was a fun evening.*

- *What a fun person he is!*

4. figure of fun

5. for fun

6. fun and games

7. in fun

8. make fun of

fun

Explain

1. uncountable noun

You refer to an activity or situation as **fun** if you think it is pleasant and enjoyable and it causes you to feel happy .

- *This year promises to be terrifically good fun.*
- *It was such a success and we had so much fun doing it.*
- *It could be fun to watch them.*
- *You still have time to join in the fun.*

2. uncountable noun

If you say that someone is **fun** , you mean that you enjoy being with them because they say and do interesting or amusing things.

- *Liz was wonderful fun to be with.*

3. adjective

If you describe something as a **fun** thing, you mean that you think it is enjoyable. If you describe someone as a **fun** person, you mean that you enjoy being with them.

horrible

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **horrible** , you do not like them at all.

- *The record sounds horrible.*

- *...a horrible small boy.*

2. adjective

You can call something **horrible** when it causes you to feel great shock , fear , and disgust .

- *Still the horrible shrieking came out of his mouth.*

3. adjective

Horrible is used to emphasize how bad something is.

- *That seems like a horrible mess that will drag on for years.*
- *Unless you respect other people's religions, horrible mistakes and conflict will occur.*

garbage

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Garbage is rubbish , especially waste from a kitchen .

- ...a garbage bag.
- ...rotting piles of garbage.

2. uncountable noun

If someone says that an idea or opinion is **garbage** , they are emphasizing that they believe it is untrue or unimportant .

- I personally think this is complete garbage.
- Furious government officials branded her story 'garbage'.

hungry

hungrier hungriest

Explain

1. adjective

When you are **hungry** , you want some food because you have not eaten for some time and have an uncomfortable or painful feeling in your stomach .

- My friend was hungry, so we drove to a shopping mall to get some food.

2. go hungry

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **hungry** for something, you are emphasizing that they want it very much. **Hungry** is also a combining form.

- Susan was certainly hungry for a life different from the one she had made for herself.
- I left Oxford in 1961 hungry to be a critic.
- ...power-hungry politicians.

juvenile

juveniles

Explain

1. countable noun

A **juvenile** is a child or young person who is not yet old enough to be regarded as an adult.

- The number of juveniles in the general population has fallen by a fifth in the past 10 years.

2. adjective

Juvenile activity or behaviour involves young people who are not yet adults.

- Juvenile crime is increasing at a terrifying rate.
- ...a scheme to lock up persistent juvenile offenders.

3. adjective

If you describe someone's behaviour as **juvenile** , you are critical of it because you think that it is silly or childish .

- Don't be so juvenile!

4. countable noun

Young animals are sometimes referred to as **juveniles** .

instrumental

instrumentals

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **instrumental** in a process or event helps to make it happen .

- In his first years as chairman he was instrumental in raising the company's wider profile.

- The Senator was instrumental in the release of some of the hostages.

2. adjective

Instrumental music is performed by instruments and not by voices. **Instrumentals** are pieces of instrumental music.

- ...a recording of vocal and instrumental music.
- The last track on the album is an instrumental.

latitude

latitudes

Explain

1. variable noun

The **latitude** of a place is its distance from the equator. Compare longitude. **Latitude** is also an adjective.

- In the middle to high latitudes rainfall has risen steadily over the last 20–30 years.
- The army must cease military operations above 36 degrees latitude north.

2. uncountable noun

Latitude is freedom to choose the way in which you do something.

- He would be given every latitude in forming a new government.
- His status at the studio afforded him all the artistic latitude he could ask for.

northern

Explain

1. adjective

Northern means in or from the north of a region, state, or country.

- Their two children were immigrants to Northern Ireland from Pennsylvania.
- Prices at three-star hotels fell furthest in several northern cities.

liability

liabilities

Explain

1. countable noun

If you say that someone or something is a **liability**, you mean that they cause a lot of problems or embarrassment.

- Team-mates and coach began to see him as a liability.
- What was once a vote-catching policy is now a political liability.

2. countable noun

A company's or organization's **liabilities** are the sums of money which it owes.

- The company had assets of 138 million and liabilities of 120.5 million.

optimistic

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **optimistic** is hopeful about the future or the success of something in particular.

- The President says she is optimistic that an agreement can be worked out soon.
- Michael was in a jovial and optimistic mood.

list

lists listing listed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **list** of things such as names or addresses is a set of them which all belong to a particular category, written down one below the other.

- Make a list of the top 10 tasks that you can delegate.
- There were six names on the list.
- ...fine wine from the hotel's exhaustive wine list.

2. countable noun

A **list** of things is a set of them that you think of as being in a particular order.

- High on the list of public demands is to end military control of broadcasting.
- I would have thought if they were looking for redundancies I would be last on the list.
- The company joined a long list of failed banks.

3. verb

To **list** several things such as reasons or names means to write or say them one after another, usually in a particular order.

- The pupils were asked to list the sports they loved most and hated most.
- Manufacturers must list ingredients in order of the amount used.

4. verb

To **list** something in a particular way means to include it in that way in a list or report.

- A medical examiner has listed the deaths as homicides.
- He was not listed under his real name on the residents panel.

5. verb

If a company **is listed**, or if it **lists**, on a stock exchange, it obtains an official quotation for its shares so that people can buy and sell them.

- It will list on the London Stock Exchange next week with a value of 130 million pounds.

6. verb

In sailing, if something, especially a ship, **lists**, it leans over to one side. **List** is also a noun.

- The ship listed again, and she was thrown back across the bunk.
- The ship's list was so strong now that almost at once she stumbled.

oriental

orientals

Explain

1. adjective

Oriental means coming from or associated with eastern Asia, especially China and Japan.

- There were Oriental carpets on the floors.
- ...oriental food.

2. countable noun

Some people refer to people from eastern Asia, especially China or Japan as **Oriental**s. This use could cause offence.

- I have always considered tea the beverage of Orientals and hippies.

litter

litters littering littered

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Litter is rubbish that is left lying around outside.

- If you see litter in the corridor, pick it up.
- On Wednesday we cleared a beach and woodland of litter.

2. uncountable noun

A **litter of** things is a quantity of them that are lying around in a disorganized way.

- He pushed aside the litter of books and papers and laid two places at the table.

3. verb

If a number of things **litter** a place, they are scattered untidily around it or over it.

- Glass from broken bottles litters the pavement.

4. adjective

If something is **littered with** things, it contains many examples of it.

- History is littered with men and women spurred into achievement by a father's disregard.
- Charles' speech is littered with lots of marketing buzzwords like 'package' and 'product'.

5. countable noun

A **litter** is a group of animals born to the same mother at the same time.

- ...a litter of pups.

6. uncountable noun

Litter is a dry substance that you put in the container where you want your cat to go to the toilet .

other

others

Explain

1. adjective

You use **other** to refer to an additional thing or person of the same type as one that has been mentioned or is known about. **Other** is also a pronoun .

- They were just like any other young couple.
- The communique gave no other details.
- Four crewmen were killed, one other was injured.
- In 1914 he (like so many others) lied about his age so that he could join the war effort.

2. adjective

You use **other** to indicate that a thing or person is not the one already mentioned, but a different one. **Other** is also a pronoun.

- The authorities insist that the discussions must not be linked to any other issue.
- Calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p per minute at all other times.
- He would have to accept it; there was no other way.
- They will then have more money to spend on other things.
- This issue, more than any other, has divided her cabinet.
- Some of these methods will work. Others will not.

3. adjective

You use **the other** to refer to the second of two things or people when the identity of the first is already known or understood, or has already been mentioned. **The other** is also a pronoun.

- The Captain was at the other end of the room.
- You deliberately went in the other direction.
- Half of PML's scientists have first degrees, the other half have PhDs.
- Henry was holding a duster in one hand and a kitchen pail in the other.
- While one of them tried to put his hand in my pocket, the other held me from behind.

4. adjective

You use **other** at the end of a list or a group of examples , to refer generally to people or things like the ones just mentioned. **Other** is also a pronoun.

- The quay will incorporate shops, restaurants and other amenities.
- Place them in a jam jar, porcelain bowl, or other similar container.
- Descartes received his stimulus from the new physics and astronomy of Copernicus, Galileo, and others.

5. adjective

You use **the other** to refer to the rest of the people or things in a group, when you are talking about one particular person or thing. **The others** is also a pronoun.

- When the other pupils were taken to an exhibition, he was left behind.
- Aubrey's on his way here, with the others.

6. adjective

Other people are people in general , as opposed to yourself or a person you have already mentioned. **Others** means the same as **other people** .

- The suffering of other people appals me.

- She likes to be with other people.
- His humour depended on contempt for others.

7. adjective

You use **other** in informal expressions of time such as **the other day** , **the other evening** , or **the other week** to refer to a day, evening, or week in the recent past .

- I rang her the other day and she said she'd like to come round.
- The other evening we had a party.

8. among other(s)

9. every other day/week/month

10. every other

11. none other than

12. no/nothing other than

13. or other

14. other than

lottery

lotteries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lottery** is a type of gambling game in which people buy numbered tickets. Several numbers are then chosen , and the people who have those numbers on their tickets win a prize.

- ...the national lottery.

2. singular noun

If you describe something as **a lottery** , you mean that what happens depends entirely on luck or chance .

- The stockmarket is a lottery.
- Which judges are assigned to a case is always a bit of a lottery.

outer

Explain

1. adjective

The **outer** parts of something are the parts which contain or enclose the other parts, and which are furthest from the centre.

- He heard a voice in the outer room.
- ...the outer suburbs of the city.

paper

papers papering papered

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Paper is a material that you write on or wrap things with. The pages of this book are made of paper.

- He wrote his name down on a piece of paper for me.
- She sat at the table with pen and paper.
- ...a sheet of pretty wrapping paper.
- ...a paper bag.

2. countable noun

A **paper** is a newspaper .

- I might get a paper in the village.
- I'll cook and you read the paper.

3. countable noun

You can refer to newspapers in general as **the paper** or **the papers** .

- You can't believe everything you read in the paper.
- There's been a lot in the papers about the problems facing stepchildren.

4. plural noun

Your **papers** are sheets of paper with writing or information on them, which you might keep in a safe place at home .

- Her papers included unpublished articles and correspondence.

5. plural noun

Your **papers** are official documents, for example your passport or identity card , which prove who you are or which give you official permission to do something.

- They have arrested four people who were trying to leave the country with forged papers.

6. countable noun

A **paper** is a long, formal piece of writing about an academic subject.

- He just published a paper in the journal Nature, analyzing the fires.

7. countable noun

A **paper** is an essay written by a student.

- ...the ten common errors that appear most frequently in student papers.

8. countable noun

A **paper** is a part of a written examination in which you answer a number of questions in a particular period of time.

- We sat each paper in the Hall.
- She finished the exam paper.
- ...the applied mathematics paper.

9. countable noun

A **paper** prepared by a government or a committee is a report on a question they have been considering or a set of proposals for changes in the law .

- ...a new government paper on climate change.

10. adjective

Paper agreements , qualifications , or profits are ones that are stated by official documents to exist, although they may not really be effective or useful .

- They expressed deep mistrust of the paper promises.
- We're looking for people who have experience rather than paper qualifications.

11. verb

If you **paper** a wall, you put wallpaper on it.

- We papered all four bedrooms.
- We have papered this bedroom in softest grey.
- The room was strange, the walls half papered, half painted.

12. on paper

13. on paper

14. not be worth the paper it is written on

outward

Explain

1. adjective

An **outward** journey is a journey that you make away from a place that you are intending to return to later .

- Tickets must be bought seven days in advance, with outward and return journey dates specified.

2. adjective

The **outward** feelings , qualities, or attitudes of someone or something are the ones they appear to have rather than the ones that they actually have.

- In spite of my outward calm, I was very shaken.
- What the military rulers have done is to restore the outward appearance of order.

3. adjective

The **outward** features of something are the ones that you can see from the outside.

- Mark was lying unconscious but with no outward sign of injury.

overseas

Explain

1. adjective

You use **overseas** to describe things that involve or are in foreign countries, usually across a sea or an ocean . **Overseas** is also an adverb .

- He has returned to South Africa from his long overseas trip.
- ...overseas trade figures.
- People think that living and working overseas is glamorous. It's not.
- Much of the investment was overseas.

2. adjective

An **overseas** student or visitor comes from a foreign country, usually across a sea or an ocean.

- Every year millions of overseas visitors come to London.

rag

rags ragging ragged

Explain

1. variable noun

A **rag** is a piece of old cloth which you can use to clean or wipe things.

- He was wiping his hands on an oily rag.
- ...a bundle of old rags.
- It looked like a piece of rag.

2. plural noun

Rags are old torn clothes.

- There were men, women and small children, some dressed in rags.

3. countable noun

People refer to a newspaper as a **rag** when they have a poor opinion of it.

- 'This man Tom works for a local rag,' he said.

4. verb

To **rag** someone means to make fun of them in an unkind way.

- She was about thirty, ten years older than the youngsters ragging her.

5. lose one's rag

6. rags to riches

7. like a red rag to a bull

parallel

parallels parallelling parallelled

Explain

1. countable noun

If something has a **parallel**, it is similar to something else, but exists or happens in a different place or at a different time. If it has **no parallel** or is **without parallel**, it is not similar to anything else.

- Readers familiar with English history will find a vague parallel to the suppression of the monasteries.
- It's an ecological disaster with no parallel anywhere else in the world.
- ...an achievement without parallel in the modern era.

2. countable noun

If there are **parallels** between two things, they are similar in some ways.

- Detailed study of folk music from a variety of countries reveals many close parallels.
- There are significant parallels with the 1980s.
- Friends of the dead lawyer were quick to draw a parallel between the two murders.

3. verb

If one thing **parallels** another, they happen at the same time or are similar, and often seem to be connected.

- Often there are emotional reasons paralleling the financial ones.
- His remarks paralleled those of the president.

4. adjective

Parallel events or situations happen at the same time as one another, or are similar to one another.

- ...parallel talks between the two countries' Foreign Ministers.
- Their instincts do not always run parallel with ours.
- This is a real world, running parallel to our own.

5. adjective

If two lines, two objects, or two lines of movement are **parallel**, they are the same distance apart along their whole length.

- ...seventy-two ships, drawn up in two parallel lines.
- Farthing Lane's just above the High Street and parallel with it.
- This trail was roughly parallel to the border.

6. countable noun

A **parallel** is an imaginary line round the Earth that is parallel to the equator. Parallels are shown on maps.

- ...the area south of the 38th parallel.

7. in parallel

reality

realities

Explain

1. uncountable noun

You use **reality** to refer to real things or the real nature of things rather than imagined, invented, or theoretical ideas.

- Fiction and reality were increasingly blurred.

2. countable noun

The reality of a situation is the truth about it, especially when it is unpleasant or difficult to deal with.

- ...the harsh reality of top international competition.

3. singular noun

You say that something has become a **reality** when it actually exists or is actually happening.

- ...the whole procedure that made this book become a reality.
- The reality is that they are poor.

4. in reality

regulation

regulations

Explain

1. countable noun

Regulations are rules made by a government or other authority in order to control the way something is done or the way people behave. **Regulation** is also an adjective.

- Employers are using the new regulations to force out people over 65.
- Under pressure from the American government, Fiat and other manufacturers obeyed the new safety regulations.
- ...a noisy cheerful group of people in regulation black parade tunics.

2. uncountable noun

Regulation is the controlling of an activity or process, usually by means of rules.

- Social services also have responsibility for the regulation of nurseries.
- Some in the market now want government regulation in order to reduce costs.

pleasant

pleasanter pleasantest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **pleasant** is nice , enjoyable, or attractive .

- I've got a pleasant little apartment.
- It's always pleasant to do what you're good at doing.

2. adjective

Someone who is **pleasant** is friendly and likeable.

- The woman had a pleasant face.
- Lloyd George was most anxious to be agreeable and pleasant.

productive

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **productive** produces or does a lot for the amount of resources used.

- Training makes workers highly productive.
- More productive farmers have been able to provide cheaper food.
- ...fertile and productive soils.

2. adjective

If you say that a relationship between people is **productive** , you mean that a lot of good or useful things happen as a result of it.

- He was hopeful that the next round of talks would also be productive.

- ...the chairman's role in fostering productive relationships between his senior colleagues.

graded adjective

Something that is **productive** of a situation or feeling creates it.

- Land, labor and capital are all productive of wealth.

rose

roses

Explain

1. **Rose** is the past tense of rise .

2. countable noun

A **rose** is a flower, often with a pleasant smell , which grows on a bush with stems that have sharp points called thorns on them.

- She bent to pick a red rose.
- ...a bunch of yellow roses.

3. countable noun

A **rose** is bush that roses grow on.

- Prune rambling roses when the flowers have faded.
- ...fragrant rose bushes.

4. colour

Something that is **rose** is reddish-pink in colour.

- ...the rose and violet hues of a twilight sky.

5. countable noun

A **rose** is a device with very small holes in it that fits onto the end of a hosepipe or watering can. The water comes out of the rose in a fine spray so that you can water plants.

6. bed of roses

7. come up roses

reliable

Explain

1. adjective

People or things that are **reliable** can be trusted to work well or to behave in the way that you want them to.

- She was efficient and reliable.
- Japanese cars are so reliable.

2. adjective

Information that is **reliable** or that is from a **reliable** source is very likely to be correct .

- There is no reliable information about civilian casualties.
- It's very difficult to give a reliable estimate.
- We have reliable sources.

3. uncountable noun

If you think that an idea or a statement is foolish or wrong , you can say that it is **rubbish** .

- He's talking rubbish.
- These reports are total and utter rubbish.

4. adjective

If you think that someone is not very good at something, you can say that they are **rubbish** at it.

- He was rubbish at his job.
- I tried playing golf, but I was rubbish.

5. verb

If you **rubbish** a person, their ideas, or their work, you say they are of little value.

- Five whole pages of script were devoted to rubbishing her political opponents.
- Officials have simply rubbished all positive ideas.

rubbish

rubbishes rubbishing rubbished

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Rubbish consists of unwanted things or waste material such as used paper , empty tins and bottles , and waste food.

- ...unwanted household rubbish.
- They had piled most of their rubbish into yellow skips.

2. uncountable noun

If you think that something is of very poor quality, you can say that it is **rubbish** .

- He described her book as absolute rubbish.

right

rights righting righted

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **right** , it is correct and agrees with the facts. **Right** is also an adverb .

- That's absolutely right.
- Clocks never told the right time.
- You chip away at the problem until somebody comes up with the right answer.
- The barman tells me you saw Ann on Tuesday morning. Is that right?
- He guessed right about some things.

2. adjective

If you do something in the **right** way or in the **right** place, you do it as or where it should be done or was planned to be done. **Right** is also an adverb.

- Walking, done in the right way, is a form of aerobic exercise.
- They have computerized systems to ensure delivery of the right pizza to the right place.
- The chocolate is then melted down to exactly the right temperature.
- To make sure I did everything right, I bought a fat instruction book.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is seen in **all the right** places or knows **all the right** people, you mean that they go to places which are socially acceptable or know people who are socially acceptable.

- He was always to be seen in the right places.
- Through his father, he had met all the right people.

4. adjective

If someone is **right about** something, they are correct in what they say or think about it.

- Ron has been right about the result of every General Election but one.
- Is that true? Was she right?
- Am I right in thinking you're the only person in the club who's actually played in the Cup Final?

5. adjective

If something such as a choice, action, or decision is the **right** one, it is the best or most suitable one.

- She'd made the right choice in leaving New York.

- The right decision was made, but probably for the wrong reasons.

- They decided the time was right for their escape.

6. adjective

If something is **not right**, there is something unsatisfactory about the situation or thing that you are talking about.

- Ratatouille doesn't taste right with any other oil.
- The name Sue Anne never seemed quite right to Molly.
- He went into hospital and came out after a week. But he still wasn't right.

7. adjective

If you think that someone was **right to** do something, you think that there were good moral reasons why they did it.

- You were right to do what you did, under the circumstances.
- The president was absolutely right in ordering the bombing raid.

8. adjective

Right is used to refer to activities or actions that are considered to be morally good and acceptable. **Right** is also a noun.

- It's not right, leaving her like this.
- Fox hunting is popular among some people in this country. It doesn't make it right though.
- The BBC thought it was right and proper not to show the film.
- At least he knew right from wrong.

9. verb

If you **right** something or if it **rights itself**, it returns to its normal or correct state, after being in an undesirable state.

- They recognise the urgency of righting the economy.
- Your eyesight rights itself very quickly.

10. verb

If you **right** a wrong, you do something to make up for a mistake or something bad that you did in the past.

- We've made progress in righting the wrongs of the past.
- To right their mistakes, the company will compensate customers.

11. verb

If you **right** something that has fallen or rolled over, or if it **rights itself**, it returns to its normal upright position.

- He righted the yacht and continued the race.
- The helicopter turned at an awful angle before righting itself.

12. adjective

The **right** side of a material is the side that is intended to be seen and that faces outwards when it is made into something.

13. to go right

14. in the right

15. to put sth right

16. Mr Right

summit

summits

Explain

1. countable noun

A **summit** is a meeting at which the leaders of two or more countries discuss important matters.

- ...next week's Washington summit.
- ...the NATO summit meeting in Rome.

2. countable noun

The **summit** of a mountain is the top of it.

- ...the first man to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

satisfactory

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **satisfactory** is acceptable to you or fulfils a particular need or purpose.

- I never got a satisfactory answer.
- It seemed a very satisfactory arrangement.
- Neither solution seemed satisfactory.

surface

surfaces surfacing surfaced

Explain

1. countable noun

The **surface** of something is the flat top part of it or the outside of it.

- 97
- ...tiny little waves on the surface of the water.
- The road surface has started breaking up.

- *Its total surface area was seven thousand square feet.*

2. countable noun

A work **surface** is a flat area, for example the top of a table , desk , or kitchen cupboard , on which you can work.

- *It can simply be left on the work surface.*
- *Place the fish on a flat surface and sprinkle the flesh with lemon juice and pepper.*

3. singular noun

When you refer to **the surface** of a situation , you are talking about what can be seen easily rather than what is hidden or not immediately obvious .

- *Back in Britain, things appear, on the surface, simpler.*
- *Social unrest is never far below the surface in the capital.*
- *It's brought to the surface a much wider controversy.*

4. adjective

Surface is used to describe the parts of the armed forces which travel by ship or by land rather than underwater or in the air.

- *In contrast with its surface fleet, Britain's submarine force was relatively small.*
- *...Nato surface forces.*

5. verb

If someone or something under water **surfaces** , they come up to the surface of the water.

- *He surfaced, gasping for air.*

6. verb

When something such as a piece of news , a feeling , or a problem **surfaces** , it becomes known or becomes obvious.

- *The paper says the evidence, when it surfaces, is certain to cause uproar.*

- *The emotions will surface at some point in life.*

- *The same old problems would surface again.*

7. verb

When someone **surfaces** , they appear after not being seen for some time, for example because they have been asleep .

- *There's no chance that he'll surface because he's bound to have heard by now.*
- *What time do you surface?*

soluble

Explain

1. adjective

A substance that is **soluble** will dissolve in a liquid .

- *Uranium is soluble in sea water.*

2. combining form

If something is **water-soluble** or **fat-soluble** , it will dissolve in water or in fat .

- *The red dye on the leather is water-soluble.*
- *...fat-soluble vitamins.*

textile

textiles

Explain

1. countable noun

Textiles are types of cloth or fabric, especially ones that have been woven.

- *...decorative textiles for the home.*

- ...the Scottish textile industry.
2. plural noun
Textiles are the industries concerned with the manufacture of cloth.
- Another 75,000 jobs will be lost in textiles and clothing.

subjective

Explain

1. adjective
 Something that is **subjective** is based on personal opinions and feelings rather than on facts .
- We know that taste in art is a subjective matter.
 - The way they interpreted their past was highly subjective.

token

tokens

Explain

1. adjective
 You use **token** to describe things or actions which are small or unimportant , but are meant to show particular intentions or feelings which may not be sincere .
- The announcement was widely seen as a token gesture.
 - Miners have staged a two-hour token stoppage to demand better pay and conditions.
2. countable noun
 A **token** is a piece of paper or card that can be exchanged for goods, either in a particular shop or as part of a special offer .

- ...£10 book tokens.
- Here is the fifth token towards our offer. You need six of these tokens.

3. countable noun
 A **token** is a round flat piece of metal or plastic that is sometimes used instead of money.

- Some of the older telephones still only accept tokens.

4. countable noun
 If you give something to a person or do something for them as a **token of** your feelings, you give it or do it as a way of expressing those feelings.

- He kept sending gifts and assured her that they were merely small tokens of his appreciation.
- As a token of goodwill, I'm going to write another letter.
- ...the custom of exchanging love tokens to celebrate February 14.

5. by the same token

troublesome

Explain

1. adjective
 You use **troublesome** to describe something or someone that causes annoying problems or difficulties .
- He needed surgery to cure a troublesome back injury.
 - Parents may find that a troublesome teenager becomes unmanageable.
2. adjective
 A **troublesome** situation or issue is full of complicated problems or difficulties.

- The economy has become a troublesome issue for the Government.

used

Explain

1. phrase

If something **used to** be done or **used to** be the case, it was done regularly in the past or was the case in the past.

- People used to come and visit him every day.
- He used to be one of the professors at the School of Education.
- I feel more compassion and less anger than I used to.

2. phrase

If something **used not to** be done or **used not to** be the case, it was not done in the past or was not the case in the past. The forms **did not use to** and **did not used to** are also found, especially in spoken English.

- Borrowing used not to be recommended.
- At some point kids start doing things they didn't use to do. They get more independent.
- He didn't used to like anyone walking on the lawns in the back garden.

3. be used to

4. get used to

toy

toys toying toyed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **toy** is an object that children play with, for example a doll or a model car.

- He was really too old for children's toys.
- ...a toy telephone.

2. countable noun

You can refer to objects that adults use for fun rather than for a serious purpose as **toys**.

- Computers have become household toys.

verbal

Explain

1. adjective

You use **verbal** to indicate that something is expressed in speech rather than in writing or action.

- They were jostled and subjected to a torrent of verbal abuse.
- We have a verbal agreement with her.
- The West must back up its verbal support with substantial economic aid.

2. adjective

You use **verbal** to indicate that something is connected with words and the use of words.

- The test has scores for verbal skills, mathematical skills, and abstract reasoning skills.
- Wayne has great verbal dexterity.

3. adjective

In grammar, **verbal** means relating to a verb.

- ...a verbal noun.

tractor

tractors

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tractor** is a farm vehicle that is used to pull farm machinery and to provide the energy needed for the machinery to work.

vital

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **vital**, you mean that it is necessary or very important.

- The port is vital to supply relief to millions of drought victims.
- Nick Wileman is a school caretaker so it is vital that he gets on well with young people.
- After her release, she was able to give vital information about her kidnapper.

2. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **vital**, you mean that they are very energetic and full of life.

- They are both very vital people and a good match.
- They have something important to say and vital and radical ways of saying it.

weapon

weapons

Explain

1. countable noun

A **weapon** is an object such as a gun, a knife, or a missile, which is used to kill or hurt people in a fight or a war.

- ...nuclear weapons.

2. countable noun

A **weapon** is something such as knowledge about a particular subject, which you can use to protect yourself or to get what you want in a difficult situation.

- I attack politicians with the one weapon they don't have, a sense of humor.

white

whiter whitest whites

Explain

1. colour

Something that is **white** is the colour of snow or milk.

- He had nice square white teeth.
- Issa's white beach hat gleamed in the harsh lights.
- He was dressed in white from head to toe.

2. adjective

A **white** person has a pale skin and belongs to a race which is of European origin. **Whites** are white people.

- Working with white people hasn't been a problem for me or for them.
- He was white, with brown shoulder-length hair and a moustache.
- It's a school that's brought blacks and whites and Hispanics together.

3. adjective

If someone goes **white** , the skin on their face becomes very pale, for example because of fear, shock , anger, or illness.

- Richard had gone very white, but he stood his ground.
- He turned white and began to stammer.
- His face was white with fury.

4. adjective

White wine is pale yellow in colour. You can refer to white wine as **white** .

- Gregory poured another glass of white wine and went back to his bedroom.
- I bought a bottle of Californian white.

5. adjective

White coffee has had milk or cream added to it.

- Wayne has a large white coffee in front of him.

6. adjective

White blood cells are the cells in your blood which your body uses to fight infection.

7. adjective

People who believe in **white** magic believe it is possible to use magic to do good things.

- ...practitioners of white magic.
- They claim to be white witches.

8. variable noun

The **white** of an egg is the transparent liquid that surrounds the yellow part called the yolk .

9. countable noun

The **white** of someone's eye is the white part that surrounds the coloured part called the iris .

10. plural noun

Whites are white clothes that you wear for playing some sports, for example tennis or cricket .

- There was a Frenchman sitting at the next table, immaculate in tennis whites.

youth

youths

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Someone's **youth** is the period of their life during which they are a child, before they are a fully mature adult .

- In my youth my ambition had been to be an inventor.
- ...the comic books of my youth.

2. uncountable noun

Youth is the quality or state of being young.

- Gregory was still enchanted with Shannon's youth and joy and beauty.
- The team is now a good mixture of experience and youth.

3. countable noun

Journalists often refer to young men as **youths** , especially when they are reporting that the young men have caused trouble .

- ...gangs of youths who broke windows and looted shops.
- A 17-year-old youth was remanded in custody yesterday.

4. plural noun

The youth are young people considered as a group.

- He represents the opinions of the youth of today.
- She's not a very good influence on the youth of this country.

alert

alerts alerting alerted

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **alert**, you are paying full attention to things around you and are able to deal with anything that might happen.

- We all have to stay alert.
- He had been spotted by an alert neighbour.

2. adjective

If you are **alert to** something, you are fully aware of it.

- The bank is alert to the danger.

3. countable noun

An **alert** is a situation in which people prepare themselves for something dangerous that might happen soon.

- Due to a security alert, this train will not be stopping at Oxford Circus.

4. verb

If you **alert** someone **to** a situation, especially a dangerous or unpleasant situation, you tell them about it.

- He wanted to alert people to the activities of the group.
- I was hoping he'd alert the police.

5. on alert

6. on the alert

acquisition

acquisitions

Explain

1. variable noun

If a company or business person makes an **acquisition**, they buy another company or part of a company.

- ...the acquisition of a profitable paper recycling company.
- ...the number of mergers and acquisitions made by Europe's 1,000 leading firms.

2. countable noun

If you make an **acquisition**, you buy or obtain something, often to add to things that you already have.

- How did you go about making this marvelous acquisition then?
- ...the President's recent acquisition of a helicopter.

3. countable noun

You can use **acquisition** to refer to an object that you buy or obtain, often to add to things that you already have.

- From her wardrobe Laura took her latest acquisition, a bright red dress.

4. uncountable noun

The **acquisition** of a skill or a particular type of knowledge is the process of learning it or developing it.

- ...language acquisition.

acre

acres

Explain

1. countable noun

An **acre** is an area of land measuring 4840 square yards or 4047 square metres.

- The property is set in two acres of land.

compulsory

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **compulsory** , you must do it or accept it, because it is the law or because someone in a position of authority says you must.

- In East Germany, learning Russian was compulsory.
- Many young men are trying to get away from compulsory military conscription.

apple

apples

Explain

1. variable noun

An **apple** is a round fruit with smooth green, yellow, or red skin and firm white flesh.

- I want an apple.
- ...2kg cooking apples.
- ...his ongoing search for the finest varieties of apple.
- ...a large garden with apple trees in it.

2. the apple of your eye

considerate

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **considerate** pays attention to the needs , wishes , or feelings of other people.

- I think he's the most charming, most considerate man I've ever known.
- I've always understood one should try and be considerate of other people.

avenue

avenues

Explain

1. countable noun

Avenue is sometimes used in the names of streets. The written abbreviation Ave. is also used.

- ...the most expensive stores on Park Avenue.

2. countable noun

An **avenue** is a wide , straight road, especially one with trees on either side.

3. countable noun

An **avenue** is a way of getting something done.

- Talbot was presented with 80 potential avenues of investigation.
- There is another avenue to pursue—it involves further negotiations.

democratic

Explain

1. adjective

A **democratic** country, government, or political system is governed by representatives who are elected by the people.

- The country returned to democratic rule after a series of military governments.
- ...the country's first democratic elections.

2. adjective

Something that is **democratic** is based on the idea that everyone should have equal rights and should be involved in making important decisions .

- *Education is the basis of a democratic society.*
- *He called for widespread changes to make the armed forces more democratic and less expensive.*

3. adjective

Democratic is used in the titles of some political parties.

- *...the Social Democratic Party.*
- *...the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.*

board

boards boarding boarded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **board** is a flat, thin, rectangular piece of wood or plastic which is used for a particular purpose.

- *...a chopping board.*

2. countable noun

A **board** is a square piece of wood or stiff cardboard that you use for playing games such as chess.

- *...a draughts board.*
- *Dr Tinsley had five pieces on the board against Chinook's four.*

3. countable noun

You can refer to a blackboard or a noticeboard as a **board**.

- *He wrote a few more notes on the board.*

4. countable noun

Boards are long flat pieces of wood which are used, for example, to make floors or walls.

- *The floor was draughty bare boards.*

5. countable noun

The board of a company or organization is the group of people who control it and direct it.

- *Arthur wants to put his recommendation before the board at a meeting tomorrow.*
- *...the agenda for the September 12 board meeting.*

6. countable noun

Board is used in the names of various organizations which are involved in dealing with a particular kind of activity.

- *A booklet listing all types of accommodation is published each year by the Spanish Tourist Board.*
- *...the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board.*

7. verb

When you **board** a train, ship, or aircraft, you get on it in order to travel somewhere.

- *I boarded the plane bound for England.*

8. uncountable noun

Board is the food which is provided when you stay somewhere, for example in a hotel.

- *Free room and board are provided for all hotel staff.*

9. above board

10. across the board

11. go by the board

12. on board

13. to sweep the board

14. take on board

dizzy

dizzier dizziest dizzies dizzying dizzied

Explain

1. adjective

If you feel **dizzy** , you feel that you are losing your balance and are about to fall .

- Her head still hurt, and she felt slightly dizzy and disoriented.
- He began to get dizzy spells.

2. adjective

You can use **dizzy** to describe a woman who is careless and forgets things, but is easy to like .

- She is famed for playing dizzy blondes.
- ...a charmingly dizzy great-grandmother.

3. verb

If something **dizzies** you, it causes you to feel unsteady or confused.

- The sudden height dizzied her and she clung tightly.

4. dizzy heights

2. adjective

If you describe something as **dynamic** , you approve of it because it is very active and energetic .

- South Asia continues to be the most dynamic economic region in the world.
- ...90 minutes of dynamic Indian folk dance.

3. adjective

A **dynamic** process is one that constantly changes and progresses .

- ...a dynamic, evolving worldwide epidemic.
- Political debate is dynamic.

4. countable noun

The **dynamic** of a system or process is the force that causes it to change or progress.

- The dynamic of the market demands constant change and adjustment.
- Politics has its own dynamic.

5. plural noun

The **dynamics** of a situation or group of people are the opposing forces within it that cause it to change.

- ...the dynamics of the social system.
- The interchange of ideas aids an understanding of family dynamics.

6. uncountable noun

Dynamics are forces which produce power or movement.

- Scientists observe the same dynamics in fluids.

7. uncountable noun

Dynamics is the scientific study of motion, energy, and forces.

- His idea was to apply geometry to dynamics.

dynamic

dynamics

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **dynamic** , you approve of them because they are full of energy or full of new and exciting ideas.

- He seemed a dynamic and energetic leader.
- Marcus was handsome, dynamic and ambitious.

constitution

constitutions

Explain

1. countable noun

The **constitution** of a country or organization is the system of laws which formally states people's rights and duties .

- The king was forced to adopt a new constitution which reduced his powers.
- ...the American Constitution.
- At one time, the club's constitution prevented women from becoming full members.

2. countable noun

Your **constitution** is your health.

- He must have an extremely strong constitution.
- I've always had the constitution of an ox.

excess

excesses

Explain

1. variable noun

An **excess of** something is a larger amount than is needed , allowed, or usual .

- An excess of house plants in a small flat can be oppressive.
- Polyunsaturated oils are essential for health. Excess is harmful, however.

2. adjective

Excess is used to describe amounts that are greater than what is needed, allowed, or usual.

- After cooking the fish, pour off any excess fat.

3. uncountable noun

Excess is behaviour that is unacceptable because it is considered too extreme or immoral .

- She said she was sick of her life of excess.
- ...adolescent excess.
- ...the bloody excesses of warfare and empire-building.

4. adjective

Excess is used to refer to additional amounts of money that need to be paid for services and activities that were not originally planned or taken into account .

- ...a letter demanding an excess fare of £20.
- Staff who have to travel farther can claim excess travel expenses.

5. countable noun

The **excess** on an insurance policy is a sum of money which the insured person has to pay towards the cost of a claim. The insurance company pays the rest .

- The company wanted £1,800 for a policy with a £400 excess for under-21s.

6. in excess of

7. to excess

excessive

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe the amount or level of something as **excessive** , you disapprove of it because it is more or higher than is necessary or reasonable .

- ...the alleged use of excessive force by police.
- The government says that local authority spending is excessive.

cricket

crickets

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Cricket is an outdoor game played between two teams. Players try to score points, called runs, by hitting a ball with a wooden bat.

- During the summer term we would play cricket at the village ground.
- ...the Yorkshire County Cricket Club.

2. not cricket

3. countable noun

A **cricket** is a small jumping insect that produces short, loud sounds by rubbing its wings together.

horizontal

horizontals

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **horizontal** is flat and level with the ground, rather than at an angle to it. **Horizontal** is also a noun.

- The board consists of vertical and horizontal lines.
- Swing the club back until it is horizontal.
- Do not raise your left arm above the horizontal.

2. countable noun

A **horizontal** is a line or structure that is horizontal.

- Horizontals play a large part in all garden design.

cup

cups cupping cupped

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cup** is a small round container that you drink from. Cups usually have handles and are made from china or plastic. A **cup of** something is the amount of something contained in a cup.

- ...cups and saucers.
- Mix about four cups of white flour with a pinch of salt.

2. countable noun

Things, or parts of things, that are small, round, and hollow in shape can be referred to as **cups**.

- ...the brass cups of the small chandelier.

3. countable noun

A **cup** is a large metal cup with two handles that is given to the winner of a game or competition.

4. countable noun

Cup is used in the names of some sports competitions in which the prize is a cup.

- Sri Lanka's cricket team will play India in the final of the Asia Cup.
- ...after his fateful injury in the FA Cup final.

5. verb

If you **cup** your **hands**, you make them into a curved shape like a cup.

- He cupped his hands around his mouth and called out for Diane.
- David knelt, cupped his hands and splashed river water on to his face.

- *She held it in her cupped hands for us to see.*

6. verb

If you **cup** something in your hands, you make your hands into a curved dish-like shape and support it or hold it gently.

- *He cupped her chin in the palm of his hand.*
- *He cradled the baby in his arms, his hands cupping her tiny skull.*

7. be in one's cups

immediate

Explain

1. adjective

An **immediate** result, action, or reaction happens or is done without any delay.

- *These tragic incidents have had an immediate effect.*
- *My immediate reaction was just disgust.*

2. adjective

Immediate needs and concerns exist at the present time and must be dealt with quickly.

- *Relief agencies say the immediate problem is not a lack of food, but transportation.*

3. adjective

The **immediate** person or thing comes just before or just after another person or thing in a sequence .

- *In the immediate aftermath of the riots, a mood of hope and reconciliation sprang up.*
- *His immediate superior, General Geichenko, had singled him out for special mention.*

4. adjective

You use **immediate** to describe an area or position that is next to or very near a particular place or person.

- *Only a handful had returned to work in the immediate vicinity.*
- *I was seated at Sauter's immediate left.*

5. adjective

Your **immediate** family are the members of your family who are most closely related to you, for example your parents , children, brothers , and sisters .

- *The presence of his immediate family is obviously having a calming effect on him.*

diameter

diameters

Explain

1. variable noun

The **diameter** of a round object is the length of a straight line that can be drawn across it, passing through the middle of it.

- *...a tube less than a fifth of the diameter of a human hair.*
- *...a length of 22-mm diameter steel pipe.*
- *...a tiny capsule, between 1 and 3 millimetres in diameter.*

ingenious

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **ingenious** is very clever and involves new ideas, methods, or equipment .

- *...a truly ingenious invention.*
- *Gautier's solution to the puzzle is ingenious.*

distress

distresses distressing distressed

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Distress is a state of extreme sorrow , suffering , or pain.

- Jealousy causes distress and painful emotions.
- Her mouth grew stiff with pain and distress.

2. uncountable noun

Distress is the state of being in extreme danger and needing urgent help .

- He expressed concern that the ship might be in distress.
- The constable received a distress call, and saw two youths attacking his colleague.

3. verb

If someone or something **distresses** you, they cause you to be upset or worried .

- The idea of Toni being in danger distresses him enormously.
- I did not want to frighten or distress the horse.

instant

instants

Explain

1. countable noun

An **instant** is an extremely short period of time.

- For an instant, Catherine was tempted to flee.

- The pain disappeared in an instant.

2. singular noun

If you say that something happens **at** a particular **instant** , you mean that it happens at exactly the time you have been referring to, and you are usually suggesting that it happens quickly or immediately .

- At that instant the museum was plunged into total darkness.
- In the same instant he flung open the car door.

3. the instant

4. adjective

You use **instant** to describe something that happens immediately.

- Mr Porter's book was an instant hit.
- He had taken an instant dislike to Mortlake.

5. adjective

Instant food is food that you can prepare very quickly, for example by just adding water.

- ...instant coffee.

enterprise

enterprises

Explain

1. countable noun

An **enterprise** is a company or business, often a small one.

- There are plenty of small industrial enterprises.
- ...the integration of farming enterprises.

2. countable noun

An **enterprise** is something new, difficult , or important that you do or try to do.

- ...the first Director of such a novel enterprise.
- Horse breeding is indeed a risky enterprise.

3. uncountable noun

Enterprise is the activity of managing companies and businesses and starting new ones.

- He is still involved in voluntary work promoting local enterprise.
- ...a national program of subsidies to private enterprise.

4. uncountable noun

Enterprise is the ability to think of new and effective things to do, together with an eagerness to do them.

- ...the spirit of enterprise worthy of a free and industrious people.
- ...the group's lack of enterprise.

local

locals

Explain

1. adjective

Local means existing in or belonging to the area where you live , or to the area that you are talking about. The **locals** are local people.

- We'd better check on the match in the local paper.
- Some local residents joined the students' protest.
- I was going to pop up to the local library.

- That's what the locals call the place.

2. adjective

Local government is elected by people in one area of a country and controls aspects such as education , housing , and transport within that area.

- Education comprises two-thirds of all local council spending.
- ...the controversial system of local taxation known as the poll tax.

3. countable noun

Your **local** is a pub which is near where you live and where you often go for a drink.

- The Black Horse is my local.

4. adjective

A **local** anaesthetic or condition affects only a small area of your body.

- An injection of local anaesthetic is usually given first to numb the area.

funeral

funerals

Explain

1. countable noun

A **funeral** is the ceremony that is held when the body of someone who has died is buried or cremated.

- His funeral will be on Thursday at Blackburn Cathedral.
- He was given a state funeral.

2. it's your funeral

mad

madder maddest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **mad** has a mind that does not work in a normal way, with the result that their behaviour is very strange .

- She was afraid of going mad.

2. adjective

You use **mad** to describe people or things that you think are very foolish.

- You'd be mad to work with him again.
- Isn't that a rather mad idea?

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **mad** , you mean that they are very angry.

- You're just mad at me because I don't want to go.
- I'm pretty mad about it, I can tell you.

4. adjective

If you are **mad about** or **mad on** something or someone, you like them very much indeed. **Mad** is also a combining form.

- She's not as mad about sport as I am.
- He's mad about you.
- He's mad on trains.
- ...his football-mad son.
- He's not power-mad.

5. adjective

Mad behaviour is wild and uncontrolled .

- You only have an hour to complete the game so it's a mad dash against the clock.
- The audience went mad.

6. drive sb mad

7. like mad

gun

guns gunning gunned

Explain

1. countable noun

A **gun** is a weapon from which bullets or other things are fired .

- He produced a gun and he came into the house.
- The inner-city has guns and crime and drugs and deprivation.
- ...gun control laws.

2. countable noun

A **gun** or a **starting gun** is an object like a gun that is used to make a noise to signal the start of a race .

- The starting gun blasted and they were off.

3. verb

To **gun** an engine or a vehicle means to make it start or go faster by pressing on the accelerator pedal .

- He gunned his engine and drove off.

4. with guns blazing

5. to jump the gun

6. to stick to your guns

main

mains

Explain

1. adjective

The **main** thing is the most important one of several similar things in a particular situation .

- ...one of the main tourist areas of Amsterdam.
- My main concern now is to protect the children.
- What are the main differences and similarities between them?

2. in the main

3. countable noun

The **mains** are the pipes which supply gas or water to buildings, or which take sewage away from them.

- ...the water supply from the mains.
- The capital has been without mains water since Wednesday night.

4. plural noun

The **mains** are the wires which supply electricity to buildings, or the place where the wires end inside the building.

- ...amplifiers which plug into the mains.
- Make sure plugs are disconnected from the mains.
- It is mains or battery powered.

helicopter

helicopters

Explain

1. countable noun

A **helicopter** is an aircraft with long blades on top that go round very fast . It is able to stay still in the air and to move straight upwards or downwards .

major

majors majoring majored

Explain

1. adjective

You use **major** when you want to describe something that is more important, serious, or significant than other things in a group or situation.

- The major factor in the decision to stay or to leave was usually professional.
- Studies show that stress can also be a major problem.
- Exercise has a major part to play in preventing and combating disease.

2. countable noun

A **major** is an officer of middle rank in the British army or the United States army, air force, or marines .

- I was a major in the war, you know.
- ...Major Alan Bulman.

3. countable noun

At a university or college in the United States, a student's **major** is the main subject that they are studying.

- English majors would be asked to explore the roots of language.

4. countable noun

At a university or college in the United States, if a student is, for example, a geology **major** , geology is the main subject they are studying.

- She was named the outstanding undergraduate history major at the University of Oklahoma.

5. verb

If a student at a university or college in the United States **majors in** a particular subject, that subject is the main one they study.

- He majored in finance at Claremont Men's College in California.

6. adjective

In music, a **major** scale is one in which the third note is two tones higher than the first.

- ...Mozart's Symphony No 35 in D Major.

7. countable noun

A **major** is a large or important company.

- Oil majors need not fear being unable to sell their crude.

8. plural noun

The majors are groups of professional sports teams that compete against each other, especially in American baseball .

- I knew what I could do in the minor leagues, I just wanted a chance to prove myself in the majors.

9. countable noun

A **major** is an important sporting competition , especially in golf or tennis .

- Sarazen became the first golfer to win all four majors.

- The hero of Doctor Zhivago dies in 1929.

- ...the author's decision to make his hero a photographer.

2. countable noun

A **hero** is someone, especially a man, who has done something brave , new, or good, and who is therefore greatly admired by a lot of people.

- He called Mr Mandela a hero who had inspired millions.

- ...the goalscoring hero of the British hockey team.

- They think you're some sort of hero.

3. countable noun

If you describe someone as your **hero** , you mean that you admire them a great deal , usually because of a particular quality or skill that they have.

- He was the boyhood hero for every kid of my generation who knew anything about tennis.

- No matter, he remained the hero of the crowds.

hero

heroes

Explain

1. countable noun

The **hero** of a book, play, film, or story is the main male character, who usually has good qualities.

marginal

marginals

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **marginal** , you mean that it is small or not very important.

- This is a marginal improvement on October.

- The role of the opposition party proved marginal.

2. adjective

If you describe people as **marginal** , you mean that they are not involved in the main events or developments in society because they are poor or have no power.

- Andy Warhol made glamorous icons out of the most marginal people.
- I don't want to call him marginal, but he's not a major character.

3. adjective

In political elections, a **marginal** seat or constituency is one which is usually won or lost by only a few votes , and is therefore of great interest to politicians and journalists . A **marginal** is a marginal seat.

- ...the views of voters in five marginal seats.
- The votes in the marginals are those that really count.
- The coalition won a majority of the vote but failed to win enough of the key marginals.

4. adjective

Marginal activities , costs, or taxes are not the main part of a business or an economic system, but often make the difference between its success or failure , and are therefore important to control .

- Consumer electronics has become a marginal business for the group.
- For low-paid workers, the marginal tax rate is at least 75

5. graded adjective

Marginal land is not very good for growing crops or grass for animals.

- ...helping farmers, so they do not have to exploit marginal lands.

inch

inches inching inched

Explain

1. countable noun

An **inch** is an imperial unit of length, approximately equal to 2.54 centimetres . There are twelve inches in a foot.

- ...a candy tin 6 inches high and 8 inches in diameter.
- ...18 inches below the surface.

2. verb

To **inch** somewhere or to **inch** something somewhere means to move there very slowly and carefully, or to make something do this.

- ...a climber inching up a vertical wall of rock.
- He inched the van forward.
- An ambulance inched its way through the crowd.

3. every inch

4. every inch

5. inch by inch

mechanical

Explain

1. adjective

A **mechanical** device has parts that move when it is working , often using power from an engine or from electricity .

- ...a small mechanical device that taps out the numbers.

- ...the oldest working mechanical clock in the world.

- Most mechanical devices require oil as a lubricant.

2. adjective

Mechanical means relating to machines and engines and the way they work.

- ...mechanical engineering.
- The company undertakes mechanical work on all types of cars.
- The train had stopped due to a mechanical problem.

3. adjective

If you describe a person as **mechanical**, you mean they are naturally good at understanding how machines work.

- He was a very mechanical person, who knew a lot about sound.
- I'm not mechanical like my father; I have to follow the instructions.

4. adjective

If you describe someone's action as **mechanical**, you mean that they do it automatically, without thinking about it.

- It is real prayer, and not mechanical repetition.
- Her retort was mechanical.

incident

incidents

Explain

1. countable noun

An **incident** is something that happens, often something that is unpleasant.

- These incidents were the latest in a series of disputes between the two nations.
- 26 people have been killed in a dramatic shooting incident.
- The voting went ahead without incident.

memorial

memorials

Explain

1. countable noun

A **memorial** is a structure built in order to remind people of a famous person or event.

- Building a memorial to Columbus has been his lifelong dream.
- Every village had its war memorial.

2. adjective

A **memorial** event, object, or prize is in honour of someone who has died, so that they will be remembered.

- A memorial service is being held for her at St Paul's Church.
- ...memorial plaques to local regiments.
- He went on to win the James E. Sullivan Memorial Trophy as the outstanding amateur athlete of 1962.

3. countable noun

If you say that something will be a **memorial** to someone who has died, you mean that it will continue to exist and remind people of them.

- The museum will serve as a memorial to the millions who passed through Ellis Island.
- The public park is an impressive memorial to a good man.

intuition

intuitions

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **intuition** or your **intuitions** are unexplained feelings you have that something is true even when you have no evidence or proof of it.

- Her intuition was telling her that something was wrong.
- You can't make a case on your intuitions, Phil.

municipal

Explain

1. adjective

Municipal means associated with or belonging to a city or town that has its own local government.

- The municipal authorities gave the go-ahead for the march.
- ...next month's municipal elections.
- ...the municipal library.

loss

losses

Explain

1. variable noun

Loss is the fact of no longer having something or having less of it than before.

- ...loss of sight.
- The loss of income for the government is about 250millionamonth....hairloss.
- The job losses will reduce the total workforce to 7,000.

2. variable noun

Loss of life occurs when people die .

- ...a terrible loss of human life.
- The allies suffered less than 20 casualties while enemy losses were said to be high.

3. uncountable noun

The **loss** of a relative or friend is their death.

- They took the time to talk about the loss of Thomas and how their grief was affecting them.
- ...the loss of his mother.

4. variable noun

If a business makes a **loss** , it earns less than it spends .

- That year the company made a loss of nine hundred million pounds.
- The company stopped producing fertilizer because of continued losses.
- ...profit and loss.

5. uncountable noun

Loss is the feeling of sadness you experience when someone or something you like is taken away from you.

- Talk to others about your feelings of loss and grief.

- *He always woke with a sense of deep sorrow and depressing loss.*

6. countable noun

A **loss** is the disadvantage you suffer when a valuable and useful person or thing leaves or is taken away.

- *She said his death was a great loss to herself.*

7. uncountable noun

The **loss** of something such as heat, blood, or fluid is the gradual reduction of it or of its level in a system or in someone's body.

- *...blood loss.*
- *...weight loss.*
- *...a rapid loss of heat from the body.*

8. at a loss

9. be at a loss

10. cut your losses

11. a dead loss

national

nationals

Explain

1. adjective

National means relating to the whole of a country or nation rather than to part of it or to other nations.

- *Ruling parties have lost ground in national and local elections.*
- *...major national and international issues.*

2. adjective

National means typical of the people or customs of a particular country or nation.

- *...the national characteristics and history of the country.*

- *Baseball is the national pastime.*

3. countable noun

You can refer to someone who is legally a citizen of a country as a **national** of that country.

- *...a Sri-Lankan-born British national.*

masterpiece

masterpieces

Explain

1. countable noun

A **masterpiece** is an extremely good painting, novel, film, or other work of art.

- *His book, I must add, is a masterpiece.*
- *...masterpieces by artists like Rembrandt, Raphael and Ingres.*

2. countable noun

An artist's, writer's, or composer's **masterpiece** is the best work that they have ever produced.

- *'Man's Fate,' translated into sixteen languages, is probably his masterpiece.*

3. countable noun

A **masterpiece** is an extremely clever or skilful example of something.

- *The whole thing was a masterpiece of crowd management.*

necessary

necessaries

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **necessary** is needed in order for something else to happen .

- I kept the engine running because it might be necessary to leave fast.
- We will do whatever is necessary to stop them.
- Is that really necessary?
- Make the necessary arrangements.

2. adjective

A **necessary** consequence or connection must happen or exist , because of the nature of the things or events involved.

- Wastage was no doubt a necessary consequence of war.
- Scientific work has a necessary connection with the idea of progress.

3. plural noun

Necessaries are things, such as food or clothing, that you need to have in order to live .

- ...a small parcel of necessities tied up in a handkerchief and carried on a stick.

4. if necessary/when necessary/where necessary

meanwhile

Explain

1. adverb

Meanwhile means while a particular thing is happening .

- Bake the aubergines till soft. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a heavy pan.

- Kate turned to beckon Peter across from the car, but Bill waved him back, meanwhile pushing Kate inside.

2. adverb

Meanwhile means in the period of time between two events.

- You needn't worry; I'll be ready to greet them. Meanwhile I'm off to discuss the Fowler's party with Felix.

3. adverb

You use **meanwhile** to introduce a different aspect of a particular situation , especially one that is completely opposite to the one previously mentioned .

- Almost four million households are in debt to their energy company. Meanwhile, suppliers profits have doubled.

opposite

opposites

Explain

1. preposition

If one thing is **opposite** another, it is on the other side of a space from it. **Opposite** is also an adverb .

- Jennie had sat opposite her at breakfast.
- He looked up at the buildings opposite, but could see no open window.
- He sits in one chair, I sit opposite.

2. adjective

The **opposite** side or part of something is the side or part that is furthest away from you.

- ...the opposite corner of the room.

3. adjective

Opposite is used to describe things of the same kind which are completely different in a particular way. For example, north and south are opposite directions, and winning and losing are opposite results in a game.

- All the cars driving in the opposite direction had their headlights on.
- I should have written the notes in the opposite order.
- In fact everything he does is opposite to what is considered normal behaviour.

4. countable noun

The opposite of someone or something is the person or thing that is most different from them.

- Ritter was a very complex man but Marius was the opposite, a simple farmer.
- Well, whatever he says, you can bet he's thinking the opposite.

mile

miles

Explain

1. countable noun

A **mile** is a unit of distance equal to 1760 yards or approximately 1.6 kilometres.

- They drove 600 miles across the desert.
- The hurricane is moving to the west at about 18 miles per hour.
- She lives just half a mile away.
- There's a lake up there, about ten miles long.
- ...a 50-mile bike ride.

2. plural noun

Miles is used, especially in the expression **miles away**, to refer to a long distance.

- If you enrol at a gym that's miles away, you won't be visiting it as often as you should.
- I was miles and miles from anywhere.
- 'Shall I come to see you?'—'Are you kidding? It's miles.'

3. countable noun

Miles or **a mile** is used with the meaning 'very much' in order to emphasize the difference between two things or qualities, or the difference between what you aimed to do and what you actually achieved.

- You're miles better than most of the performers we see nowadays.
- With a Labour candidate in place they won by a mile.
- The rehearsals were miles too slow and no work was getting done.

4. miles away

5. to go the extra mile

6. a mile off

7. run a mile

8. to stick out a mile

past

pasts

Explain

1. singular noun

The past is the time before the present, and the things that have happened .

- In the past, about a third of the babies born to women with diabetes were lost.
- He should learn from the mistakes of the past. We have been here before.
- We would like to put the past behind us.

2. countable noun

Your **past** consists of all the things that you have done or that have happened to you.

- ...revelations about his past.
- ...Germany's recent past.

3. adjective

Past events and things happened or existed before the present time. **Past** is also used after periods of time.

- I knew from past experience that alternative therapies could help.
- ...a return to the turbulence of past centuries.
- The list of past champions includes many British internationals.
- A South Korean newspaper said today the event will be smaller than in years past.

4. adjective

You use **past** to talk about a period of time that has just finished. For example , if you talk about the **past five years** , you mean the period of five years that has just finished.

- Most shops have remained closed for the past three days.
- ...the momentous events of the past few days.

5. adjective

If a situation is **past** , it has ended and no longer exists.

- Many economists believe the worst of the economic downturn is past.
- ...images from years long past.
- The time for loyalty is past.

6. adjective

In grammar , the **past tenses** of a verb are the ones used to talk about things that happened at some time before the present. The simple past tense uses the past form of a verb, which for regular verbs ends in '-ed', as in 'They walked back to the car '.

7. preposition

You use **past** when you are stating a time which is thirty minutes or less after a particular hour . For example, if it is **twenty past six** , it is twenty minutes after six o'clock. **Past** is also an adverb .

- It's ten past eleven.
- I arrived at half past ten.
- I have my lunch at half past.

8. preposition

If it is **past** a particular time, it is later than that time.

- It was past midnight.
- It's past your bedtime.

9. preposition

If you go **past** someone or something, you go near them and keep moving, so that they are then behind you. **Past** is also an adverb.

- I dashed past him and out of the door.
- A steady procession of people filed past the coffin.

- He was never able to get **past** the border guards.

moss

- An ambulance drove **past**.

mosses

Explain

10. preposition

If you look or point **past** a person or thing, you look or point at something behind them.

- She stared **past** Christine at the bed.

1. variable noun

Moss is a very small soft green plant which grows on damp soil , or on wood or stone .

- ...ground covered over with moss.

11. preposition

If something is **past** a place, it is on the other side of it.

- Go north on I-15 to the exit just **past** Barstow.
- Just **past** the Barlby roundabout there's temporary traffic lights.

permanent

permanents

Explain

12. preposition

If someone or something is **past** a particular point or stage , they are no longer at that point or stage.

- He was well **past** retirement age.
- ...a piece of cheese four weeks **past** its sell-by date.
- The situation is long **past** the stage when anyone's advice would help.

1. adjective

Something that is **permanent** lasts for ever .

- Heavy drinking can cause permanent damage to the brain.
- ...a permanent solution to the problem.
- The ban is intended to be permanent.

13. preposition

If you are **past** doing something, you are no longer able to do it. For example, if you are **past caring** , you do not care about something any more because so many bad things have happened to you.

- She was **past** caring about anything by then and just wanted the pain to end.
- Often by the time they do accept the truth they are **past** being able to put words to feelings.

2. adjective

You use **permanent** to describe situations or states that keep occurring or which seem to exist all the time; used especially to describe problems or difficulties .

- ...a permanent state of tension.
- They feel under permanent threat.
- There was a permanent 20-yard queue for the portable toilets.

14. would not put it past sb/would not put anything past sb

3. adjective

A **permanent** employee is one who is employed for an unlimited length of time.

- At the end of the probationary period you will become a permanent employee.

- ...a permanent job.

4. adjective

Your **permanent** home or your **permanent** address is the one at which you spend most of your time or the one that you return to after having stayed in other places.

- York Cottage was as near to a permanent home as the children knew.
- They had no permanent address.

5. countable noun

A **permanent** is a treatment where a hair stylist curls your hair and treats it with a chemical so that it stays curly for several months .

picture

pictures picturing pictured

Explain

1. countable noun

A **picture** consists of lines and shapes which are drawn , painted , or printed on a surface and show a person, thing, or scene.

- A picture of Rory O'Moore hangs in the dining room at Kildangan.
- ...drawing a small picture with coloured chalks.

2. countable noun

A **picture** is a photograph.

- The tourists have nothing to do but take pictures of each other.
- The Observer carries a big front-page picture of rioters in a litter-strewn street.

3. countable noun

Television **pictures** are the scenes which you see on a television screen.

- ...heartrending television pictures of human suffering.

4. verb

To **be pictured** somewhere , for example in a newspaper or magazine , means to appear in a photograph or picture.

- The golfer is pictured on many of the front pages, kissing his trophy as he holds it aloft.
- ...a woman who claimed she had been pictured dancing with a celebrity in Stringfellow's nightclub.
- The rattan and wrought-iron chair pictured here costs £125.

5. countable noun

You can refer to a film as a **picture** .

- Warner Communications Inc. has refused to distribute the picture in the United States.
- ...a director of epic action pictures.

6. plural noun

If you go to **the pictures** , you go to a cinema to see a film.

- We're going to the pictures tonight.
- I'd rather see it at the pictures than on TV anyway.

7. countable noun

If you have a **picture** of something in your mind , you have a clear idea or memory of it in your mind as if you were actually seeing it.

- They have in their mind a picture of what a police officer should look like.
- We are just trying to get our picture of the whole afternoon straight.
- I tried to put the picture from my mind.

8. verb

If you **picture** something in your mind, you think of it and have such a clear memory or idea of it that you seem to be able to see it.

- He pictured her with long black braided hair.
- I never would have pictured this as her home.
- He pictured Claire sitting out in the car, waiting for him.
- She pictured herself working with animals.
- I tried to picture the place, but could not.

9. countable noun

A **picture** of something is a description of it or an indication of what it is like.

- I'll try and give you a better picture of what the boys do.
- Her book paints a bleak picture of the problems women now face.
- From the files that have now been released, a truer picture emerges.

10. singular noun

When you refer to the **picture** in a particular place, you are referring to the situation there.

- But as with other charitable bodies, these figures mask the true picture.
- It's a similar picture across the border in Ethiopia.

11. get the picture

12. in the picture/out of the picture

13. a picture of sth/the picture of sth

14. put sb in the picture

perpetual

Explain

1. adjective

A **perpetual** feeling, state, or quality is one that never ends or changes.

- ...the creation of a perpetual union.

2. adjective

A **perpetual** act, situation, or state is one that happens again and again and so seems never to end.

- I thought her perpetual complaints were going to prove too much for me.

pillow

pillows

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pillow** is a rectangular cushion which you rest your head on when you are in bed.

present

Explain

1. adjective

You use **present** to describe things and people that exist now, rather than those that existed in the past or those that may exist in the future.

- He has brought much of the present crisis on himself.

- ...the government's present economic difficulties.

- It has been skilfully renovated by the present owners.

- No statement can be made at the present time.

2. singular noun

The present is the period of time that we are in now and the things that are happening now.

- ...his struggle to reconcile the past with the present.
- ...continuing right up to the present.
- Then her thoughts would switch to the present.

3. adjective

In grammar, the **present** tenses of a verb are the ones that are used to talk about things that happen regularly or situations that exist at this time. The simple present tense uses the base form or the 's' form of a verb, as in 'I play tennis twice a week' and 'He works in a bank'.

4. at present

5. the present day

6. for the present

7. there's no time like the present

pine

pin *pin* *pin*

Explain

1. variable noun

A **pine tree** or a **pine** is a tall tree which has very thin, sharp leaves and a fresh smell. Pine trees have leaves all year round. **Pine** is the wood of this tree.

- ...high mountains covered in pine trees.
- ...a big pine table.

2. verb

If you **pine for** someone who has died or gone away, you want them to be with you very much and feel sad because they are not there.

- When the family moved away, Polly pined for them.
- Make sure your pet won't pine while you're away.

3. verb

If you **pine for** something, you want it very much, especially when it is unlikely that you will be able to have it.

- I pine for the countryside.
- ...the democracy they have pined for since 1939.

radiant

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **radiant** is so happy that their happiness shows in their face.

- Kathy smiled at her daughter's radiant face.
- On her wedding day the bride looked truly radiant.

2. adjective

Something that is **radiant** glows brightly.

- The evening sun warms the old red brick wall to a radiant glow.
- Out on the bay the morning is radiant.

3. adjective

Radiant heat or energy is sent out in the form of rays.

- The earth would be a frozen ball if it were not for the radiant heat of the sun.

range

ranges ranging ranged

Explain

1. countable noun

A **range of** things is a number of different things of the same general kind.

- A wide range of colours and patterns are available.
- The two men discussed a range of issues.
- The range includes chests of drawers, tables and wardrobes.

2. countable noun

A **range** is the complete group that is included between two points on a scale of measurement or quality.

- The average age range is between 35 and 55.
- ...properties available in the price range they are looking for.
- ...top-of-the-range products for which people are prepared to pay a little bit more.

3. countable noun

The **range of** something is the maximum area in which it can reach things or detect things.

- The 120mm mortar has a range of 18,000 yards.
- The trees on the mountains within my range of vision had all been felled.
- Tactical nuclear weapons have shorter ranges.

4. verb

If things **range between** two points or **range from** one point **to** another, they vary within these points on a scale of measurement or quality.

- They range in price from 3 to 15.
- ...offering merchandise ranging from the everyday to the esoteric.
- ...temperatures ranging between 5C and 20C.

5. verb

If a piece of writing or speech **ranges over** a group of topics, it includes all those topics.

- The discussion in this chapter has ranged over a number of matters.

6. verb

If people or things **are ranged** somewhere, they are arranged in a row or in lines.

- Some 300 trees have been ranged along the perimeter hedge.
- More than 1,500 police and troops are ranged against them.

7. verb

If animals or people **range** somewhere, they move around in a place without having a particular destination in mind.

- Feeding is not a problem because the birds range over such a large area.
- They range widely in search of carrion.

8. countable noun

A **range** of mountains or hills is a line of them.

- ...the massive mountain ranges to the north.
- ...an impressive range of hills topped with trees.

9. countable noun

A **range** is a large area of open land, especially land in the United States where cattle are kept.

10. countable noun

A rifle **range** or a shooting **range** is a place where people can practise shooting at targets.

- It reminds me of my days on the rifle range preparing for duty in Vietnam.
- ...an Army firing range.

11. countable noun

A **range** or **kitchen range** is an old-fashioned metal cooker .

12. countable noun

A **range** or **kitchen range** is a large metal device for cooking food using gas or electricity . A range consists of a grill , an oven, and some gas or electric rings.

13. within range, out of range

14. at close range

republican

republicans

Explain

1. adjective

Republican means relating to a republic. In **republican** systems of government , power is held by the people or the representatives that they elect .

- ...the nations that had adopted the republican form of government.

2. adjective

In the United States , if someone is **Republican** , they belong to or support the Republican Party. A **Republican** is someone who supports or belongs to the Republican Party.

- ...Republican voters.

- Some families have been Republican for generations.

- What made you decide to become a Republican?

3. adjective

In Northern Ireland , if someone is **Republican** , they believe that Northern Ireland should not be ruled by Britain but should become part of the Republic of Ireland. A **Republican** is someone who has Republican views .

- ...a Republican paramilitary group.
- ...a Northern Ireland Republican.

replacement

replacements

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you refer to the **replacement** of one thing by another, you mean that the second thing takes the place of the first.

- ...the replacement of damaged or lost books.

2. countable noun

Someone who takes someone else's place in an organization , government, or team can be referred to as their **replacement** .

- Taylor has nominated Adams as his replacement.
- The 18-year-old made his debut last week as a replacement for the injured striker.

roundabout

roundabouts

Explain

1. countable noun

A **roundabout** is a circular structure in the road at a place where several roads meet . You drive round it until you come to the road that you want .

2. countable noun

A **roundabout** at a fair is a large, circular mechanical device with seats, often in the shape of animals or cars , on which children sit and go round and round.

3. countable noun

A **roundabout** in a park or school play area is a circular platform that children sit or stand on. People push the platform to make it spin round.

4. adjective

If you go somewhere by a **roundabout** route , you do not go there by the shortest and quickest route.

- The party took a roundabout route overland.

5. adjective

If you do or say something in a **roundabout** way , you do not do or say it in a simple , clear , and direct way.

- We made a bit of a fuss in a roundabout way.
- ...using indirect or roundabout language in place of a precise noun.

squirrel

squirrels squirrelling squirrelled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **squirrel** is a small animal with a long furry tail. Squirrels live mainly in trees.

shrewd

shrewder shrewdest

Explain

1. adjective

A **shrewd** person is able to understand and judge a situation quickly and to use this understanding to their own advantage .

- She's a shrewd businesswoman.
- His grey eyes were shrewd but kindly.
- It should prove a shrewd investment.

stalk

stalks stalking stalked

Explain

1. countable noun

The **stalk** of a flower, leaf , or fruit is the thin part that joins it to the plant or tree.

- A single pale blue flower grows up from each joint on a long stalk.
- ...corn stalks.

2. verb

If you **stalk** a person or a wild animal, you follow them quietly in order to kill them, catch them, or observe them carefully.

- The hunter stalked the stag for days.

3. verb

If someone **stalks** someone else, especially a famous person or a person they used to have a relationship with, they keep following them or contacting them in an annoying and frightening way.

- *Even after their divorce he continued to stalk and threaten her.*

4. verb

*If you **stalk** somewhere , you walk there in a stiff, proud , or angry way.*

- *If his patience is tried at meetings he has been known to stalk out.*

5. verb

*If you say that something bad such as death , fear , or evil **stalks** a place, you mean it is there.*

- *...tales of famine stalking the streets of the city.*

spicy

spicier spiciest

Explain

1. adjective

***Spicy** food is strongly flavoured with spices.*

- *Thai food is hot and spicy.*
- *...a spicy tomato and coriander sauce.*

studio

studios

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **studio** is a room where a painter , photographer, or designer works.*

- *She was in her studio again, painting onto a large canvas.*

2. countable noun

*A **studio** is a room where radio or television programmes are recorded, CDs are produced, or films are made.*

- *She's much happier performing live than in a recording studio.*

3. countable noun

*You can also refer to film-making or recording companies as **studios** .*

- *She wrote to Paramount Studios and asked if they would audition her.*

4. countable noun

*A **studio** is a small flat with one room for living and sleeping in, a kitchen , and a bathroom . You can also talk about a **studio flat** in British English or a **studio apartment** in American English.*

- *I live on my own in a studio flat.*

sudden

Explain

1. adjective

***Sudden** means happening quickly and unexpectedly.*

- *He had been deeply affected by the sudden death of his father-in-law.*
- *'I hope,' the stranger said, 'that the sudden change of venue did not inconvenience you.'*
- *She started to thank him, but a sudden movement behind him caught her attention.*
- *It was all very sudden.*

2. all of a sudden

survival

Explain

1. uncountable noun

*If you refer to the **survival** of something or*

someone, you mean that they manage to continue or exist in spite of difficult circumstances .

- ...companies which have been struggling for survival in the advancing recession.
- Ask for the free booklet 'Debt: a Survival Guide'.

2. uncountable noun

If you refer to the **survival** of a person or living thing, you mean that they live through a dangerous situation in which it was possible that they might die .

- If cancers are spotted early there's a high chance of survival.
- An animal's sense of smell is still crucial to its survival.

3. survival of the fittest

thumb

thumbs thumbing thumbed

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **thumb** is the short thick part on the side of your hand next to your four fingers .

- She bit the tip of her left thumb, not looking at me.

2. countable noun

The **thumb** of a glove is the part which a person's thumb fits into.

3. verb

If you **thumb** a lift or **thumb** a ride, you stand by the side of the road holding out your thumb until a driver stops and gives you a lift.

- It may interest you to know that a boy answering Rory's description thumbed a ride to Howth.

- Thumbing a lift had once a carefree, easy-going image.

4. to stick out like a sore thumb

5. to twiddle your thumbs

6. under sb's thumb

western

westerns

Explain

1. adjective

Western means in or from the west of a region, state, or country.

- ...hand-made rugs from Western and Central Asia.
- ...Moi University, in western Kenya.

2. adjective

Western is used to describe things, people, ideas , or ways of life that come from or are associated with the United States, Canada , and the countries of Western, Northern , and Southern Europe.

- Mexico had the support of the big western governments.
- Those statements have never been reported in the Western media.

3. countable noun

A **western** is a book or film about life in the west of America in the nineteenth century, especially the lives of cowboys .

trash

trashes trashing trashed

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Trash consists of unwanted things or waste material such as used paper , empty containers and bottles , and waste food.

- *The yards are overgrown and cluttered with trash.*
- *Mowing lawns and taking out the trash are jobs for the tenant.*

2. uncountable noun

If you say that something such as a book , painting , or film is **trash** , you mean that it is of very poor quality.

- *Pop music doesn't have to be trash; it can be art.*
- *Don't read that awful trash.*

3. verb

If someone **trashes** a place or vehicle , they deliberately destroy it or make it very dirty .

- *Would they trash the place when the party was over?*
- *The building had been trashed and its electricity supply cut.*

4. verb

If you **trash** people or their ideas, you criticize them very strongly and say that they are worthless.

- *People asked why the candidates spent so much time trashing each other.*

arrival

arrivals

Explain

1. variable noun

When a person or vehicle arrives at a place, you can refer to their **arrival** .

- *...the day after his arrival in England.*
- *He was dead on arrival at the nearby hospital.*
- *...the airport arrivals hall.*
- *...the arrival gate at Penn Station.*

2. variable noun

When someone starts a new job , you can refer to their **arrival** in that job.

- *...the power vacuum created by the arrival of a new president.*
- *The company had eight departures and 11 new arrivals on its management board in 1980-89.*

3. singular noun

When something is brought to you or becomes available , you can refer to its **arrival** .

- *I was flicking idly through a newspaper while awaiting the arrival of orange juice and coffee.*
- *The coronation broadcast marked the arrival of television.*

4. singular noun

When a particular time comes or a particular event happens , you can refer to its **arrival** .

- *He celebrated the arrival of the New Year with a party for his friends.*

5. countable noun

You can refer to someone who has just arrived at a place as a new **arrival** .

- A high proportion of the new arrivals are skilled professionals.

- He was the most junior and most recent arrival at the embassy.

6. singular noun

When a baby is born, you can refer to its **arrival**.

- ...a couple anticipating the arrival of a new child.

7. countable noun

You can refer to a baby who has just been born as a new **arrival**.

- Her father was besotted with the new arrival.

ambitious

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **ambitious** has a strong desire to be successful, rich, or powerful.

- Chris is so ambitious, so determined to do it all.
- He's a very ambitious lad and he wants to play at the highest level.

2. adjective

An **ambitious** idea or plan is on a large scale and needs a lot of work to be carried out successfully.

- The ambitious project was completed in only nine months.
- Their goal was extraordinarily ambitious.

attitude

attitudes

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **attitude to** something is the way that you think and feel about it, especially when this shows in the way you behave.

- ...the general change in attitude towards people with disabilities.
- His attitude made me angry.
- I don't think it's fair to accuse me of having an attitude problem.

2. uncountable noun

If you refer to someone as a person **with attitude**, you mean that they have a striking and individual style of behaviour, especially a forceful or aggressive one.

3. attitude of mind

capable

Explain

1. adjective

If a person or thing is **capable of** doing something, they have the ability to do it.

- He appeared hardly capable of conducting a coherent conversation.
- The kitchen is capable of catering for several hundred people.
- I had no hesitation in calling the police because I realised he was capable of murder.

2. adjective

Someone who is **capable** has the skill or qualities necessary to do a particular thing well, or is able to do most things well.

- She's a very capable speaker.
- Sam was a highly capable manager.

ceremony

ceremonies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **ceremony** is a formal event such as a wedding

- ...his grandmother's funeral, a private ceremony attended only by the family.
- Today's award ceremony took place at the British Embassy in Tokyo.

2. uncountable noun

Ceremony consists of the special things that are said and done on very formal occasions .

- The Republic was proclaimed in public with great ceremony.
- ...the pomp and ceremony of the Pope's visit.

3. uncountable noun

If you do something **without ceremony** , you do it quickly and in a casual way.

- 'Is Hilton here?' she asked without ceremony.

competent

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **competent** is efficient and effective .

- He was a loyal, distinguished and very competent civil servant.
- ...a competent performance.

2. adjective

If you are **competent to** do something, you have the skills, abilities , or experience necessary to do it well .

- Most adults do not feel competent to deal with a medical emergency involving a child.

conversion

conversions

Explain

1. variable noun

Conversion is the act or process of changing something into a different state or form.

- ...the conversion of disused rail lines into cycle routes.
- A loft conversion can add considerably to the value of a house.

2. variable noun

If someone changes their religion or beliefs, you can refer to their **conversion** to their new religion or beliefs.

- ...his conversion to Christianity.
- It's hard to trust the President's conversion.

3. countable noun

In rugby , if a player makes or kicks a **conversion** , he scores points by kicking the ball over the goal after a try has been scored.

creative

creatives

Explain

1. adjective

A **creative** person has the ability to invent and develop original ideas , especially in the arts .

- Like so many creative people, he was never satisfied.
- ...her obvious creative talents.

2. adjective

Creative activities involve the inventing and making of new kinds of things.

- ...creative writing.
- ...creative arts.
- Cooking is creative.

3. adjective

If you use something in a **creative** way, you use it in a new way that produces interesting and unusual results.

- ...his creative use of words.

4. countable noun

A **creative** is someone whose job is to be creative, especially someone who creates advertisements .

- Along with scores of other advertising creatives, he will be taking part in an exhibition at the Saatchi gallery.

crucial

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **crucial** , you mean it is extremely important.

- He had administrators under him but took the crucial decisions himself.

- ...the most crucial election campaign for years.

- Improved consumer confidence is crucial to an economic recovery.

country

countries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **country** is one of the political units which the world is divided into, covering a particular area of land.

- Indonesia is the fifth most populous country in the world.
- ...that disputed boundary between the two countries.
- Young people do move around the country quite a bit these days.

2. singular noun

The people who live in a particular country can be referred to as **the country** .

- The country goes to the polls today to elect a new government.
- Seventy per cent of this country is opposed to blood sports.

3. singular noun

The country consists of places such as farms , open fields , and villages which are away from towns and cities.

- ...a healthy life in the country.
- She was cycling along a country road near Compiègne.
- I was a simple country boy from Norfolk.

4. uncountable noun

A particular kind of **country** is an area of land which has particular characteristics or is connected with a particular well-known person.

- Varese Ligure is a small town in mountainous country east of Genoa.
- ...some of the best walking country in the Sierras.
- The Japanese visitors set off in search of Brontë country.

5. uncountable noun

Country music is popular music from the southern United States .

- For a long time I just wanted to play country music.
- The brilliant young country singer tours her songs about lost love and cigarettes, from March 7.

6. across country

7. across country

8. go to the country

dead

Explain

1. adjective

A person, animal, or plant that is **dead** is no longer living. **The dead** are people who are dead.

- Her husband's been dead a year now.
- The group had shot dead another hostage.
- ...their dead brother.
- ...old newspapers and dead flowers.

- The dead included six people attending a religious ceremony.

- ...the annual festival when Chinese traditionally honour the dead.

2. adjective

Land or water that is **dead** contains no living things.

- ...charred land, mountainsides of dead earth and stumps of trees.
- But this water seems dead: it's polluted and horribly stagnant.

3. adjective

If you describe a place or a period of time as **dead** , you do not like it because there is very little activity taking place in it.

- ...some dead little town where the liveliest thing is the flies.
- This made that holiday week a particularly dead period.

4. adjective

Something that is **dead** is no longer being used or is finished .

- The dead cigarette was still between his fingers.
- This bottle's dead. But we've got another one.

5. adjective

If you say that an idea, plan, or subject is **dead** , you mean that people are no longer interested in it or willing to develop it any further.

- It's a dead issue, Baxter.
- But that doesn't mean this brand of politics is dead or dying.
- The deal with Chelsea may not, however, be dead.

6. adjective

A **dead** language is no longer spoken or written as a means of communication , although it may still be studied.

- We used to grumble that we were wasting time learning a dead language.

7. adjective

A telephone or piece of electrical equipment that is **dead** is no longer functioning, for example because it no longer has any electrical power.

- On another occasion I answered the phone and the line went dead.

8. adjective

In sport, when a ball is **dead** , it has gone outside the playing area, or a situation has occurred in which the game has to be temporarily stopped, and none of the players can score points or gain an advantage .

9. graded adjective

A **dead** sound or colour is dull rather than lively or bright. **Dead** is also a combining form.

- 'That is correct, Meg,' he answered in his cold, dead voice.
- Then he heard a piercing scream echoing down the deep well, ending in a dull, dead thud.
- The blood drained from his face, leaving the skin dead white.

10. adjective

Dead is used to mean 'complete' or ' absolute ', especially before the words 'centre', ' silence ', and 'stop'.

- He adjusted each chesspiece so that it stood dead centre in its square.
- They hurried about in dead silence, with anxious faces.

- Lila's boat came to a dead stop.

11. adverb

Dead means ' precisely ' or ' exactly '.

- Mars was visible, dead in the centre of the telescope.
- Their arrows are dead on target.
- A fishing boat came out of nowhere, dead ahead.

12. adverb

Dead is sometimes used to mean 'very'.

- Meadowhall is also dead easy for people to get to.
- His poems sound dead boring, actually.
- I am dead against the legalisation of drugs.

13. over my dead body

14. dead and buried

15. drop (down) dead

16. to drop dead

17. dead and gone

18. be/feel/look (half) dead

19. at/in (the) dead of (the) night/winter

20. rise/raise sb from the dead

21. rise/come back from the dead

22. wouldn't be seen/caught dead

23. to stop dead

24. dead in the water

diversion

diversions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **diversion** is an action or event that attracts your attention away from what you are doing or concentrating on.

- The robbers threw smoke bombs to create a diversion.
- The whole argument is a diversion.

2. countable noun

A **diversion** is an activity that you do for pleasure .

- Finger painting is very messy but an excellent diversion.

3. countable noun

A **diversion** is a special route arranged for traffic to follow when the normal route cannot be used.

- They turned back because of traffic diversions.

4. uncountable noun

The diversion of something involves changing its course or destination .

- ...the illegal diversion of profits from secret arms sales.
- ...the diversion of a ship to Lebanon with 8mworth of aluminium on board.

effective

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **effective** works well and produces the results that were intended .

- Homoeopathic treatment can be effective in treating virtually any illness.

- Simple antibiotics are effective against this organism.

- ...an effective public transport system.

2. adjective

Effective means having a particular role or result in practice, though not officially or in theory .

- They have had effective control of the area since the security forces left.

- The restructuring resulted in an effective increase on fares.

3. adjective

When something such as a law or an agreement becomes **effective** , it begins officially to apply or be valid .

- The new rules will become effective in the next few days.

event

events

Explain

1. countable noun

An **event** is something that happens, especially when it is unusual or important. You can use **events** to describe all the things that are happening in a particular situation .

- ...the events of Black Wednesday.

- ...in the wake of recent events in Europe.

- A new book by J K Rowling is always an event.

2. countable noun

An **event** is a planned and organized occasion , for example a social gathering or a sports match .

- The cross-country section of the three-day event was held here yesterday.
- ...major sporting events.
- ...our programme of lectures and social events.

3. countable noun

An **event** is one of the races or competitions that are part of an organized occasion such as a sports meeting .

- A solo piper opens Aberdeen Highland Games at 10am and the main events start at 1pm.

4. in the event of/that

5. in any event

6. in the event

evidence

evidences evidencing evidenced

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Evidence is anything that you see , experience , read , or are told that causes you to believe that something is true or has really happened .

- Ganley said he'd seen no evidence of widespread fraud.
- There is a lot of evidence that stress is partly responsible for disease.
- To date there is no evidence to support this theory.

2. uncountable noun

Evidence is the information which is used in a court of law to try to prove something. Evidence is obtained from documents, objects, or witnesses.

- The evidence against him was purely circumstantial.
- ...enough evidence for a successful prosecution.

3. give evidence

4. verb

If a particular feeling , ability , or attitude **is evidenced by** something or someone, it is seen or felt .

- He's wise in other ways too, as evidenced by his reason for switching from tennis to golf.
- She was not calculating and evidenced no specific interest in money.

5. be in evidence

evil

evils

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Evil is a powerful force that some people believe to exist , and which causes wicked and bad things to happen .

- We are still being attacked by the forces of evil.
- There's always a conflict between good and evil in his plays.

2. uncountable noun

Evil is used to refer to all the wicked and bad things that happen in the world.

- *He could not, after all, stop all the evil in the world.*

- *...those who see television as the root of all evil.*

3. countable noun

If you refer to an **evil**, you mean a very unpleasant or harmful situation or activity.

- *Higher taxes may be a necessary evil.*
- *...a lecture on the evils of alcohol.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **evil**, you mean that they are very wicked by nature and take pleasure in doing things that harm other people.

- *...the country's most evil terrorists.*
- *She's an evil woman.*

5. adjective

If you describe something as **evil**, you mean that you think it causes a great deal of harm to people and is morally bad.

- *After 1760 few Americans refrained from condemning slavery as evil.*
- *They are setting an evil example for their children.*

6. adjective

If you describe something as **evil**, you mean that you think it is influenced by the devil.

- *I think this is an evil spirit at work.*
- *According to local folklore it is an evil place.*

7. adjective

You can describe a very unpleasant smell as **evil**.

- *Both men were smoking evil-smelling pipes.*

8. the evil day/hour

9. the lesser of two evils

excitement

excitements

Explain

1. variable noun

You use **excitement** to refer to the state of being excited, or to something that excites you.

- *Everyone is in a state of great excitement.*
- *...the excitement of a thunderstorm.*
- *This game had its challenges, excitements and rewards.*

faulty

Explain

1. adjective

A **faulty** piece of equipment has something wrong with it and is not working properly.

- *The money will be used to repair faulty equipment.*

2. adjective

If you describe someone's argument or reasoning as **faulty**, you mean that it is wrong or contains mistakes, usually because they have not been thinking in a logical way.

- *Their interpretation was faulty—they had misinterpreted things.*

fact

facts

Explain

1. the fact that

2. the fact that

3. *in actual fact*

4. *in actual fact*

5. *variable noun*

When you refer to something as a **fact** or as **fact**, you mean that you think it is true or correct .

- ...a statement of verifiable historical fact.
- How much was fact and how much fancy no one knew.

6. *countable noun*

Facts are pieces of information that can be discovered .

- There is so much information you can almost effortlessly find the facts for yourself.
- His opponent swamped him with facts and figures.
- The lorries always left at night when there were few witnesses around to record the fact.

7. *as a matter of fact*

8. *to know something for a fact*

9. *the fact is*

10. *the fact remains*

11. *and that's a fact*

12. *is that a fact?*

finite

Explain

1. *adjective*

Something that is **finite** has a definite fixed size or extent.

- ...a finite set of elements.

- Only a finite number of situations can arise.

- The fossil fuels (coal and oil) are finite resources.

2. *adjective*

A **finite** clause is a clause based on a verb group which indicates tense, such as 'went', 'is waiting', or 'will be found', rather than on an infinitive or a participle . Compare non-finite .

fixture

fixtures

Explain

1. *countable noun*

Fixtures are pieces of furniture or equipment , for example baths and sinks , which are fixed inside a house or other building and which stay there if you move.

- ...a detailed list of what fixtures and fittings are included in the purchase price.

2. *countable noun*

A **fixture** is a sports event which takes place on a particular date.

- City won this fixture 3-0 last season.

3. *countable noun*

If you describe someone or something as a **fixture** in a particular place or occasion, you mean that they always seem to be there.

- She was a fixture in New York's nightclubs.
- The cordless kettle may now be a fixture in most kitchens.

frontier

frontiers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **frontier** is a border between two countries.

- It wasn't difficult then to cross the frontier.

2. countable noun

When you are talking about the western part of America before the twentieth century, you use **frontier** to refer to the area beyond the part settled by Europeans.

- ...a far-flung outpost on the frontier.

3. countable noun

The frontiers of something, especially knowledge, are the limits to which it extends.

- ...pushing back the frontiers of science.
- ...technological frontiers.

historic

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **historic** is important in history, or likely to be considered important at some time in the future.

- King gave this historic speech the night before he was assassinated.
- ...a fourth historic election victory.

gear

gears gearing geared

Explain

1. countable noun

The **gears** on a machine or vehicle are a device for changing the rate at which energy is changed into motion.

- On hills, he must use low gears.
- The car was in fourth gear.
- He put the truck in gear and drove on.

2. uncountable noun

The **gear** involved in a particular activity is the equipment or special clothing that you use.

- About 100 officers in riot gear were needed to break up the fight.
- ...fishing gear.
- They helped us put our gear back into the van.

3. uncountable noun

Gear means clothing.

- I used to wear trendy gear but it just looked ridiculous.

4. uncountable noun

Some people refer to illegal drugs, especially heroin, as **gear**.

- Are these people using gear and amphetamines at the same time?

5. passive verb

If someone or something **is geared to** or **to-wards** a particular purpose, they are organized or designed in order to achieve that purpose.

- Colleges are not always geared to the needs of mature students.
- My training was geared towards winning gold in Munich.

incentive

incentives

Explain

1. variable noun

If something is an **incentive to** do something, it encourages you to do it.

- There is little or no incentive to adopt such measures.
- Many companies in Britain are keen on the idea of tax incentives for RD.

influential

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **influential** has a lot of influence over people or events.

- It helps to have influential friends.
- ...the influential position of president of the chamber.
- He had been influential in shaping economic policy.
- ...one of the most influential books ever written.

insect

insects

Explain

1. countable noun

An **insect** is a small animal that has six legs. Most insects have wings. Ants , flies , butterflies , and beetles are all insects.

interesting

Explain

1. adjective

If you find something **interesting** , it attracts your attention , for example because you think it is exciting or unusual .

- It was interesting to be in a different environment.
- The two halves of the town face each other, and both have interesting churches.
- His third album is by far his most interesting.

kidney

kidneys

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **kidneys** are the organs in your body that take waste matter from your blood and send it out of your body as urine.

2. variable noun

Kidneys are the kidneys of an animal, for example a lamb , calf , or pig , that are eaten as meat .

- ...lambs' kidneys.
- ...steak and kidney pie.

liable

Explain

1. be liable to do sth

2. adjective

If people or things are **liable to** something unpleasant , they are likely to experience it or do it.

- *She will grow into a woman particularly liable to depression.*
- *This volcanic rock is less liable to shatter than limestone.*

3. adjective

If you are **liable for** something such as a debt , you are legally responsible for it.

- *The airline's insurer is liable for damages to the victims' families.*
- *As the killings took place outside British jurisdiction, the Ministry of Defence could not be held liable.*

lavatory

lavatories

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lavatory** is the same as a toilet .

- *...the ladies' lavatory at the University of London.*
- *...a public lavatory.*

limited

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **limited** is not very great in amount, range , or degree .

- *They may only have a limited amount of time to get their points across.*
- *Shops have a very limited selection.*

2. adjective

A **limited** company is one whose owners are legally responsible for only a part of any money that it may owe if it goes bankrupt .

- *They had plans to turn the club into a limited company.*
- *He is the founder of International Sports Management Limited.*

loyalty

loyalties

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Loyalty is the quality of staying firm in your friendship or support for someone or something.

- *I have sworn an oath of loyalty to the monarchy.*
- *This is seen as a reward for the army's loyalty during a barracks revolt earlier this month.*

2. countable noun

Loyalties are feelings of friendship, support, or duty towards someone or something.

- *She had developed strong loyalties to the Manet family.*

mature

matures maturing matured maturer maturest

Explain

1. verb

When a child or young animal **matures** , it becomes an adult.

- *You will learn what to expect as your child matures physically.*
- *The eggs hatched and the chicks matured.*

- ...young girls who'd not yet matured.

2. verb

When something **matures** , it reaches a state of complete development .

- When the trees matured they were cut in certain areas.
- Their songwriting has matured.

3. verb

If someone **matures** , they become more fully developed in their personality and emotional behaviour .

- Hopefully after three years at university I will have matured.
- I thought you had matured enough not to be giggly and silly about serious art.

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **mature** , you think that they are fully developed and balanced in their personality and emotional behaviour.

- They are emotionally mature and should behave responsibly.
- You and I are mature, freethinking adults.

5. graded adjective

If you describe the work of an artist , writer , or musician as **mature** , you mean that it is thoughtful and skilful and shows that their abilities have fully developed.

- It is his most mature comedy yet.

6. verb

If something such as wine or cheese **matures** or **is matured** , it is left for a time to allow its full flavour or strength to develop.

- Unlike wine, brandy matures only in wood, not glass.

- ...the cellars where the cheeses are matured.

- ...our best selling matured cheddar.

7. adjective

Mature cheese or wine has been left for a time to allow its full flavour or strength to develop.

- Grate some mature cheddar cheese.
- ...the best place to enjoy fine, mature wines.

8. verb

When an investment such as a savings policy or pension plan **matures** , it reaches the stage when you stop paying money and the company pays you back the money you have saved , and the interest your money has earned .

- These bonuses will be paid when your savings plan matures in ten years' time.
- ...an endowment policy that matured on September 1.

9. adjective

If you say that someone is **mature** or of **mature** years , you are saying politely that they are middle-aged or old .

- ...a man of mature years.

mineral

minerals

Explain

1. countable noun

A **mineral** is a substance such as tin , salt , or sulphur that is formed naturally in rocks and in the earth . Minerals are also found in small quantities in food and drink.

moderate

moderates moderating moderated

Explain

1. adjective

Moderate political opinions or policies are not extreme.

- *He was an easygoing man of very moderate views.*
- *Both countries have called for a moderate approach to the use of force.*

2. adjective

You use **moderate** to describe people or groups who have moderate political opinions or policies. A **moderate** is someone with moderate political opinions.

- *...a moderate Democrat.*
- *...the moderate wing of the army.*
- *If he presents himself as a radical, he risks scaring off the moderates.*

3. adjective

You use **moderate** to describe something that is neither large nor small in amount or degree .

- *While a moderate amount of stress can be beneficial, too much stress can exhaust you.*
- *...moderate exercise.*

4. adjective

A **moderate** change in something is a change that is not great .

- *Most drugs offer either no real improvement or, at best, only moderate improvements.*

5. verb

If you **moderate** something or if it **moderates** , it becomes less extreme or violent and easier to deal with or accept .

- *They are hoping that once in office he can be persuaded to moderate his views.*

- *Amongst relief workers, the immediate sense of crisis has moderated somewhat.*

- *Without Westcott's moderating influence, Mathers's autocratic manner became unbearable.*

miracle

miracles

Explain

1. countable noun

If you say that a good event is a **miracle** , you mean that it is very surprising and unexpected .

- *It is a miracle no one was killed.*
- *The Italian economic miracle has always been a mystery.*

2. adjective

A **miracle** drug or product does something that was thought almost impossible .

- *...a miracle drug that is said to be a cure for Aids and cancer.*

3. countable noun

A **miracle** is a wonderful and surprising event that is believed to be caused by God .

- *...the miracle of the Virgin Birth.*
- *...Jesus's ability to perform miracles.*

overhead

Explain

1. adjective

You use **overhead** to indicate that something is above you or above the place that you are talking about. **Overhead** is also an adverb .

- *She turned on the overhead light and looked around the little room.*
- *...people who live under or near overhead cables.*
- *...planes passing overhead.*
- *Now there were only the stars overhead.*

monopoly

monopolies

Explain

1. variable noun

If a company, person, or state has a **monopoly on** something such as an industry, they have complete control over it, so that it is impossible for others to become involved in it.

- *...Russian moves to end a state monopoly on land ownership.*
- *...the governing party's monopoly over the media.*
- *...an inquiry by the Monopolies Commission.*

2. countable noun

A **monopoly** is a company which is the only one providing a particular product or service.

- *...a state-owned monopoly.*

3. singular noun

If you say that someone does not have a **monopoly on** something, you mean that they are not the only person who has that thing.

- *Women do not have a monopoly on feelings of betrayal.*

patient

patients

Explain

1. countable noun

A **patient** is a person who is receiving medical treatment from a doctor or hospital. A **patient** is also someone who is registered with a particular doctor.

- *The earlier the treatment is given, the better the patient's chances.*
- *She was tough but wonderful with her patients.*
- *He specialized in treatment of cancer patients.*

2. adjective

If you are **patient**, you stay calm and do not get annoyed, for example when something takes a long time, or when someone is not doing what you want them to do.

- *Please be patient—your cheque will arrive.*
- *He was endlessly kind and patient with children.*

nationality

nationalities

Explain

1. variable noun

If you have the **nationality** of a particular country, you were born there or have the legal right to be a citizen.

- *Asked his nationality, he said British.*
- *The crew are of different nationalities and have no common language.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to people who have the same racial origins as a **nationality**, especially when they do not have their own independent country.

- The poor of many nationalities struggle for survival.

poisonous

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **poisonous** will kill you or make you ill if you swallow or absorb it.

- All parts of the yew tree are poisonous, including the berries.
- ...a large cloud of poisonous gas.

2. adjective

An animal that is **poisonous** produces a poison that will kill you or make you ill if the animal bites you.

- There are hundreds of poisonous spiders and snakes.

3. adjective

If you describe something as **poisonous**, you mean that it is extremely unpleasant and likely to spoil or destroy a good relationship or situation.

- ...poisonous comments.
- ...lying awake half the night tormented by poisonous suspicions.
- ...poisonous attacks on the state-run church.

orchard

orchards

Explain

1. countable noun

An **orchard** is an area of land on which fruit trees are grown.

polite

politer politest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **polite** has good manners and behaves in a way that is socially correct and not rude to other people.

- Everyone around him was trying to be polite, but you could tell they were all bored.
- It's not polite to point or talk about strangers in public.
- Gately, a quiet and very polite young man, made a favourable impression.
- I hate having to make polite conversation.

2. adjective

You can refer to people who consider themselves to be socially superior and to set standards of behaviour for everyone else as **polite society** or **polite company**.

- Certain words are vulgar and not acceptable in polite society.

ore

ores

Explain

1. variable noun

Ore is rock or earth from which metal can be obtained.

- ...a huge iron ore mine.

preceding

Explain

1. adjective
(prenominal)

outline

outlines outlining outlined

Explain

1. verb
If you **outline** an idea or a plan, you explain it in a general way.
 - The mayor outlined his plan to clean up the town's image.
 - The methods outlined in this book are only suggestions.
2. variable noun
An **outline** is a general explanation or description of something.
 - Following is an outline of the survey findings.
 - The proposals were given in outline by the Secretary of State.
3. passive verb
You say that an object **is outlined** when you can see its general shape because there is light behind it.
 - The Ritz was outlined against the lights up there.
 - It was a beautiful sight outlined above the starry sky.
4. countable noun
The **outline** of something is its general shape, especially when it cannot be clearly seen.
 - He could see only the hazy outline of the goalposts.

profitable

Explain

1. adjective
A **profitable** organization or practice makes a profit.
 - Improved transport turned agriculture into a highly profitable business.
 - It was profitable for them to produce large amounts of food.
2. adjective
Something that is **profitable** results in some benefit for you.
 - ...collaboration which leads to a profitable exchange of personnel and ideas.

paradigm

paradigms

Explain

1. variable noun
A **paradigm** is a model for something which explains it or shows how it can be produced.
 - ...a new paradigm of production.
2. countable noun
A **paradigm** is a clear and typical example of something.
 - He had become the paradigm of the successful man.

promising

Explain

1. adjective
Someone or something that is **promising** seems likely to be very good or successful .

- A school has honoured one of its brightest and most promising former pupils.

parliament

parliaments

Explain

1. countable noun

The **parliament** of some countries, for example Britain, is the group of people who make or change its laws, and decide what policies the country should follow.

- Parliament today approved the policy, but it has not yet become law.

2. countable noun

A particular **parliament** is a particular period of time in which a parliament is doing its work, between two elections or between two periods of holiday.

- The legislation is expected to be passed in the next parliament.

regular

regulars

Explain

1. adjective

Regular events have equal amounts of time between them, so that they happen, for example, at the same time each day or each week.

- Take regular exercise.
- Now it's time for our regular look at the world of international sport.
- We're going to be meeting there on a regular basis.

- The cartridge must be replaced at regular intervals.

2. adjective

Regular events happen often.

- This condition usually clears up with regular shampooing.

3. adjective

If you are, for example, a **regular** customer at a shop or a **regular** visitor to a place, you go there often.

- 'Tell me, Mr Mentakis, was Mrs Savalas one of your regular customers?'
- She has become a regular visitor to Houghton Hall.
- ...people who are not regular churchgoers.

4. countable noun

The **regulars** at a place or in a team are the people who often go to the place or are often in the team.

- Regulars at his local pub have set up a fund to help out.
- I wasn't one of their regulars.

5. adjective

You use **regular** when referring to the thing, person, time, or place that is usually used by someone. For example, someone's **regular** place is the place where they usually sit.

- The man sat at his regular table near the window.
- ...samples from one of their regular suppliers.

6. adjective

A **regular** rhythm consists of a series of sounds or movements with equal periods of time between them.

- ...a very regular beat.
- He stood in the doorway, listening to her quiet, regular breathing.

7. adjective

Regular is used to mean 'normal'.

- It looks and feels like a regular guitar.
- He describes himself as just a regular guy from suburban Chicago.

8. adjective

In some restaurants , a **regular** drink or quantity of food is of medium size.

- ...a cheeseburger and regular fries.

9. adjective

A **regular** pattern or arrangement consists of a series of things with equal spaces between them.

- ...sandy hillocks that look as if they've been scattered in a regular pattern on the ground.
- ...regular rows of wooden huts.

10. adjective

If something has a **regular** shape, both halves are the same and it has straight edges or a smooth outline .

- ...some regular geometrical shape.

11. adjective

Regular troops are professional soldiers who are a permanent part of an official national army.

Regulars are regular troops.

- Most schemes attempt to reduce the cost of defence through a smaller regular army.
- Only about a third of the reinforcements will be regular troops.
- ...the presence of a garrison of British regulars.

12. adjective

In grammar , a **regular** verb, noun, or adjective inflects in the same way as most verbs, nouns, or adjectives in the language.

poke

pokes poking poked

Explain

1. verb

If you **poke** someone or something, you quickly push them with your finger or with a sharp object. **Poke** is also a noun .

- Lindy poked him in the ribs.
- John smiled at them and gave Richard a playful poke.

2. verb

If you **poke** one thing **into** another, you push the first thing into the second thing.

- He poked his finger into the hole.

3. verb

If something **pokes out of** or **through** another thing, you can see part of it appearing from behind or underneath the other thing.

- He saw the dog's twitching nose poke out of the basket.
- His fingers poked through the worn tips of his gloves.

4. verb

If you **poke** your head through an opening or if it **pokes** through an opening, you push it through, often so that you can see something more easily .

- Julie tapped on my door and poked her head in.
- We hadn't been able to poke our heads out and see what was going on.
- Raymond's head poked through the doorway.

relevant

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **relevant to** a situation or person is important or significant in that situation or to that person.

- Is socialism still relevant to people's lives?
- We have passed all relevant information on to the police.

2. adjective

The relevant thing of a particular kind is the one that is appropriate .

- Make sure you enclose all the relevant certificates.

- The rooms are admirably cool and shady after the hot brown monotony of the countryside.

2. adjective

Shady trees provide a lot of shade.

- Clara had been reading in a lounge chair under a shady tree.

3. adjective

You can describe activities as **shady** when you think that they might be dishonest or illegal . You can also use **shady** to describe people who are involved in such activities.

- The company was notorious for shady deals.
- Joseph watched a shady-looking bunch playing cards aboard a Mississippi steamer.

postcard

postcards

Explain

1. countable noun

A **postcard** is a piece of thin card, often with a picture on one side, which you can write on and send to people without using an envelope.

shady

shadier shadiest

Explain

1. adjective

You can describe a place as **shady** when you like the fact that it is sheltered from bright sunlight , for example by trees or buildings.

- After flowering, place the pot in a shady spot in the garden.

rain

rains raining rained

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Rain is water that falls from the clouds in small drops.

- I hope you didn't get soaked standing out in the rain.
- A spot of rain fell on her hand.

2. plural noun

In countries where rain only falls in certain seasons , this rain is referred to as **the rains** .

- ...the spring, when the rains came.
- The rains have failed again in the Horn of Africa.

3. verb

When rain falls, you can say that **it is raining** .

- It rained the whole weekend.
- It was raining hard, and she hadn't an umbrella.

4. verb

If someone **rains** blows , kicks , or bombs **on** a person or place, the person or place is attacked by many blows, kicks, or bombs. You can also say that blows, kicks, or bombs **rain on** a person or place. **Rain down** means the same as rain .

- The opponents were raining blows on each other long after the bell had gone.
- Rockets, mortars and artillery rounds rained on buildings.
- Fighter aircraft rained down high explosives.
- Grenades and mortars rained down on the city.

5. singular noun

A **rain of** things is a large number of things that fall from the sky at the same time.

- A rain of stones descended on the police.

6. it never rains but it pours

7. as right as rain

8. rain or shine

sick

sicker sickest

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **sick** , you are ill. **Sick** usually means physically ill, but it can sometimes be used to mean mentally ill. **The sick** are people who are sick.

- He's very sick. He needs medication.
- She found herself with two small children, a sick husband, and no money.
- He was not evil, but he was sick.
- There were no doctors to treat the sick.

2. adjective

If you are **sick** , the food that you have eaten comes up from your stomach and out of your mouth . If you **feel sick** , you feel as if you are going to be sick.

- She got up and was sick in the handbasin.
- The very thought of food made him feel sick.
- Orange juice makes him sick so don't give it to him.

3. uncountable noun

Sick is vomit.

4. adjective

If you say that you are **sick of** something or **sick and tired of** it, you are emphasizing that you are very annoyed by it and want it to stop .

- I am sick and tired of hearing all these people moaning.
- Most people here are sick of violence.

5. adjective

If you describe something such as a joke or story as **sick** , you mean that it deals with death or suffering in an unpleasantly humorous way.

- ...a sick joke about a cat.
- That's really sick.

6. make sb sick

7. off sick

8. worried sick

software

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Computer programs are referred to as **software**

. Compare hardware .

- ...the people who write the software for big computer projects.

significant

Explain

1. adjective

A **significant** amount or effect is large enough to be important or affect a situation to a noticeable degree .

- A small but significant number of 11-year-olds are illiterate.
- ...foods that offer a significant amount of protein.
- It is the first drug that seems to have a very significant effect on this disease.

2. adjective

A **significant** fact , event, or thing is one that is important or shows something.

- Time would appear to be the significant factor in this whole drama.
- ...a very significant piece of legislation.
- I think it was significant that he never knew his own father.

3. graded adjective

A **significant** action or gesture is intended to have a special meaning.

- Mrs Bycraft gave Rose a significant glance.

thorn

thorns

Explain

1. countable noun

Thorns are the sharp points on some plants and trees, for example on a rose bush .

- Roses will always have thorns but with care they can be avoided.

2. variable noun

A **thorn** or a **thorn bush** or a **thorn tree** is a bush or tree which has a lot of thorns on it.

- ...the shade of a thorn bush.
- ...the thorn and bramble thickets.

3. thorn in your side/flesh

sympathetic

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **sympathetic** to someone who is in a bad situation , you are kind to them and show that you understand their feelings.

- She was very sympathetic to the problems of adult students.
- It may be that he sees you only as a sympathetic friend.

2. adjective

If you are **sympathetic to** a proposal or action, you approve of it and are willing to support it.

- She met people in London who were sympathetic to her cause.
- His speeches against corruption may find a sympathetic hearing among voters.

3. adjective

You describe someone as **sympathetic** when you like them and approve of the way that they behave .

- She sounds a most sympathetic character.

tiger

tigers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tiger** is a large fierce animal belonging to the cat family. Tigers are orange with black stripes.

toxic

Explain

1. adjective

A **toxic** substance is poisonous.

- ...the cost of cleaning up toxic waste.
- These products are not toxic to humans.

toilet

toilets

Explain

1. countable noun

A **toilet** is a large bowl with a seat , or a platform with a hole , which is connected to a water system and which you use when you want to get rid of urine or faeces from your body.

- She made Tina flush the pills down the toilet.

2. countable noun

A **toilet** is a room in a house or public building that contains a toilet.

- Annette ran and locked herself in the toilet.
- Fred never uses public toilets.

3. go to the toilet

useful

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **useful** , you can use it to do something or to help you in some way.

- The slow cooker is very useful for people who go out all day.
- Hypnotherapy can be useful in helping you give up smoking.
- The police gained a great deal of useful information about the organization.

2. come in useful

tomorrow

tomorrows

Explain

1. adverb

You use **tomorrow** to refer to the day after today. **Tomorrow** is also a noun .

- Bye, see you tomorrow.
- The first official results will be announced tomorrow.
- What's on your agenda for tomorrow?
- He will play for the team in tomorrow's match against England.

- *Tomorrow is Christmas Day.*

2. *adverb*

*You can refer to the future, especially the near future, as **tomorrow** . **Tomorrow** is also a noun.*

- *What is education going to look like tomorrow?*
- *...tomorrow's computer industry.*
- *Experiences in the past become a part of us, affecting our tomorrows.*

valid

Explain

1. *adjective*

*A **valid** argument, comment , or idea is based on sensible reasoning .*

- *They put forward many valid reasons for not exporting.*
- *It is valid to consider memory the oldest mental skill, from which all others derive.*
- *He recognized the valid points that both sides were making.*

2. *adjective*

*Something that is **valid** is important or serious enough to make it worth saying or doing.*

- *Most designers share the unspoken belief that fashion is a valid form of visual art.*

3. *adjective*

*If a ticket or other document is **valid** , it can be used and will be accepted by people in authority.*

- *For foreign holidays you will need a valid passport.*
- *All tickets are valid for two months.*

transition

transitions transitioning transitioned

Explain

1. *variable noun*

***Transition** is the process in which something changes from one state to another.*

- *The transition to a multi-party democracy is proving to be difficult.*
- *...a period of transition.*

2. *verb*

*To **transition from** one state or activity to another means to move gradually from one to the other.*

- *The country has begun transitioning from a military dictatorship to a budding democracy.*
- *The company transitioned to an intellectual property company.*

3. *verb*

*To **transition** means to start living your life as a person of a different gender.*

- *He confirmed in an interview with ABC that he is transitioning to life as a woman.*

4. *variable noun*

***Transition** is the process of starting to live your life as a person of a different gender.*

- *She has made a TV series about her gender transition and how she is adjusting to her new life.*
- *He started gender transition treatment last year.*

known

Explain

1. **Known** is the past participle of know .

2. adjective

You use **known** to describe someone or something that is clearly recognized by or familiar to all people or to a particular group of people.

- ...He was a known drug dealer.
- He became one of the best known actors of his day.
- Lead was one of the metals known to the ancient world.
- This plant has long been known for its medicinal qualities.
- The sport is still little known.

3. adjective

If someone or something is **known for** a particular achievement or feature , they are familiar to many people because of that achievement or feature.

- He is better known for his film and TV work.

4. to let it be known

wheel

wheels wheeling wheeled

Explain

1. countable noun

The **wheels** of a vehicle are the circular objects which are fixed underneath it and which enable it to move along the ground.

- The car wheels spun and slipped on some oil on the road.

2. countable noun

A **wheel** is a circular object which forms a part of a machine, usually a moving part.

- ...an eighteenth century mill with a water wheel.

3. countable noun

The wheel of a car or other vehicle is the circular object that is used to steer it. **The wheel** is used in expressions to talk about who is driving a vehicle. For example , if someone is **at the wheel** of a car, they are driving it.

- My co-pilot suddenly grabbed the wheel.
- Curtis got behind the wheel and they started back toward the cottage.
- Roberto handed Flynn the keys and let him take the wheel.

4. plural noun

People sometimes refer to a car as **wheels** .

- 'Do you own a house?'—'No. But I have wheels.'

5. verb

If you **wheel** an object that has wheels somewhere , you push it along.

- He wheeled his bike into the alley at the side of the house.
- They wheeled her out on the stretcher.

6. verb

If something such as a group of animals or birds **wheels** , it moves in a circle .

- A flock of crows wheeled overhead.

7. verb

If you **wheel** around, you turn around suddenly where you are standing , often because you are surprised , shocked , or angry .

- He wheeled around to face her.
- She wheeled sharply and headed for the check-out counter.

8. singular noun

You use **wheel** in expressions such as **the wheel of fortune** to refer to the changes that take place in life, especially when you are referring to the fact that the same situations occur more than once.

- The wheel of fortune will swing round again; in politics, it always does.
- In his view the wheel of history could not be turned back.

9. plural noun

People talk about **the wheels of** an organization or system to mean the way in which it operates.

- He knows the wheels of administration turn slowly.

10. wheels within wheels

wife

wives

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **wife** is the woman they are married to.

- He married his wife Jane 37 years ago.
- The woman was the wife of a film director.

alike

Explain

1. adjective

If two or more things are **alike**, they are similar in some way.

- We looked very alike.

2. adverb

Alike means in a similar way.

- They even dressed alike.
- ...their assumption that all men and women think alike.

3. adverb

You use **alike** after mentioning two or more people, groups, or things in order to emphasize that you are referring to both or all of them.

- The techniques are being applied almost everywhere by big and small firms alike.

bill

bills billing billed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bill** is a written statement of money that you owe for goods or services.

- They couldn't afford to pay the bills.
- He paid his bill for the newspapers promptly.
- ...phone bills.

2. verb

If you **bill** someone **for** goods or services you have provided them with, you give or send them a bill stating how much money they owe you for these goods or services.

- Are you going to bill me for this?

3. singular noun

The bill in a restaurant is a piece of paper on which the price of the meal you have just eaten is written and which you are given before you pay.

4. countable noun

A **bill** is a piece of paper money.

- ...a large quantity of U.S. dollar bills.

5. countable noun

In government, a **bill** is a formal statement of a proposed new law that is discussed and then voted on.

- This is the toughest crime bill that Congress has passed in a decade.
- The bill was approved by a large majority.

6. singular noun

The **bill** of a show or concert is a list of the entertainers who will take part in it.

7. verb

If someone **is billed to** appear in a particular show, it has been advertised that they are going to be in it.

- She was billed to play the Red Queen in Snow White.

8. verb

If you **bill** a person or event **as** a particular thing, you advertise them in a way that makes people think they have particular qualities or abilities.

- They bill it as Britain's most exciting museum.

9. countable noun

A bird's **bill** is its beak.

10. fit the bill

11. to foot the bill

12. a clean bill of health

attractive

Explain

1. adjective

A person who is **attractive** is pleasant to look at.

- She's a very attractive woman.
- I thought he was very attractive and obviously very intelligent.
- He was always immensely attractive to women.

2. adjective

Something that is **attractive** has a pleasant appearance or sound.

- The flat was small but attractive, if rather shabby.
- The creamy white flowers are attractive in the spring.

3. adjective

You can describe something as **attractive** when it seems worth having or doing.

- Co-operation was more than just an attractive option, it was an obligation.
- Smoking can still seem attractive to many young people.

cafe

cafés

Explain

1. countable noun

A **café** is a place where you can buy drinks, simple meals, and snacks, but, in Britain, not usually alcoholic drinks.

2. countable noun

A street **café** or a pavement **café** is a café which has tables and chairs on the pavement outside it where people can eat and drink.

- ...an Italian street café.
- ...sidewalk cafés and boutiques.

5. adjective

If something such as an action or a punishment is **automatic**, it happens without people needing to think about it because it is the result of a fixed rule or method.

- Those drivers should face an automatic charge of manslaughter.

automatic

automatics

Explain

1. adjective

An **automatic** machine or device is one which has controls that enable it to perform a task without needing to be constantly operated by a person. **Automatic** methods and processes involve the use of such machines.

- Modern trains have automatic doors.

2. countable noun

An **automatic** is a gun that keeps firing shots until you stop pulling the trigger.

- He drew his automatic and began running in the direction of the sounds.
- The gunmen opened fire with automatic weapons.

3. countable noun

An **automatic** is a car in which the gears change automatically as the car's speed increases or decreases.

4. adjective

An **automatic** action is one that you do without thinking about it.

- All of the automatic body functions, even breathing, are affected.

chart

charts charting charted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **chart** is a diagram, picture, or graph which is intended to make information easier to understand.

- Male unemployment was 14.2
- The chart below shows our top 10 choices.

2. countable noun

A **chart** is a map of the sea or stars.

- ...charts of Greek waters.

3. verb

If you **chart** an area of land, sea, or sky, or a feature in that area, you make a map of the area or show the feature in it.

- Portuguese explorers had charted the west coast of Africa as far as Sierra Leone.
- Ptolemy charted more than 1000 stars in 48 constellations.
- These seas have been well charted.

4. countable noun

The charts are the official lists that show which songs have had the most downloads or which CDs have sold the most copies each week.

- This album confirmed The Orb's status as national stars, going straight to Number One in the charts.
- They topped both the U.S. singles and album charts at the same time.

5. verb

If you **chart** the development or progress of something, you observe it and record or show it. You can also say that a report or graph **charts** the development or progress of something.

- One GP has charted a dramatic rise in local childhood asthma since the motorway was built nearby.
- This magnificent show charts his meteoric rise from 'small town' country singer to top international Rock idol.
- Bulletin boards charted each executive's progress.

6. verb

If a person or plan **charts** a course of action, they describe what should be done in order to achieve something or to make progress in the future.

- We've charted a possible way forward.
- NATO had charted a new course for stability and cooperation in Europe.
- Your future is already neatly planned and charted.

back

Explain

1. adverb

If you move **back**, you move in the opposite direction to the one in which you are facing or in which you were moving before.

- The photographers drew back to let us view the body.
- She stepped back from the door expectantly.
- He pushed her away and she fell back on the wooden bench.
- She pushes back her chair and stands.

2. adverb

If you go **back** somewhere, you return to where you were before.

- I went back to bed.
- I'm due back in London by late afternoon.
- Smith changed his mind and moved back home.
- I'll be back as soon as I can.
- He made a round-trip to the terminal and back.

3. adverb

If someone or something is **back** in a particular state, they were in that state before and are now in it again.

- The rail company said it expected services to get slowly back to normal.
- Denise hopes to be back at work by the time her daughter is one.
- Having recently bought an old typewriter, I am now trying to bring it back into working order.

4. adverb

If you give or put something **back**, you return it to the person who had it or to the place where it was before you took it. If you get or take something **back**, you then have it again after not having it for a while.

- She handed the knife back.

- Put it back in the freezer.
 - You'll get your money back.
5. *adverb*
If you put a clock or watch **back** , you change the time shown on it so that it shows an earlier time, for example when the time changes to winter time or standard time.
6. *adverb*
If you write or call **back** , you write to or phone someone after they have written to or phoned you. If you look **back** at someone, you look at them after they have started looking at you.
- They wrote back to me and they told me that I didn't have to do it.
 - If the phone rings, say you'll call back after dinner.
 - Lee looked at Theodora. She stared back.
7. *adverb*
You can say that you go or come **back to** a particular point in a conversation to show that you are mentioning or discussing it again.
- Can I come back to the question of policing once again?
 - To come back to what I said in the Introduction, in the nineteenth century Spain was fully a part of Europe.
 - Going back to the school, how many staff are there?
8. *adverb*
If something is or comes **back** , it is fashionable again after it has been unfashionable for some time.
- Short skirts are back.
 - Consensus politics could easily come back into fashion.
9. *adverb*
If someone or something is kept or situated **back from** a place, they are at a distance away from it.
- Keep back from the edge of the platform.
 - I'm a few miles back from the border.
 - He started for Dot's bedroom and Myrtle held him back.
10. *adverb*
If something is held or tied **back** , it is held or tied so that it does not hang loosely over something.
- Her hair was tied back.
 - The curtains were held back by tassels.
11. *adverb*
If you lie or sit **back** , you move your body backwards into a relaxed sloping or flat position, with your head and body resting on something.
- She lay back and stared at the ceiling.
 - She leaned back in her chair and smiled.
12. *adverb*
If you look or shout **back** at someone or something, you turn to look or shout at them when they are behind you.
- Nick looked back over his shoulder and then stopped, frowning.
 - He called back to her.
13. *adverb*
You use **back** in expressions like **back in London** or **back at the house** when you are giving an account, to show that you are going to start talking about what happened or was happening in the place you mention.
- Meanwhile, back in London, Palace Pictures was collapsing.

- Later, back at home, the telephone rang.

14. adverb

If you talk about something that happened **back** in the past or several years **back** , you are emphasizing that it happened quite a long time ago .

- The story starts back in 1950, when I was five.
- I was in St. Lucia back in January of this year.
- He contributed £50m to the project a few years back.

15. adverb

If you think **back to** something that happened in the past, you remember it or try to remember it.

- I thought back to the time in 1975 when my son was desperately ill.
- My mind flew back to stories I had heard about Vinnie.

16. back and forth

coffee

coffees

Explain

1. variable noun

Coffee is a hot drink made with water and ground or powdered coffee beans . A **coffee** is a cup of coffee.

- Would you like some coffee?
- Newman poured more black coffee.
- I made a coffee.

2. variable noun

Coffee is the roasted beans or powder from which the drink is made.

- Brazil harvested 28m bags of coffee in 1991.
- ...superior quality coffee.

backward

Explain

1. adjective

A **backward** movement or look is in the direction that your back is facing . Some people use backwards for this meaning .

- He turned and walked out without a backward glance.
- He did a backward flip.

2. adjective

If someone takes a **backward** step , they do something that does not change or improve their situation , but causes them to go back a stage .

- He didn't want to take a backward step at this point in his career.

3. adjective

A **backward** country or society does not have modern industries and machines .

- We need to accelerate the pace of change in our backward country.

4. adjective

A **backward** child has difficulty in learning. This use could cause offence .

- I was slow to walk and talk and my parents thought I was backward.

commission

commissions commissioning commissioned

Explain

1. verb

If you **commission** something or **commission** someone **to** do something, you formally arrange for someone to do a piece of work for you. **Commission** is also a noun .

- The Ministry of Agriculture commissioned a study into low-input farming.
- You can commission them to paint something especially for you.
- ...specially commissioned reports.
- Our china can be bought off the shelf or by commission.
- Parliament has set up a commission to investigate football-related violence.

2. countable noun

A **commission** is a piece of work that someone is asked to do and is paid for.

- Just a few days ago, I finished a commission.

3. variable noun

Commission is a sum of money paid to a salesperson for every sale that he or she makes. If a salesperson is paid **on commission** , the amount they receive depends on the amount they sell .

- The salespeople work on commission only.
- He also got a commission for bringing in new clients.

4. uncountable noun

If a bank or other company charges **commission** , they charge a fee for providing a service, for example for exchanging money or issuing an insurance policy .

- Travel agents charge 1 per cent commission on sterling cheques.

- Sellers pay a fixed commission fee.

5. countable noun

A **commission** is a group of people who have been appointed to find out about something or to control something.

- The authorities have been asked to set up a commission to investigate the murders.
- ...the Press Complaints Commission.

6. uncountable noun

The commission of a crime is the act of committing a crime.

- Anyone using a gun in the commission of a crime should be given an additional penalty.

7. countable noun

If a member of the armed forces receives a **commission** , he or she becomes an officer.

- He accepted a commission as a naval officer.

8. verb

If a member of the armed forces **is commissioned** , he or she is made an officer.

- He was commissioned as second lieutenant in the Air Force.
- Only commissioned officers qualify for the Military Cross.

9. out of commission

brilliant

Explain

1. adjective

A **brilliant** person, idea , or performance is extremely clever or skilful .

- She had a brilliant mind.

- *Her brilliant performance had earned her two Golden Globes.*

2. adjective

*You can say that something is **brilliant** when you are very pleased about it or think that it is very good.*

- *If you get a chance to see the show, do go—it's brilliant.*
- *My sister's given me this brilliant book.*

3. adjective

*A **brilliant** career or success is very successful .*

- *He served four years in prison, emerging to find his brilliant career in ruins.*
- *The raid was a brilliant success.*

4. adjective

*A **brilliant** colour is extremely bright .*

- *The woman had brilliant green eyes.*
- *...a brilliant white open-necked shirt.*

5. adjective

*You describe light, or something that reflects light, as **brilliant** when it shines very brightly.*

- *The event was held in brilliant sunshine.*
- *It was 250 million times more brilliant than the Sun.*

committee

committees

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **committee** is a group of people who meet to make decisions or plans for a larger group or organization that they represent.*

- *...a committee of ministers.*
- *He sat on the firm's management committee.*
- *...the Committee for Safety in Medicine.*
- *My reasons were stated in writing and circulated to all committee members.*

coordinate

Explain

1. verb

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

2. noun

6. 7.

3. adjective

8. 9. 10.

- *coordinate geometry*

compass

compasses

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **compass** is an instrument that you use for finding directions. It has a dial and a magnetic needle that always points to the north.*

- *We had to rely on a compass and a lot of luck to get here.*

2. plural noun

***Compasses** are a hinged V-shaped instrument that you use for drawing circles.*

3. countable noun

*If something is within **the compass of** something or someone, it is within their limits or abilities .*

- *Within the compass of a normal sized book such a comprehensive survey was not practicable.*

coordinate

Explain

1. verb

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

2. noun

6. 7.

3. adjective

8. 9. 10.

- *coordinate geometry*

diagram

diagrams diagramming diagrammed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **diagram** is a simple drawing which consists mainly of lines and is used, for example , to explain how a machine works.

- *...a circuit diagram.*
- *You can reduce long explanations to simple charts or diagrams.*

2. verb

To **diagram** something means to draw a diagram of it or to explain it using a diagram.

- *The sound waves of the voice could be diagrammed as in B.*
- *...diagramming the movement of a system's variables.*

downward

Explain

1. adjective

A **downward** movement or look is directed towards a lower place or a lower level.

- *...a firm downward movement of the hands.*

2. adjective

If you refer to a **downward** trend , you mean that something is decreasing or that a situation is getting worse .

- *The downward trend in home ownership is likely to continue.*
- *...a decline in the economy, resulting in a general downward spiral.*

flap

flaps flapping flapped

Explain

1. verb

If something such as a piece of cloth or paper **flaps** or if you **flap** it, it moves quickly up and down or from side to side.

- *Grey sheets flapped on the clothes line.*
- *They would flap bath towels from their balconies as they chatted.*

2. verb

If a bird or insect **flaps** its wings or if its wings **flap** , the wings move quickly up and down.

- *The bird flapped its wings furiously.*
- *A pigeon emerges, wings flapping noisily, from the tower.*

3. verb

If you **flap** your arms, you move them quickly up and down as if they were the wings of a bird.

- ...a kid running and flapping her arms.

4. countable noun

A **flap** of cloth or skin, for example , is a flat piece of it that can move freely up and down or from side to side because it is held or attached by only one edge.

- He drew back the tent flap and strode out into the blizzard.
- ...a loose flap of skin.

5. countable noun

A **flap** on the wing of an aircraft is an area along the edge of the wing that can be raised or lowered to control the movement of the aircraft.

- ...the sudden slowing as the flaps were lowered.

6. countable noun

A **flap** is a sudden noise or movement made by a bird's wing or by a piece of paper or cloth when it flaps.

- Nothing to be heard but the soft flap of a silk banner.

7. singular noun

Someone who is **in a flap** is in a state of great excitement , worry , or panic.

- Why did people get in a flap over nuclear energy?
- Wherever he goes there's always a flap.

early

earlier earliest

Explain

1. adverb

Early means before the usual time that a particular event or activity happens . **Early** is also an adjective .

- I knew I had to get up early.
- Why do we have to go to bed so early?
- I decided that I was going to take early retirement.
- I planned an early night.

2. adjective

Early means near the beginning of a day , week , year , or other period of time. **Early** is also an adverb .

- ...in the 1970s and the early 1980s.
- ...a few weeks in early summer.
- She was in her early teens.
- ...the early hours of Saturday morning.
- We'll hope to see you some time early next week.
- ...early in the season.

3. adverb

Early means before the time that was arranged or expected. **Early** is also an adjective.

- She arrived early to secure a place at the front.
- The first snow came a month earlier than usual.
- I'm always early.

4. adjective

Early means near the beginning of a period in history , or in the history of something such as the world, a society , or an activity.

- ...the early stages of pregnancy.
- ...Fassbinder's early films.
- ...the early days of the occupation.
- It's too early to declare his efforts a success.

5. adjective

Early means near the beginning of something such as a piece of work or a process. **Early** is also an adverb.

- ...the book's early chapters.
- ...an incident which occurred much earlier in the game.

6. adjective

Early refers to plants which flower or crop before or at the beginning of the main season . **Early** is also an adverb.

- ...these early cabbages and cauliflowers.
- ...early flowering shrubs.

7. adjective

Early reports or indications of something are the first reports or indications about it.

- The early indications look encouraging.
- Earlier reports that troops opened fire are now being denied.

8. as early as

9. it's early days

elder

elders

Explain

1. adjective

The elder of two people is the one who was born first.

- ...his elder brother.
- ...the elder of her two daughters.

2. countable noun

A person's **elder** is someone who is older than them, especially someone quite a lot older.

- The young have no respect for their elders.

3. countable noun

In some societies , an **elder** is one of the respected older people who have influence and authority.

- ...tribal elders.

4. countable noun

In some Christian churches, an **elder** is one of the people who hold a position of responsibility , but not usually a minister .

- He is now an elder of the village church.

5. variable noun

An **elder** is a bush or small tree which has groups of small white flowers and black berries .

instance

instances

Explain

1. phrase

You use **for instance** to introduce a particular event, situation , or person that is an example of what you are talking about.

- There are a number of improvements; for instance, both mouse buttons can now be used.

- *Straining to lift heavy weights for instance can lead to a rise in blood pressure whilst the activity continues.*

2. countable noun

An **instance** is a particular example or occurrence of something.

- *She cited an instance where their training had been a marvelous help in dealing with problems.*
- *...an investigation into a serious instance of corruption.*

3. in the first instance

4. at sb's instance

elegant

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe a person or thing as **elegant**, you mean that they are pleasing and graceful in appearance or style.

- *Patricia looked beautiful and elegant as always.*
- *...an elegant restaurant.*

2. adjective

If you describe a piece of writing, an idea, or a plan as **elegant**, you mean that it is simple, clear, and clever.

- *The document impressed me with its elegant simplicity.*

intellectual

intellectuals

Explain

1. adjective

Intellectual means involving a person's ability to think and to understand ideas and information.

- *High levels of lead could damage the intellectual development of children.*
- *He has written seven thrillers, and clearly enjoys intellectual pursuits.*

2. countable noun

An **intellectual** is someone who spends a lot of time studying and thinking about complicated ideas. **Intellectual** is also an adjective.

- *...teachers, artists and other intellectuals.*
- *They were very intellectual and witty.*
- *...an intellectual elite.*

learning

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Learning is the process of gaining knowledge through studying.

- *The brochure described the library as the focal point of learning on the campus.*

gorgeous

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **gorgeous**, you mean that it gives you a lot of pleasure or is very attractive.

- *...gorgeous mountain scenery.*
- *It's a gorgeous day.*

- Some of the Renaissance buildings are gorgeous.

2. adjective

If you describe someone as **gorgeous** , you mean that you find them very sexually attractive.

- The cosmetics industry uses gorgeous women to sell its skincare products.
- All the girls in my house are mad about Ryan, they think he's gorgeous.

3. adjective

If you describe things such as clothes and colours as **gorgeous** , you mean they are bright , rich , and impressive .

- ...a red-haired man in the gorgeous uniform of a Marshal of the Empire.

librarian

librarians

Explain

1. countable noun

A **librarian** is a person who is in charge of a library or who has been specially trained to work in a library.

graceful

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **graceful** moves in a smooth and controlled way which is attractive to watch .

- His movements were so graceful they seemed effortless.
- ...graceful ballerinas.

2. adjective

Something that is **graceful** is attractive because it has a pleasing shape or style.

- A graceful medieval cathedral.
- His handwriting, from earliest young manhood, was flowing and graceful.

3. adjective

If a person's behaviour is **graceful** , it is polite , kind , and pleasant , especially in a difficult situation .

- Aubrey could think of no graceful way to escape Corbet's company.
- He was charming, cheerful, and graceful under pressure.

library

libraries

Explain

1. countable noun

A public **library** is a building where things such as books, newspapers , videos , and music are kept for people to read , use, or borrow .

- ...the local library.
- She issued them library cards.

2. countable noun

A private **library** is a collection of things such as books or music, that is normally only used with the permission of the owner .

- My thanks go to the British School of Osteopathy, for the use of their library.

3. countable noun

In some large houses **the library** is the room where most of the books are kept.

- Guests were rarely entertained in the library.

matter

matters mattering mattered

Explain

1. countable noun

A **matter** is a task , situation , or event which you have to deal with or think about, especially one that involves problems .

- It was clear that she wanted to discuss some private matter.
- Until the matter is resolved, the athletes will be ineligible to compete.
- Don't you think this is now a matter for the police?
- Business matters drew him to Paris.

2. plural noun

You use **matters** to refer to the situation you are talking about, especially when something is affecting the situation in some way.

- The new system should improve matters.
- If it would facilitate matters, I would be happy to come to New York.
- Matters took an unexpected turn.

3. singular noun

If you say that a situation is **a matter of** a particular thing, you mean that that is the most important thing to be done or considered when you are involved in the situation or explaining it.

- History is always a matter of interpretation.
- Observance of the law is a matter of principle for us.
- After that, life became a matter of defying school rules.
- Jack had attended these meetings as a matter of routine for years.

4. uncountable noun

Printed **matter** consists of books, newspapers , and other texts that are printed. Reading **matter** consists of things that are suitable for reading, such as books and newspapers.

- Better education created an ever-larger demand for printed matter.
- ...a rich variety of reading matter.

5. uncountable noun

Matter is the physical part of the universe consisting of solids , liquids, and gases .

- A proton is an elementary particle of matter.
- He has spent his career studying how matter behaves.

6. uncountable noun

You use **matter** to refer to a particular type of substance.

- They feed mostly on decaying vegetable matter.
- ...waste matter from industries.

7. singular noun

You use **matter** in expressions such as ' **What's the matter?** ' or ' **Is anything the matter?** ' when you think that someone has a problem and you want to know what it is.

- Carole, what's the matter? You don't seem happy.
- What's the matter with your office?
- She told him there was nothing the matter.

8. singular noun

You use **matter** in expressions such as ' **a matter of weeks** ' when you are emphasizing how small an amount is or how short a period of time is.

- *Within a matter of days she was back at work.*
 - *He expected to be at East Grinstead station in a matter of hours.*
 - *This time the journey was short, a matter of four or five miles up into the hills.*
20. no matter
21. no matter
22. no matter what
23. a matter of opinion

9. verb

*If you say that something does not **matter** , you mean that it is not important to you because it does not have an effect on you or on a particular situation.*

- *A lot of the food goes on the floor but that doesn't matter.*
- *As for Laura and me, the colour of our skin has never mattered.*
- *As long as staff are smart, it does not matter how long their hair is.*
- *Does it matter that people don't know this?*
- *Money is the only thing that matters to them.*

10. another matter/a different matter

11. as a matter of

12. no easy matter

13. that's the end of the matter/that's an end to the matter

14. the fact of the matter/the truth of the matter

15. for that matter

16. it doesn't matter

17. it doesn't matter

18. no laughing matter

19. make matters worse

24. a matter of time

moan

moans moaning moaned

Explain

1. verb

*If you **moan** , you make a low sound, usually because you are unhappy or in pain . **Moan** is also a noun .*

- *Tony moaned in his sleep and then turned over on his side.*
- *'My head, my head,' he moaned. 'I can't see.'*
- *Suddenly she gave a low, choking moan and began to tremble violently.*
- *...her moan of sorrow.*

2. verb

*To **moan** means to complain or speak in a way which shows that you are very unhappy.*

- *I used to moan if I didn't get at least six hours' sleep at night.*
- *...moaning about the weather.*
- *They moan on a lot about money.*
- *Meg moans, 'I hated it!'*
- *The gardener was moaning that he had another garden to do later that morning.*

3. countable noun

A **moan** is a complaint.

- They have been listening to people's gripes, moans and praise.

4. have a moan

5. countable noun

A **moan** is a low noise .

- ...the occasional moan of the wind round the corners of the house.
- ...the moan of distant traffic.

latter

Explain

1. pronoun

When two people, things, or groups have just been mentioned, you can refer to the second of them as **the latter** . **Latter** is also an adjective .

- He tracked down his cousin and uncle. The latter was sick.
- There are the people who speak after they think and the people who think while they're speaking. Mike definitely belongs in the latter category.

2. adjective

You use **latter** to describe the later part of a period of time or event .

- He is getting into the latter years of his career.
- The latter part of the debate concentrated on abortion.

object

objects objecting objected

Explain

1. countable noun

An **object** is anything that has a fixed shape or form, that you can touch or see, and that is not alive .

- He squinted his eyes as though he were studying an object on the horizon.
- ...an object the shape of a coconut.
- In the cosy consulting room the children are surrounded by familiar objects.

2. countable noun

The **object** of what someone is doing is their aim or purpose.

- The object of the exercise is to raise money for the charity.
- He made it his object in life to find the island.
- My object was to publish a scholarly work on Peter Mourne.

3. countable noun

The **object of** a particular feeling or reaction is the person or thing it is directed towards or that causes it.

- The object of her hatred was a 24-year-old model.
- The object of great interest at the Temple was a large marble tower built in memory of Buddha.
- She knew that she was an object of pity among her friends.

4. countable noun

In grammar , the **object** of a verb or a preposition is the word or phrase which completes the structure begun by the verb or preposition.

5. verb

If you **object** to something, you express your dislike or disapproval of it.

- A lot of people will object to the book.
- Cullen objected that his small staff would be unable to handle the added work.
- We objected strongly but were outvoted.
- 'Hey, I don't know what you're talking about,' Russo objected.

6. money is no object

magnificent

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something or someone is **magnificent**, you mean that you think they are extremely good, beautiful, or impressive.

- ...a magnificent country house in wooded grounds.
- ...magnificent views over the San Fernando Valley.
- She is magnificent at making you feel you can talk quite naturally to her.

owner

owners

Explain

1. countable noun

The **owner** of something is the person to whom it belongs.

- The owner of the store was sweeping his floor when I walked in.

- Every pet owner knows their animal has its own personality.
- New owners will have to wait until September before moving in.

old

older oldest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **old** has lived for many years and is no longer young. **The old** are people who are old. This use could cause offence.

- ...a white-haired old man.
- He was considered too old for the job.
- ...providing a caring response for the needs of the old.

2. adjective

You use **old** to talk about how many days, weeks, months, or years someone or something has lived or existed.

- He was abandoned by his father when he was three months old.
- The paintings in the chapel were perhaps a thousand years old.
- How old are you now?
- These weren't young kids, they were as old as I was.
- Bill was six years older than David.

3. adjective

Something that is **old** has existed for a long time.

- She loved the big old house.
- These books must be very old.

- ...an old Arab proverb.
 - ...her old habit of criticizing his speech.
4. adjective
Something that is **old** is no longer in good condition because of its age or because it has been used a lot .
- He took a bunch of keys from the pocket of his old corduroy trousers.
 - ...an old toothbrush.
5. adjective
You use **old** to refer to something that is no longer used, that no longer exists, or that has been replaced by something else.
- The old road had disappeared under grass and heather.
 - Although the old secret police have been abolished, the military police still exist.
 - ...avoiding the corruption and ineffectiveness of the old parties.
6. adjective
You use **old** to refer to something that used to belong to you, or to a person or thing that used to have a particular role in your life.
- I'll make up the bed in your old room.
 - I still have affection for my old school.
 - Mark was heartbroken when Jane returned to her old boyfriend.
7. adjective
An **old** friend , enemy , or rival is someone who has been your friend, enemy, or rival for a long time.
- I called my old friend John Horner.
 - Mr Brownson, I assure you King's an old enemy of mine.

- The French and English are old rivals.
8. adjective
You can use **old** to express affection when talking to or about someone you know .
- Are you all right, old chap?
 - Good old Bergen would do him the favor.
9. any old
10. in the old days
11. the good old days
12. of old

pasture

pastures

Explain

1. variable noun
Pasture is land with grass growing on it for farm animals to eat .
- The cows are out now, grazing in the pasture.
 - ...mountain pastures.
2. pastures new
3. put sth out to pasture
4. put sb out to pasture

orthodox

Explain

1. adjective
Orthodox beliefs , methods , or systems are ones which are accepted or used by most people.

- *Payne gained a reputation for sound, if orthodox, views.*
- *Many of these ideas are now being incorporated into orthodox medical treatment.*
- *...orthodox police methods.*

2. adjective

*If you describe someone as **orthodox** , you mean that they hold the older and more traditional ideas of their religion or party.*

- *...orthodox Jews.*
- *...orthodox communists.*

3. adjective

*The **Orthodox** churches are Christian churches in Eastern Europe which separated from the western church in the eleventh century.*

- *...the Greek Orthodox Church.*

peace

Explain

1. uncountable noun

*If countries or groups involved in a war or violent conflict are discussing **peace** , they are talking to each other in order to try to end the conflict.*

- *Peace talks broke up without agreement last week.*
- *Leaders of some rival factions signed a peace agreement last week.*
- *They hope the treaty will bring peace and stability to the region.*

2. uncountable noun

*If there is **peace** in a country or in the world, there are no wars or violent conflicts going on.*

- *The President spoke of a shared commitment to world peace and economic development.*

- *...the Nobel Peace Prize.*

3. uncountable noun

*If you disapprove of weapons , especially nuclear weapons, you can use **peace** to refer to campaigns and other activities intended to reduce their numbers or stop their use.*

- *Two peace campaigners were accused of causing damage to an F1 11 nuclear bomber.*
- *He campaigned for peace and against the spread of nuclear weapons.*

4. uncountable noun

*If you have **peace** , you are not being disturbed , and you are in calm , quiet surroundings.*

- *All I want is to have some peace and quiet.*
- *One more question and I'll leave you in peace.*

5. uncountable noun

*If you have a feeling of **peace** , you feel contented and calm and not at all worried . You can also say that you are **at peace** .*

- *I had a wonderful feeling of peace and serenity when I saw him.*
- *The peace of the Lord be always with you.*
- *I know you will never be at peace until you have discovered where your brother is.*

6. uncountable noun

*If there is **peace** among a group of people, they live or work together in a friendly way and do not quarrel . You can also say that people live or work **in peace with** each other.*

- *...a period of relative peace in the country's industrial relations.*
- *If you can't live in peace with your little brother then get out of the house.*

7. countable noun

The Peace of a particular place is a treaty or an agreement that was signed there, bringing an end to a war.

- *The Peace of Ryswick was signed in September 1697.*

8. to hold your peace

9. to keep the peace

10. to keep the peace

11. make (one's) peace

12. peace of mind

13. to rest in peace

14. at peace with

plausible

Explain

1. adjective

An explanation or statement that is **plausible** seems likely to be true or valid.

- *A more plausible explanation would seem to be that people are fed up with the Conservative government.*
- *That explanation seems entirely plausible to me.*

2. adjective

If you say that someone is **plausible**, you mean that they seem to be telling the truth and to be sincere and honest.

- *He was so plausible that he conned everybody.*

physicist

physicists

Explain

1. countable noun

A **physicist** is a person who does research connected with physics or who studies physics.

- *...a nuclear physicist.*

previous

Explain

1. adjective

A **previous** event or thing is one that happened or existed before the one that you are talking about.

- *I'm a lot happier than I was in my previous job.*
- *He has no previous convictions.*

2. adjective

You refer to the period of time or the thing immediately before the one that you are talking about as the **previous** one.

- *It was a surprisingly dry day after the rain of the previous week.*
- *He recalled exactly what Bob had told him the previous night.*

physics

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Physics is the scientific study of forces such as heat, light, sound, pressure, gravity, and electricity, and the way that they affect objects.

- *...the laws of physics.*
- *...experiments in particle physics.*

prior

priors

Explain

1. adjective

You use **prior** to indicate that something has already happened , or must happen, before another event takes place.

- He claimed he had no prior knowledge of the protest.
- The Constitution requires the president to seek the prior approval of Congress for military action.

- For the prior year, they reported net income of 1.1million.

2. adjective

A **prior** claim or duty is more important than other claims or duties and needs to be dealt with first.

- The firm I wanted to use had prior commitments.

3. countable noun

A **prior** is a monk who is in charge of a priory or a monk who is the second most important person in a monastery.

4. prior to sth

pope

popes

Explain

1. countable noun

The Pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

- ...the Pope's message to the people.
- ...Pope John Paul II.

rigid

Explain

1. adjective

Laws, rules , or systems that are **rigid** cannot be changed or varied , and are therefore considered to be rather severe.

- Several colleges in our study have rigid rules about student conduct.
- Hospital routines for nurses are very rigid.

2. adjective

If you disapprove of someone because you think they are not willing to change their way of thinking or behaving , you can describe them as **rigid** .

- She was a fairly rigid person who had strong religious views.
- My father is very rigid in his thinking.

3. adjective

A **rigid** substance or object is stiff and does not bend, stretch , or twist easily .

- ...rigid plastic containers.
- These plates are fairly rigid.

4. graded adjective

If someone goes **rigid** , their body becomes very straight and stiff, usually as a result of shock or fear .

- I went rigid with shock.
- Andrew went rigid when he saw a dog, any dog, anywhere.

provision

provisions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **provision of** something is the act of giving it or making it available to people who need or want it.

- The department is responsible for the provision of residential care services.
- ...nursery provision for children with special needs.

2. variable noun

If you make **provision for** something that might happen or that might need to be done , you make arrangements to deal with it.

- Mr King asked if it had ever occurred to her to make provision for her own pension.
- There is no provision for funding performance-related pay rises.

3. uncountable noun

If you make **provision for** someone, you support them financially and make sure that they have the things that they need.

- Special provision should be made for children.
- There are very generous provisions for the mother.

4. countable noun

A **provision** in a law or an agreement is an arrangement which is included in it.

- There was a provision in his contract that would return him two-thirds of his deposit.
- The bill's provision for the sale and purchase of land faces stiff opposition.

5. plural noun

Provisions are supplies of food.

- On board were enough provisions for two weeks.

senior

seniors

Explain

1. adjective

The **senior** people in an organization or profession have the highest and most important jobs .

- ...senior officials in the Israeli government.
- ...the company's senior management.
- Television and radio needed many more women in senior jobs.

2. adjective

If someone is **senior to** you in an organization or profession, they have a higher and more important job than you or they are considered to be superior to you because they have worked there for longer and have more experience . Your **seniors** are the people who are senior to you.

- The position had to be filled by an officer senior to Haig.
- Williams felt himself to be senior to all of them.
- He was described by his seniors as a model officer.

3. singular noun

Senior is used when indicating how much older one person is than another. For example , if someone is ten years your **senior** , they are ten years older than you.

- She became involved with a married man many years her senior.

4. countable noun

Seniors are students in a high school, university, or college who are the oldest and who have reached an advanced level in their studies .

5. adjective

If you take part in a sport at **senior** level, you take part in competitions with adults and people who have reached a high degree of achievement in that sport.

- This will be his fifth international championship and his third at senior level.

6. countable noun

In sports such as golf and tennis, a **senior** is a professional player who is fairly old and who plays in special competitions against other older players.

ridge

ridges

Explain

1. countable noun

A **ridge** is a long, narrow piece of raised land.

2. countable noun

A **ridge** is a raised line on a flat surface.

- ...the bony ridge of the eye socket.

rock

rocks rocking rocked

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Rock is the hard substance which the Earth is made of.

- The hills above the valley are bare rock.
- A little way below the ridge was an outcrop of rock that made a rough shelter.

2. countable noun

A **rock** is a large piece of rock that sticks up out of the ground or the sea, or that has broken away from a mountain or a cliff.

- She sat cross-legged on the rock.
- ...the sound of the sea crashing against the rocks.
- He and two friends were climbing a rock face when they heard cries for help.

3. countable noun

A **rock** is a piece of rock that is small enough for you to pick up.

- She bent down, picked up a rock and threw it into the trees.

4. verb

When something **rocks** or when you **rock** it, it moves slowly and regularly backwards and forwards or from side to side.

- His body rocked from side to side with the train.
- He stood a few moments, rocking back and forwards on his heels.
- She sat on the porch and rocked the baby.

5. verb

If an explosion or an earthquake **rocks** a building or an area, it causes the building or area to shake. You can also say that the building or area **rocks**.

- Three people were injured yesterday when an explosion rocked one of Britain's best known film studios.
- ...a country that's rocked by dozens of earthquakes every year.
- As the buildings rocked under heavy shell-fire, he took refuge in the cellars.

6. verb

If an event or a piece of news **rocks** a group or society, it shocks them or makes them feel less secure .

- His death rocked the fashion business.
- ...the latest scandal to rock the monarchy.
- Wall Street was rocked by the news and shares fell 4.3 per cent by the end of trading.

7. uncountable noun

Rock is loud music with a strong beat that is usually played and sung by a small group of people using instruments such as electric guitars and drums .

- He once told an interviewer that he didn't even like rock music.
- ...a rock concert.
- ...famous rock stars.

8. uncountable noun

Rock is a sweet that is made in long, hard sticks and is often sold in towns by the sea in Britain.

- ...a stick of rock.

9. to be caught between a rock and a hard place

10. on the rocks

11. on the rocks

smooth

smoother smoothest smooths smoothing
smoothed

Explain

1. adjective

A **smooth** surface has no roughness, lumps , or holes.

- ...a rich cream that keeps skin soft and smooth.
- ...a smooth surface such as glass.
- The flagstones beneath their feet were worn smooth by centuries of use.

2. adjective

A **smooth** liquid or mixture has been mixed well so that it has no lumps.

- Continue whisking until the mixture looks smooth and creamy.
- Blend the cornflour to a smooth paste with a little cold water.

3. adjective

If you describe a drink such as wine, whisky , or coffee as **smooth** , you mean that it is not bitter and is pleasant to drink.

- This makes the coffee much smoother.

4. adjective

A **smooth** line or movement has no sudden breaks or changes in direction or speed .

- This exercise is done in one smooth motion.
- ...the smooth curve of the trunk.

5. adjective

A **smooth** ride , flight , or sea crossing is very comfortable because there are no unpleasant movements.

- The active suspension system gives the car a very smooth ride.

6. adjective

You use **smooth** to describe something that is going well and is free of problems or trouble .

- Political hopes for a swift and smooth transition to democracy have been dashed.
- A number of problems marred the smooth running of this event.

7. adjective

If you describe a man as **smooth** , you mean that he is extremely smart , confident , and polite , often in a way that you find rather unpleasant.

- Twelve extremely good-looking, smooth young men have been picked as finalists.
- He was the smoothest and probably the most powerful chief of staff in political memory.

8. verb

If you **smooth** something, you move your hands over its surface to make it smooth and flat.

- She stood up and smoothed down her frock.
- Bardo smoothed his moustache.

9. verb

If you **smooth** something somewhere , you use your hands to spread it there.

- She smoothed the lotion across his shoulder blades.
- His fingers smoothed the hair back from her face.

10. smooth the path/way

11. take the rough with the smooth

season

seasons seasoning seasoned

Explain

1. countable noun

The **seasons** are the main periods into which a year can be divided and which each have their own typical weather conditions.

- Autumn's my favourite season.
- ...the only region of Brazil where all four seasons are clearly defined.
- ...the rainy season.

2. countable noun

You can use **season** to refer to the period during each year when a particular activity or event takes place. For example , the planting **season** is the period when a particular plant or crop is planted.

- ...birds arriving for the breeding season.
- For law students, autumn brings the recruiting season.

3. countable noun

You can use **season** to refer to the period when a particular fruit, vegetable , or other food is ready for eating and is widely available .

- The plum season is about to begin.
- Now British asparagus is in season.

4. countable noun

You can use **season** to refer to a fixed period during each year when a particular sport is played.

- ...the baseball season.
- It is his first race this season.

5. countable noun

A **season** is a period in which a play or show, or a series of plays or shows, is performed in one place.

- ...a season of three new plays.
- ...the Royal Ballet's summer season.

6. countable noun

A **season of** films is several of them shown as a series because they are connected in some way.

- ...a season of films by America's preeminent documentary maker, Ken Burns.

7. countable noun

The holiday or vacation **season** is the time when most people have their holiday.

- ...the peak holiday season.
- There are discos and clubs but these are often closed out of season.

8. verb

If you **season** food with salt, pepper, or spices, you add them to it in order to improve its flavour .

- Season the meat with salt and pepper.
- I believe in seasoning food before putting it on the table.

9. verb

If wood **is seasoned** , it is made suitable for making into furniture or for burning , usually by being allowed to dry out gradually.

- Ensure that new wood has been seasoned.

10. in season

shepherd

shepherds shepherding shepherded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **shepherd** is a person, especially a man, whose job is to look after sheep.

2. verb

If you **are shepherded** somewhere , someone takes you there to make sure that you arrive at the right place safely.

- She was shepherded by her guards up the rear ramp of the aircraft.

spontaneous

Explain

1. adjective

Spontaneous acts are not planned or arranged , but are done because someone suddenly wants to do them.

- Their spontaneous outbursts of song were accompanied by lively music.
- I joined in the spontaneous applause.

2. adjective

A **spontaneous** event happens because of processes within something rather than being caused by things outside it.

- I had another spontaneous miscarriage at around the 16th to 18th week.
- ...a spontaneous explosion.

storage

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you refer to the **storage** of something, you mean that it is kept in a special place until it is needed .

- ...the storage of toxic waste.
- Some of the space will at first be used for storage.
- The collection has been in storage for decades.

2. uncountable noun

Storage is the process of storing data in a computer.

- His task is to ensure the fair use and storage of personal information held on computer.
- ...data-storage devices.

superior

superiors

Explain

1. adjective

If one thing or person is **superior to** another, the first is better than the second .

- We have a relationship infinitely superior to those of many of our friends.
- ...a woman greatly superior to her husband in education and sensitivity.
- Long-term stock market investments have produced superior returns compared with cash deposits.

2. adjective

If you describe something as **superior** , you mean that it is good, and better than other things of the same kind .

- A few years ago it was virtually impossible to find superior quality coffee in local shops.
- Lulu was said to be of very superior intelligence.

3. adjective

A **superior** person or thing is more important than another person or thing in the same organization or system.

- ...negotiations between the mutineers and their superior officers.
- Locally passed laws are of superior authority to those laws passed in the capital.

4. countable noun

Your **superior** in an organization that you work for is a person who has a higher rank than you.

- Other army units are completely surrounded and cut-off from communication with their superiors.
- The company president, and my immediate superior, was the dynamic Harry Stokes.

5. adjective

If you describe someone as **superior** , you disapprove of them because they behave as if they are better, more important, or more intelligent than other people.

- Finch gave a superior smile.
- You can stand there and feel superior as you point and laugh at them.

6. adjective

If one group of people has **superior** numbers to another group, the first has more people than the second, and therefore has an advantage over it.

- The demonstrators fled when they saw the authorities' superior numbers.
- His men were far superior numerically.

7. countable noun

If you describe someone as your **superior** in a particular activity , you mean that they are better than you at that activity.

- Anthony sometimes felt that his mistress was his superior in will-power.
- His rival was probably his superior in comic roles.

substance

substances

Explain

1. countable noun

A **substance** is a solid, powder, liquid, or gas with particular properties.

- Ethylene glycol is a poisonous substance found in antifreeze.
- The substance that's causing the problem comes from the barley.

2. uncountable noun

Substance is the quality of being important or significant.

- It's questionable whether anything of substance has been achieved.
- Syria will attend only if the negotiations deal with issues of substance.

3. singular noun

The substance of what someone says or writes is the main thing that they are trying to say.

- The substance of his discussions doesn't really matter.

4. uncountable noun

If you say that something has no **substance**, you mean that it is not true.

- There is no substance in any of these allegations.

5. of substance

unanimous

Explain

1. adjective

When a group of people are **unanimous**, they all agree about something or all vote for the same thing.

- Editors were unanimous in their condemnation of the proposals.
- They were unanimous that Chortlesby Manor must be preserved.

2. adjective

A **unanimous** vote, decision, or agreement is one in which all the people involved agree.

- ...the unanimous vote for Petra as President.
- Their decision was unanimous.

thing

things

Explain

1. countable noun

You can use **thing** to refer to any object, feature, or event when you cannot, need not, or do not want to refer to it more precisely.

- 'What's that thing in the middle of the fountain?'—'Some kind of statue, I guess.'
- She was in the middle of clearing the break-fast things.
- If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- A strange thing happened.
- We get blamed for all kinds of things.

2. countable noun

Thing is used in lists and descriptions to give examples or to increase the range of what you are referring to.

- These are genetic disorders. They are things like muscular dystrophy and haemophilia.
- The Earth is made mainly of iron and silicon and things like that.
- Keep big things such as bikes or iPods for birthdays or Christmas.
- You can spot them fairly easily because of their short haircuts and things.

3. countable noun

Thing is often used after an adjective, where it would also be possible just to use the adjective. For example, you can say **it's a different thing** instead of **it's different**.

- Of course, literacy isn't the same thing as intelligence.
- To be a parent is a terribly difficult thing.
- Perhaps it's a good thing that Dizzy retired.

4. singular noun

Thing is often used instead of the pronouns 'anything,' or 'everything' in order to emphasize what you are saying.

- It isn't going to solve a single thing.
- Don't you worry about a thing.
- 'It's all here,' she said. 'Every damn thing.'

5. countable noun

Thing is used in expressions such as **such a thing** or **things like that**, especially in negative statements, in order to emphasize the bad or difficult situation you are referring back to.

- I don't believe he would tell Leo such a thing.

- 'Are you accusing me of being a thief?'—'I have done no such thing, Tony.'

- How do you actually go about discovering a thing like that?

- I'm trying to cope. These things happen. You have to cope.

6. countable noun

You can use **thing** to refer in a vague way to a situation, activity, or idea, especially when you want to suggest that it is not very important.

- I'm a bit unsettled tonight. This war thing's upsetting me.
- These folks clearly take this ballroom thing very seriously.
- ...the man who had spoken dismissively of the 'vision thing' when running for the presidency in 1988.

7. countable noun

You can use **thing** when you are referring to something that you are uncertain or vague about, after mentioning something that it resembles or could possibly be.

- She'd actually taken it home and she put it in this jar thing.
- The captain of the submarine has got this periscope thing.

8. countable noun

You often use **thing** to indicate to the person you are addressing that you are about to mention something important, or something that you particularly want them to know.

- One thing I am sure of was that she was scared.
- The first thing parents want to know is: will the baby survive?

- The funny thing is that the rest of us have known that for years.
 - The most important thing to remember about fish is to buy it really fresh.
9. countable noun
Thing is often used to refer back to something that has just been mentioned, either to emphasize it or to give more information about it.
- I never wanted to be normal. It was not a thing I ever thought desirable.
 - The Captain stretched his left leg on one of the empty chairs. He knew it was not a polite thing to do.
10. countable noun
A **thing** is a physical object that is considered as having no life of its own.
- It's not a thing, Beauchamp. It's a human being!
11. countable noun
Thing is used to refer to something, especially a physical object, when you want to express contempt or anger towards it.
- This thing's virtually useless.
 - They're armed with sub-machine-guns or machine-pistols or whatever you call those things.
 - Turn that thing off!
12. countable noun
You can call a person or an animal a particular **thing** when you want to mention a particular quality that they have and express your feelings towards them, usually affectionate feelings.
- You really are quite a clever little thing.
 - Oh you lucky thing!
13. plural noun
Your **things** are your clothes or possessions.
- Sara told him to take all his things and not to return.
 - Is there anything you'd like to borrow, before your own things are unpacked?
14. plural noun
Things can refer to the situation or life in general and the way it is changing or affecting you.
- Everyone agrees things are getting better.
 - A change of ownership might improve things.
 - How are things going?
15. plural noun
Things can refer to a particular aspect of life, such as the physical or spiritual aspect.
- ...a movement away from the things of this world to the things of the spirit.
 - I think I'm more aware now of some spiritual things and I do believe in good and evil.
16. countable noun
You can refer to something that is too frightening, strange, or horrible to describe clearly as a **thing**.
- ...John W. Campbell, author of 'The Thing From Another World.'
17. singular noun
If you say that something is **the thing**, you mean that it is fashionable or popular.
- I feel under pressure to go out and get drunk because it's the thing to do.
 - They were obviously of the opinion that his taste was not quite the thing.

18. *in all things*

19. *be all things to all men/people*

20. *do the decent/democratic/right/wrong/honourable thing*

21. *the done thing*

22. *first thing*

23. *have a thing about*

24. *it is a good/bad thing to*

25. *make a thing about/out of*

26. *be one thing*

27. *for one thing*

28. *one thing and another*

29. *it is just/simply one of those things*

30. *one thing led to another*

31. *do your own thing*

32. *a thing of the past*

33. *seeing/hearing things*

34. *no such thing*

35. *the thing is*

36. *just the thing/the very thing*

37. *a thing or two*

upward

Explain

1. adjective

An **upward** movement or look is directed towards a higher place or a higher level.

- She started once again on the steep upward climb.
- She gave him a quick, upward look, then lowered her eyes.

2. adjective

If you refer to an **upward** trend or an **upward** spiral, you mean that something is increasing in quantity or price.

- ...the Army's concern that the upward trend in the numbers avoiding military service may continue.
- Oil prices continued an upward swing this morning.
- ...if prices continue their inexorably upward spiral.

uniform

uniforms

Explain

1. variable noun

A **uniform** is a special set of clothes which some people, for example soldiers or the police, wear to work in and which some children wear at school.

- The town police wear dark blue uniforms and flat caps.
- Philippe was in uniform, wearing a pistol holster on his belt.

- *She will probably take great pride in wearing school uniform.*

2. countable noun

*You can refer to the particular style of clothing which a group of people wear to show they belong to a group or a movement as their **uniform** .*

- *Mark's is the uniform of the young male traveller—green army trousers, T-shirt and shirt.*

3. adjective

*If something is **uniform** , it does not vary , but is even and regular throughout.*

- *Chips should be cut into uniform size and thickness.*
- *The results after applying the fake tan were uniform.*
- *The price rises will not be uniform across the country.*

4. adjective

*If you describe a number of things as **uniform** , you mean that they are all the same.*

- *Along each wall stretched uniform green metal filing cabinets.*
- *Shrimp are raised in long uniform ponds, frozen in the nearby packing plant and shipped north.*

voluntary

Explain

1. adjective

Voluntary actions or activities are done because someone chooses to do them and not because they have been forced to do them.

- *Attention is drawn to a special voluntary course in Commercial French.*

- *The scheme, due to begin next month, will be voluntary.*

2. adjective

Voluntary work is done by people who are not paid for it, but who do it because they want to do it.

- *In her spare time she does voluntary work.*
- *He'd been working at the local hostel on a voluntary basis.*

3. adjective

A **voluntary** worker is someone who does work without being paid for it, because they want to do it.

- *Apna Arts has achieved more with voluntary workers in three years than most organisations with paid workers have achieved in ten.*
- *We depend solely upon our voluntary helpers.*

4. adjective

A **voluntary** organization is controlled and organized by the people who have chosen to work for it, often without being paid, rather than receiving help or money from the government.

- *Some local authorities and voluntary organizations also run workshops for people with disabilities.*
- *It has been largely through the voluntary sector that the needs of victims have been met.*
- *...a voluntary hostel for ex-offenders.*

usage

usages

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Usage is the way in which words are actually used in particular contexts , especially with regard to their meanings .

- The word 'undertaker' had long been in common usage.
- He was a stickler for the correct usage of English.

2. countable noun

A **usage** is a meaning that a word has or a way in which it can be used.

- It's very definitely a usage which has come over to Britain from America.

3. uncountable noun

Usage is the degree to which something is used or the way in which it is used.

- Parts of the motor wore out because of constant usage.
- If your water usage is very small, it may be worthwhile opting for a meter.

worldwide

Explain

1. adverb

If something exists or happens **worldwide** , it exists or happens throughout the world. **Worldwide** is also an adjective .

- His books have sold more than 20 million copies worldwide.
- Worldwide, an enormous amount of research effort goes into military technology.
- Today, doctors are fearing a worldwide epidemic.

use

uses using used

Explain

1. verb

If you **use** something, you do something with it in order to do a job or to achieve a particular result or effect .

- Trim off the excess pastry using a sharp knife.
- He had simply used a little imagination.
- Officials used loud hailer to call for calm.
- The show uses Zondo's trial and execution as its framework.

2. verb

If you **use** a supply of something, you finish it so that none of it is left . **Use up** means the same as use1 .

- You used all the ice cubes and didn't put the ice trays back.
- They've never had anything spare—they've always used it all.
- It isn't them who use up the world's resources.
- We were breathing really fast, and using the air up quickly.

3. verb

If someone **uses** drugs, they take drugs regularly, especially illegal ones.

- He denied he had used drugs.

4. verb

You can say that someone **uses** the toilet or bathroom as a polite way of saying that they go to the toilet.

- Wash your hands after using the toilet.

- He asked whether he could use my bathroom.

5. verb

If you **use** a particular word or expression, you say or write it, because it has the meaning that you want to express .

- The judge liked using the word 'wicked' of people he had sent to jail.
- When Johnson talks about cuts, he uses words like 'target price' and 'efficiency payments'.

6. verb

If you **use** a particular name, you call yourself by that name, especially when it is not the name that you usually call yourself.

- Now I use a false name if I'm meeting people for the first time.
- I didn't want to use my married name because we've split.

7. verb

If you say that someone **uses** people, you disapprove of them because they make others do things for them in order to benefit or gain some advantage from it, and not because they care about the other people.

- Be careful she's not just using you.
- Why do I have the feeling I'm being used again?

Explain

1. adjective

A **young** person, animal, or plant has not lived or existed for very long and is not yet mature .

The young are people who are young.

- In Scotland, young people can marry at 16.
- You weren't so very young when she died; you were old enough to remember.
- ...a field of young barley.
- He played with his younger brother.
- The association is advising pregnant women, the very young and the elderly to avoid such foods.

2. adjective

You use **young** to describe a time when a person or thing was young.

- In her younger days my mother had been a successful fashionwear saleswoman.

3. adjective

Someone who is **young** in appearance or behaviour looks or behaves as if they are young.

- I was twenty-three, I suppose, and young for my age.
- He seemed to me very young and very lonely.

4. plural noun

The **young** of an animal are its babies .

- The hen may not be able to feed its young.

young

younger youngest

waiter

waiters

Explain

1. countable noun

A **waiter** is a man who works in a restaurant, serving people with food and drink .

conquest

conquests

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Conquest is the act of conquering a country or group of people.

- He had led the conquest of southern Poland in 1939.
- After the Norman Conquest the forest became a royal hunting preserve.
- Jerusalem has seen endless conquests and occupations.

2. countable noun

Conquests are lands that have been conquered in war .

- He had realized that Britain could not have peace unless she returned at least some of her former conquests.

3. countable noun

If someone makes a **conquest** , they succeed in attracting and usually sleeping with another person. You usually use **conquest** when you want to indicate that this relationship is not important to the person concerned .

- Despite his conquests, he remains lonely and isolated.
- ...men who boast about their sexual conquests to all their friends.

4. countable noun

You can refer to the person that someone has succeeded in attracting as their **conquest** .

- Pushkin was a womaniser whose conquests included everyone from prostitutes to princesses.

5. singular noun

The conquest of something such as a problem is success in ending it or dealing with it.

- The conquest of inflation has been the Government's overriding economic priority for nearly 15 years.
- ...the conquest of cancer.

alternate

alternates alternating alternated

Explain

1. verb

When you **alternate** two things, you keep using one then the other. When one thing **alternates with** another, the first regularly occurs after the other.

- Her aggressive moods alternated with gentle or more co-operative states.
- The three acts will alternate as headliners throughout the tour.
- Now you just alternate layers of that mixture and eggplant.
- The band alternated romantic love songs with bouncy dance numbers.
- ...an imaginative novel, with alternating chapters presenting each partner's point of view.

2. adjective

Alternate actions, events , or processes regularly occur after each other.

- They were streaked with alternate bands of colour.

3. adjective

If something happens on **alternate** days , it happens on one day, then happens on every second day after that. In the same way , something can happen in **alternate** weeks , years , or other periods of time.

- Lesley had agreed to Jim going skiing in alternate years.

4. adjective

You use **alternate** to describe a plan , idea , or system which is different from the one already in operation and can be used instead of it.

- His group was forced to turn back and take an alternate route.
- ...alternate forms of medical treatment.

5. countable noun

An **alternate** is a person or thing that replaces another, and can act or be used instead of them.

- In most jurisdictions, twelve jurors and two alternates are chosen.
- ... meats and meat alternates.

6. adjective

Alternate is sometimes used, especially in American English , instead of alternative in meanings 2, 3, 4, and 5.

- ...an alternate lifestyle.

cream

creams creaming creamed

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Cream is a thick yellowish-white liquid taken from milk. You can use it in cooking or put it on fruit or desserts .

- ...strawberries and cream.

2. uncountable noun

Cream is used in the names of soups that contain cream or milk.

- ...cream of mushroom soup.

3. variable noun

A **cream** is a substance that you rub into your skin, for example to keep it soft or to heal or protect it.

- Gently apply the cream to the affected areas.
- ...sun protection creams.

4. colour

Something that is **cream** is yellowish-white in colour.

- ...cream silk stockings.
- ...a cream-coloured Persian cat.

5. singular noun

Cream is used in expressions such as **the cream of society** and **the cream of British athletes** to refer to the best people or things of a particular kind .

- The Ball was attended by the cream of Hollywood society.
- ...the cream of Chicago's 200 jazz and blues clubs.

ample

amplifier amplest

Explain

1. adjective

If there is an **ample** amount of something, there is enough of it and usually some extra .

- There'll be ample opportunity to relax, swim and soak up some sun.
- The design of the ground floor created ample space for a good-sized kitchen.

2. graded adjective

If you describe someone's figure as **ample** , you mean that they are large in a pleasant or attractive way.

- ...a young mother with a baby resting against her ample bosom.

credential

Explain

1. noun

1. 2.

2. adjective

3.

busy

busier busiest busies busying busied

Explain

1. adjective

When you are **busy** , you are working hard or concentrating on a task , so that you are not free to do anything else.

- What is it? I'm busy.
- They are busy preparing for a hectic day's activity on Saturday.
- Rachel said she would be too busy to come.

- Phil Martin is an exceptionally busy man.

2. adjective

A **busy** time is a period of time during which you have a lot of things to do.

- It'll have to wait. This is our busiest time.
- Even with her busy schedule she finds time to watch TV.
- I had a busy day and was rather tired.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **busy** thinking or worrying about something, you mean that it is taking all their attention , often to such an extent that they are unable to think about anything else.

- I'm so busy worrying about all the wrong things that I'm not focusing on the right ones.
- Most people are too busy with their own troubles to give much help.

4. verb

If you **busy yourself** with something, you occupy yourself by dealing with it.

- He busied himself with the camera.
- She busied herself getting towels ready.
- For a while Kathryn busied herself in the kitchen.

5. adjective

A **busy** place is full of people who are doing things or moving about.

- The Strand is one of London's busiest and most affluent streets.
- The ward was busy and Amy hardly had time to talk.

6. adjective

When a telephone line is **busy** , you cannot make your call because the line is already being used by someone else.

- I tried to reach him, but the line was busy.

destiny

destinies

Explain

1. countable noun

A person's **destiny** is everything that happens to them during their life, including what will happen in the future, especially when it is considered to be controlled by someone or something else.

- We are masters of our own destiny.
- It is my destiny one day to be king.

2. uncountable noun

Destiny is the force which some people believe controls the things that happen to you in your life.

- Is it destiny that brings people together, or is it accident?

cloudy

cloudier cloudiest

Explain

1. adjective

If it is **cloudy**, there are a lot of clouds in the sky.

- ...a windy, cloudy day.

2. adjective

A **cloudy** liquid is less clear than it should be.

3. graded adjective

Ideas, opinions, or issues that are **cloudy** are confused or uncertain.

- ...an absurdly cloudy political debate.
- The legal position is very cloudy.

detective

detectives

Explain

1. countable noun

A **detective** is someone whose job is to discover what has happened in a crime or other situation and to find the people involved. Some detectives work in the police force and others work privately.

- Detectives are appealing for witnesses who may have seen anything suspicious.
- She hired a private detective in an attempt to find her daughter.

2. title noun

In Britain '**detective**' is used before words such as 'constable' or 'sergeant', and in the U.S. the word '**detective**' is used on its own, to indicate that a police officer is a member of the department concerned with investigating crimes.

- ...Detective Inspector Ian Mosley.
- ...Detective Nardosa of the New York City Police Department.

3. adjective

A **detective** novel or story is one in which a detective tries to solve a crime.

4. detective work

cooperative

Explain

1. adjective

1. 2. 3.

2. noun

4. 5.

diamond

diamonds

Explain

1. variable noun

A **diamond** is a hard, bright , precious stone which is clear and colourless. Diamonds are used in jewellery and for cutting very hard substances .

- ...a pair of diamond earrings.
- ...a sphere made of diamond without impurity or flaw.

2. plural noun

Diamonds are jewellery such as necklaces and rings which have diamonds set into them.

- Nicole loves wearing her diamonds, even with jeans and a white T-shirt.

3. countable noun

A **diamond** is a shape with four straight sides of equal length where the opposite angles are the same, but none of the angles is equal to 90: .

- He formed his hands into the shape of a diamond.

4. uncountable noun

Diamonds is one of the four suits of cards in a pack of playing cards. Each card in the suit is marked with one or more red symbols in the shape of a diamond. A **diamond** is a playing card of this suit.

- He drew the seven of diamonds.
- ...win the ace of clubs and play a diamond.

5. countable noun

In baseball , the **diamond** is the diamond-shaped area of the playing field between the four bases.

cosmic

Explain

1. adjective

Cosmic means occurring in, or coming from, the part of space that lies outside Earth and its atmosphere .

- ...cosmic radiation.
- ...cosmic debris.

2. adjective

Cosmic means belonging or relating to the universe.

- ...the cosmic laws governing our world.
- ...humanity's place in the cosmic order of things.

edition

editions

Explain

1. countable noun

An **edition** is a particular version of a book, magazine , or newspaper that is printed at one time.

- A paperback edition is now available at bookshops.

2. countable noun

An **edition** is the total number of copies of a particular book or newspaper that are printed at one time.

- The second edition was published only in America.

3. countable noun

An **edition** is a single television or radio programme that is one of a series about a particular subject .

- They appeared on an edition of BBC2's Arena.

dangerous

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **dangerous** , it is able or likely to hurt or harm you.

- It's a dangerous stretch of road.
- ...dangerous drugs.
- It's dangerous to jump to early conclusions.

example

examples

Explain

1. countable noun

An **example of** something is a particular situation , object, or person which shows that what is being claimed is true .

- The doctors gave numerous examples of patients being expelled from hospital.
- Listed below are just a few examples of some of the family benefits available.

2. countable noun

An **example of** a particular class of objects or styles is something that has many of the typical features of such a class or style, and that you consider clearly represents it.

- Symphonies 103 and 104 stand as perfect examples of early symphonic construction.
- The plaque illustrated in Figure 1 is an example of his work at this time.

3. for example

4. countable noun

If you refer to a person or their behaviour as an **example to** other people, you mean that he or she behaves in a good or correct way that other people should copy .

- He is a model professional and an example to the younger lads.
- Their example shows us what we are all capable of.

5. countable noun

In a dictionary entry , an **example** is a phrase or sentence which shows how a particular word is used.

- The examples are unique to this dictionary.

6. follow someone's example

7. make an example of someone

8. set an example

decisive

Explain

1. adjective

If a fact , action, or event is **decisive** , it makes it certain that there will be a particular result.

- ...his decisive victory in the presidential elections.
- The election campaign has now entered its final, decisive phase.
- The meeting between Molotov, Bidault and Bevin was decisive.

2. adjective

If someone is **decisive** , they have or show an ability to make quick decisions in a difficult or complicated situation .

- He should give way to a more imaginative, more decisive leader.

exception

exceptions

Explain

1. countable noun

An **exception** is a particular thing, person, or situation that is not included in a general statement, judgment, or rule.

- Few guitarists can sing as well as they can play; Eddie, however, is an exception.
- There were no floral offerings at the ceremony, with the exception of a single red rose.
- The law makes no exceptions.
- With few exceptions, guests are booked for week-long visits.

2. no exception

3. the exception that proves the rule

4. take exception to something

5. with the exception of

6. without exception

diverse

Explain

1. adjective

If a group or range of things is **diverse**, it is made up of a wide variety of things.

- ...shops selling a diverse range of gifts.
- Society is now much more diverse than ever before.

2. adjective

Diverse people or things are very different from each other.

- Jones has a much more diverse and perhaps younger audience.

fate

fates

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Fate is a power that some people believe controls and decides everything that happens, in a way that cannot be prevented or changed. You can also refer to **the fates**.

- I see no use quarrelling with fate.
- ...the fickleness of fate.
- It was just one of those times when you wonder whether the fates conspire against you.

2. countable noun

A person's or thing's **fate** is what happens to them.

- The Russian Parliament will hold a special session later this month to decide his fate.
- He seems for a moment to be again holding the fate of the country in his hands.
- The Casino, where she had often danced, had suffered a similar fate.
- ...the terrible fate awaiting humanity.

3. to seal someone's fate

faithful

faithfuls

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **faithful to** a person, organization , idea , or activity remains firm in their belief in them or support for them. **The faithful** are people who are faithful to someone or something.

- She had been faithful to her promise to guard this secret.
- Older Americans are among this country's most faithful voters.
- He spends his time making speeches at factories or gatherings of the Party faithful.

2. adjective

Someone who is **faithful to** their husband , wife , or lover does not have a sexual relationship with anyone else.

- She insisted that she had remained faithful to her husband.
- I'm very faithful when I love someone.

3. plural noun

The faithful are the group of people who believe in a particular religion .

- The faithful revered him then as a prophet.

4. adjective

A **faithful** account , translation , or copy of something represents or reproduces the original accurately.

- Colin Welland's screenplay is faithful to the novel.
- ...faithful copies of household items used in the mid-1800s.

5. old faithful

freight

freights freighting freighted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Freight is the movement of goods by lorries , trains , ships , or aeroplanes .

- France derives 16

2. uncountable noun

Freight is goods that are transported by lorries, trains, ships, or aeroplanes.

- ...26 tons of freight.

- 90

3. verb

When goods **are freighted** , they are transported in large quantities over a long distance .

- From these ports the grain is freighted down to Addis Ababa.

fat

fatter fattest fats

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that a person or animal is **fat** , you mean that they have a lot of flesh on their body and that they weigh too much. You usually use the word **fat** when you think that this is a bad thing.

- I could eat what I liked without getting fat.
- After five minutes, the fat woman in the seat in front of me was asleep.

2. uncountable noun

Fat is the extra flesh that animals and humans have under their skin, which is used to store energy and to help keep them warm .

- Because you're not burning calories, everything you eat turns to fat.

3. variable noun

Fat is a solid or liquid substance obtained from animals or vegetables, which is used in cooking.

- When you use oil or fat for cooking, use as little as possible.
- ...vegetable fats, such as coconut oil and palm oil.

4. variable noun

Fat is a substance contained in foods such as meat , cheese , and butter which forms an energy store in your body.

- An easy way to cut the amount of fat in your diet is to avoid eating red meats.
- Most low-fat yogurts are about 40 calories per 100g.

5. adjective

A **fat** object, especially a book, is very thick or wide .

- ...'Europe in Figures', a fat book published on September 22nd.
- He took out his fat wallet and peeled off some notes.

6. adjective

A **fat** profit or fee is a large one.

- They are set to make a big fat profit.

7. fat chance

8. grow fat

9. a fat lot of good/use/help

friend

friends friending friended

Explain

1. countable noun

A **friend** is someone who you know well and like, but who is not related to you.

- I had a long talk about this with my best friend.
- She never was a close friend of mine.
- ...Sara's old friend, Ogden.

2. plural noun

If you are **friends with** someone, you are their friend and they are yours.

- I still wanted to be friends with Alison.
- We remained good friends.
- Sally and I became friends.

3. plural noun

The **friends of** a country, cause, organization , or a famous politician are the people and organizations who help and support them.

- ...the friends of capitalism.
- ...The Friends of Birmingham Royal Ballet.

4. countable noun

If one country refers to another as a **friend** , they mean that the other country is not an enemy of theirs.

- Do Italy's friends and partners have to accept the situation?

5. to make friends

6. verb

If you **friend** someone, you ask them to be your friend on a social media website, so that you can see each other's posts .

- People you have friended on Facebook could be complete strangers in real life.
- He friended dozens of other graduates of his college.

foul

fouler foulest fouls fouling fouled

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **foul** , you mean it is dirty and smells or tastes unpleasant.

- ...foul polluted water.
- The smell was quite foul.

2. adjective

Foul language is offensive and contains swear words or rude words.

- He was sent off for using foul language in a match last Sunday.
- He had a foul mouth.

3. adjective

If someone has a **foul** temper or is in a **foul** mood , they become angry or violent very suddenly and easily .

- Collins was in a foul mood even before the interviews began.

4. adjective

Foul weather is unpleasant, windy , and stormy .

5. verb

If a place **is fouled** by someone or something, they make it dirty.

- Two oil-related accidents have fouled the ocean and the skies there.

6. verb

If an animal **fouls** a place, it drops faeces onto the ground.

- It is an offence to let your dog foul a foot-path.

7. verb

If a machine or vehicle **fouls** part of its mechanism or if something such as a rope **fouls** the mechanism, the mechanism can no longer work properly because something has become twisted or knotted around it.

- The freighter fouled its propeller in fishing nets.

8. verb

In a game or sport, if a player **fouls** another player, they touch them or block them in a way which is not allowed according to the rules.

- He was sent off for fouling the striker.

9. countable noun

A **foul** is an act in a game or sport that is not allowed according to the rules. **Foul** is also an adjective .

- He has committed more fouls than any other player this season.
- ...a foul tackle.

10. cry foul

11. by fair means or foul

12. to fall foul of

gold

golds

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Gold is a valuable , yellow-coloured metal that is used for making jewellery and ornaments , and as an international currency .

- ...a sapphire set in gold.
- The price of gold was going up.
- ...gold coins.

2. uncountable noun

Gold is jewellery and other things that are made of gold.

- We handed over all our gold and money.

3. colour

Something that is **gold** is a bright yellow colour, and is often shiny .

- I'd been wearing Michel's black and gold shirt.

4. variable noun

A **gold** is the same as a gold medal .

- His ambition was to win gold.
- This Saturday the British star is going for gold and a new world record.

5. good as gold

6. a heart of gold

7. pot of gold

fruitful

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **fruitful** produces good and useful results.

- We had a long, happy, fruitful relationship.

- The talks had been fruitful, but much remained to be done.

2. adjective

Fruitful land or trees produce a lot of crops .

- ...a landscape that was fruitful and lush.

imperative

imperatives

Explain

1. adjective

If it is **imperative** that something is done , that thing is extremely important and must be done.

- It was imperative that he act as naturally as possible.
- That's why it is imperative to know what your rights are at such a time.
- The events of the past few days make it imperative for her to act.

2. countable noun

An **imperative** is something that is extremely important and must be done.

- The most important political imperative is to limit the number of U.S. casualties.
- ...the needs of those unable to respond to the imperatives of an enterprise culture.

3. singular noun

In grammar , a clause that is in **the imperative** , or in **the imperative** mood, contains the base form of a verb and usually has no subject . Examples are ' Go away ' and ' Please be careful '. Clauses of this kind are typically used to tell someone to do something.

4. countable noun

An **imperative** is a verb in the base form that is used, usually without a subject, in an imperative clause.

glorious

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **glorious** is very beautiful and impressive .

- ...a glorious rainbow in the air.
- She had missed the glorious blooms of the Mediterranean spring.
- ...a glorious Edwardian opera house.

2. adjective

If you describe something as **glorious** , you are emphasizing that it is wonderful and it makes you feel very happy .

- The win revived glorious memories of his championship-winning days.
- We opened the windows and let in the glorious evening air.

3. adjective

A **glorious** career , victory , or occasion involves great fame or success .

- Harrison had a glorious career spanning more than six decades.
- Her future could be more glorious even than her past.

4. adjective

Glorious weather is hot and sunny .

- I got dressed and emerged into glorious sunshine.
- The sun was out again, and it was a glorious day.

lateral

Explain

1. adjective

Lateral means relating to the sides of something, or moving in a sideways direction .

- McKinnon estimated the lateral movement of the bridge to be between four and six inches.

initiative

initiatives

Explain

1. countable noun

An **initiative** is an important act or statement that is intended to solve a problem .

- Government initiatives to help young people have been inadequate.
- There's talk of a new peace initiative.

2. singular noun

In a fight or contest , if you have **the initiative** , you are in a better position than your opponents to decide what to do next .

- We have the initiative; we intend to keep it.
- He paused enough to consider the options but never so long as to lose the initiative.

3. uncountable noun

If you have **initiative** , you have the ability to decide what to do next and to do it, without needing other people to tell you what to do.

- She was disappointed by his lack of initiative.
- ...workers who are able to sort out problems on their own initiative.

4. take the initiative

levy

levies levying levied

Explain

1. countable noun

A **levy** is a sum of money that you have to pay , for example as a tax to the government .

- ...an annual motorway levy on all drivers.

2. verb

If a government or organization **levies** a tax or other sum of money, it demands it from people or organizations.

- They levied religious taxes on Christian commercial transactions.
- Taxes should not be levied without the authority of Parliament.

- The New York Times has a legitimate claim to be a national newspaper.

3. adjective

A **legitimate** child is one whose parents were married before he or she was born.

- We only married in order that the child should be legitimate.

4. verb

To **legitimate** something means the same as to legitimize it.

- We want to legitimate this process by passing a law.

limb

limbs

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **limbs** are your arms and legs.

- She would be able to stretch out her cramped limbs and rest for a few hours.

2. countable noun

The **limbs** of a tree are its branches.

- This entire rickety structure was hanging from the limb of an enormous leafy tree.

3. out on a limb

4. tear sb limb from limb

legitimate

legitimizes legitimizing legitimated

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **legitimate** is acceptable according to the law.

- The French government has condemned the coup in Haiti and has demanded the restoration of the legitimate government.
- The government will not seek to disrupt the legitimate business activities of the defendant.

2. adjective

If you say that something such as a feeling or claim is **legitimate** , you think that it is reasonable and justified .

- That's a perfectly legitimate fear.

metric

Explain

1. adjective

Metric means relating to the metric system.

- *Around 180,000 metric tons of food aid is required.*
- *Converting metric measurements to U.S. equivalents is easy.*

lung

lungs

Explain

1. countable noun
*Your **lungs** are the two organs inside your chest which fill with air when you breathe in.*

military

militaries

Explain

1. adjective
***Military** means relating to the armed forces of a country.*
 - *Military action may become necessary.*
 - *The president is sending in almost 20,000 military personnel to help with the relief efforts.*
 - *...last year's military coup.*
2. adjective
***Military** means relating to or belonging to the army, rather than to the navy or the air force.*
 - *The attack has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces.*
3. countable noun
***The military** are the armed forces of a country, especially officers of high rank .*

- *The bombing has been far more widespread than the military will admit.*
- *Did you serve in the military?*

4. adjective

***Military** means well-organized , controlled, or neat , in a way that is typical of a soldier.*

- *Your working day will need to be organized with military precision.*
- *He has a military bearing, never failing to carry himself erect.*

metal

metals

Explain

1. variable noun
***Metal** is a hard substance such as iron, steel, gold, or lead.*
 - *...pieces of furniture in wood, metal and glass.*
 - *He hit his head against a metal bar.*

minus

minuses

Explain

1. conjunction
*You use **minus** to show that one number or quantity is being subtracted from another.*
 - *One minus one is zero.*
 - *They've been promised their full July salary minus the hardship payment.*

2. adjective

Minus before a number or quantity means that the number or quantity is less than zero.

- The aircraft was subjected to temperatures of minus 65 degrees and plus 120 degrees.

3. Teachers use **minus** in grading work in schools and colleges . ' B minus' is not as good as 'B', but is a better grade than 'C'.

- I'm giving him a B minus.

4. preposition

To be **minus** something means not to have that thing.

- The film company collapsed, leaving Chris jobless and minus his life savings.

5. countable noun

A **minus** is a disadvantage.

- The minuses far outweigh that possible gain.
- The plusses and minuses were about equal.
- None of these minus points will have been mentioned.

6. plus or minus

- Players should be allowed to earn money from advertising.

- She probably had more money but she didn't spend it.

- ...discounts and money saving offers.

2. plural noun

Monies is used to refer to several separate sums of money that form part of a larger amount that is received or spent .

- We drew up a schedule of payments for the rest of the monies owed.

- ...the investment and management of monies by pension funds.

3. to have money to burn

4. in the money

5. make money

6. to put your money where your mouth is

7. the smart money

8. money talks

9. to throw money at something

10. to throw good money after bad

11. (get your) money's worth

money

monies moneys

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Money is the coins or bank notes that you use to buy things, or the sum that you have in a bank account .

- A lot of the money that you pay at the cinema goes back to the film distributors.

nephew

nephews

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **nephew** is the son of their sister or brother.

- I am planning a 25th birthday party for my nephew.

multiple

multiples

Explain

1. adjective

You use **multiple** to describe things that consist of many parts, involve many people, or have many uses.

- He died of multiple injuries.
- The most common multiple births are twins, two babies born at the same time.

2. countable noun

If one number is a **multiple of** a smaller number, it can be exactly divided by that smaller number.

- Their numerical system, derived from the Babylonians, was based on multiples of the number six.

3. countable noun

A **multiple** or a **multiple store** is a shop with a lot of branches in different towns.

- It made it almost impossible for the smaller retailer to compete against the multiples.

niece

nieces

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **niece** is the daughter of their sister or brother.

- ...his niece from America, the daughter of his eldest sister.

muscular

Explain

1. adjective

Muscular means involving or affecting your muscles.

- As a general rule, all muscular effort is enhanced by breathing in as the effort is made.
- Early symptoms include anorexia, muscular weakness and fatigue.

2. adjective

If a person or their body is **muscular**, they are very fit and strong, and have firm muscles which are not covered with a lot of fat.

- Like most female athletes, she was lean and muscular.
- ...his tanned muscular legs.

order

Explain

1. phrase

If you do something **in order to** achieve a particular thing or **in order that** something can happen, you do it because you want to achieve that thing.

- Most schools are extremely unwilling to cut down on staff in order to cut costs.
- ...asking them to risk their lives in order that the rest of us can sleep better.

2. phrase

If someone must be in a particular situation **in order to** achieve something they want, they cannot achieve that thing if they are not in that situation.

- We need to get rid of the idea that we must be liked all the time in order to be worthwhile.
- They need hostages in order to bargain with the government.

3. phrase

If something must happen **in order for** something else to happen, the second thing cannot happen if the first thing does not happen.

- In order for our muscles to work efficiently they need oxygen, which is provided by the lungs.

nominal

Explain

1. adjective

You use **nominal** to indicate that someone or something is supposed to have a particular identity or status, but in reality does not have it.

- As he was still not allowed to run a company, his partner became its nominal head.
- I was brought up a nominal Christian.

2. adjective

A **nominal** price or sum of money is very small in comparison with the real cost or value of the thing that is being bought or sold.

- I am prepared to sell my shares at a nominal price.
- All the ferries carry bicycles free or for a nominal charge.

3. adjective

In economics, the **nominal** value, rate, or level of something is the one expressed in terms of current prices or figures, without taking into account general changes in prices that take place over time.

- Inflation would be lower and so nominal rates would be rather more attractive in real terms.
- In 1990 personal incomes grew a nominal 6.8 per cent.

ownership

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Ownership of something is the state of owning it.

- They decided to relax their rules on the foreign ownership of their airlines.
- ...the growth of home ownership in Britain.
- He said that anyone trying to export goods without proof of ownership would have them seized.

numerous

Explain

1. adjective

If people or things are **numerous**, they exist or are present in large numbers.

- Sex crimes were just as numerous as they are today.
- Despite numerous attempts to diet, her weight soared.

plate

plates

Explain

1. countable noun

A **plate** is a round or oval flat dish that is used to hold food. A **plate of** food is the amount of food on the plate.

- Anita pushed her plate away; she had eaten virtually nothing.
- ...a huge plate of spaghetti.

2. countable noun

A **plate** is a flat piece of metal, especially on machinery or a building.

3. countable noun

A **plate** is a small, flat piece of metal with someone's name written on it, which you usually find beside the front door of an office or house.

4. plural noun

On a road vehicle, the **plates** are the panels at the front and back which display the license number in the United States, and the registration number in Britain.

- ...dusty-looking cars with New Jersey plates.

5. uncountable noun

Plate is dishes, bowls, and cups that are made of precious metal, especially silver or gold.

- ...gold and silver plate, jewellery, and roomfuls of antique furniture.

6. countable noun

In printing, a **plate** is a sheet of metal which is carved or specially treated with chemicals so that it can be used to print text or pictures.

7. countable noun

In photography, a **plate** is a thin sheet of glass that is covered with a layer of chemicals which react to the light and on which an image can be formed.

8. countable noun

A **plate** in a book is a picture or photograph which takes up a whole page and is usually printed on better quality paper than the rest of the book.

- Fermor's book has 55 colour plates.

9. countable noun

In a microscope, the **plate** is a small rectangular piece of glass onto which you put a small amount of the substance that you want to look at. You then slide the plate under the microscope to look at the substance.

10. countable noun

A dental **plate** is a piece of plastic which is shaped to fit inside a person's mouth and which a set of false teeth is attached to.

11. countable noun

In geology, a **plate** is a large piece of the Earth's surface, perhaps as large as a continent, which moves very slowly.

- The United States Geological Survey has revealed that the earthquake was not caused by a simple horizontal movement of one plate past another.

12. countable noun

In baseball, **the plate** is the same as the **home plate**.

13. have enough on one's plate/have a lot on one's plate

14. hand sth to sb on a plate

overall

overalls

Explain

1. adjective

You use **overall** to indicate that you are talking about a situation in general or about the whole of something. **Overall** is also an adverb .

- ...the overall rise in unemployment.
- Cut down your overall amount of physical activity.
- It is usually the woman who assumes overall care of the baby.
- Overall, I like Connie. I think she's great.
- Overall I was disappointed.
- The college has few ways to assess the quality of education overall.

2. plural noun

Overalls consist of a single piece of clothing that combines trousers and a jacket . You wear overalls over your clothes in order to protect them while you are working .

- ...workers in blue overalls.

3. plural noun

Overalls are trousers that are attached to a piece of cloth which covers your chest and which has straps going over your shoulders .

- An elderly man dressed in faded overalls took the witness stand.

4. countable noun

An **overall** is a piece of clothing shaped like a coat that you wear over your clothes in order to protect them while you are working.

pneumonia

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Pneumonia is a serious disease which affects

your lungs and makes it difficult for you to breathe .

- She nearly died of pneumonia.

quiet

quieter quietest quiets quieting quieted

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **quiet** makes only a small amount of noise.

- Tania kept the children reasonably quiet and contented.
- A quiet murmur passed through the classroom.
- The airlines have invested enormous sums in new, quieter aircraft.

2. adjective

If a place is **quiet** , there is very little noise there.

- She was received in a small, quiet office.
- The street was unnaturally quiet.

3. adjective

If a place, situation , or time is **quiet** , there is no excitement , activity, or trouble .

- ...a quiet rural backwater.
- It is very quiet without him.
- While he wanted Los Angeles and partying, she wanted a quiet life.
- The city is now relatively quiet but there's palpable anger as people cope with shortages.

4. uncountable noun

Quiet is silence .

- He called for quiet and announced that the next song was in our honor.
 - Jeremy wants some peace and quiet before his big match.
5. adjective
If you are **quiet** , you are not saying anything.
- I told them to be quiet and go to sleep.
 - I just went quiet, embarrassed, and couldn't answer.
 - They were both quiet for a while. Then Charlie said: 'I must go.'
 - Then a voice called out, 'Quiet, everybody, please!'
6. adjective
If you refer , for example , to someone's **quiet** confidence or **quiet** despair , you mean that they do not say much about the way they are feeling .
- He has a quiet confidence in his ability.
 - All through his life he has shown a quiet determination to get things done.
7. adjective
You describe activities as **quiet** when they happen in secret or in such a way that people do not notice them.
- The Swedes had sought his freedom through quiet diplomacy.
 - Then it was back to the house for a quiet celebration.
 - Can I have a quiet word with you, son?
8. adjective
A **quiet** person behaves in a calm way and is not easily made angry or upset .
- He's a nice quiet man.
9. graded adjective
You describe colours or clothes as **quiet** when they are not bright or not very noticeable .
- They dress in quiet colors so as not to call attention to themselves.
10. verb
If someone or something **quiets** or if you **quiet** them, they become less noisy , less active , or silent.
- The wind dropped and the sea quieted.
 - He quieted the crowd with a gesture.
11. verb
To **quiet** fears or complaints means to persuade people that there is no good reason for them.
- Music seemed to quiet her anxiety and loneliness.
12. go quietly
13. keep quiet about sth/keep sth quiet
14. on the quiet

poverty

Explain

1. uncountable noun
Poverty is the state of being extremely poor .
- ...people living in absolute poverty.
 - Garvey died in loneliness and poverty.
2. singular noun
You can use **poverty** to refer to any situation in which there is not enough of something or its quality is poor.
- Britain has suffered from a poverty of ambition.
 - ...a poverty of ideas.

reasonable

Explain

1. adjective

If you think that someone is fair and sensible you can say that they are **reasonable** .

- He's a reasonable sort of chap.
- Oh, come on, be reasonable.

2. adjective

If you say that a decision or action is **reasonable** , you mean that it is fair and sensible.

- ...a perfectly reasonable decision.
- At the time, what he'd done had seemed reasonable.

3. adjective

If you say that an expectation or explanation is **reasonable** , you mean that there are good reasons why it may be correct .

- It seems reasonable to expect rapid urban growth.

4. adjective

If you say that the price of something is **reasonable** , you mean that it is fair and not too high .

- You get an interesting meal for a reasonable price.
- His fees were quite reasonable.

5. adjective

You can use **reasonable** to describe something that is fairly good, but not very good.

- The boy answered him in reasonable French.
- He had never been able to make a reasonable living from his writing.

6. adjective

A **reasonable** amount of something is a fairly large amount of it.

- They will need a reasonable amount of desk area and good light.

profile

profiles profiling profiled

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **profile** is the outline of your face as it is seen when someone is looking at you from the side.

- His handsome profile was turned away from us.

2. uncountable noun

If you see someone **in profile** , you see them from the side.

- This picture shows the girl in profile.

3. countable noun

A **profile of** someone is a short article or programme in which their life and character are described .

- A newspaper published profiles of the candidates.

4. verb

To **profile** someone means to give an account of that person's life and character.

- Tamar Golan, a Paris-based journalist, profiles the rebel leader.

5. countable noun

Your **profile** on a social media website is the part where you post your name, picture , and personal information.

- He lied about himself on his profile.

6. high profile

redundant

Explain

1. adjective

If you are made **redundant**, your employer tells you to leave because your job is no longer necessary or because your employer cannot afford to keep paying you.

- My husband was made redundant late last year.
- ...a redundant miner.

2. adjective

Something that is **redundant** is no longer needed because its job is being done by something else or because its job is no longer necessary or useful.

- Changes in technology may mean that once-valued skills are now redundant.
- ...the conversion of redundant buildings to residential use.

pyramid

pyramids

Explain

1. countable noun

Pyramids are ancient stone buildings with four triangular sloping sides. The most famous pyramids are those built in ancient Egypt to contain the bodies of their kings and queens.

- We set off to see the Pyramids and Sphinx.

2. countable noun

A **pyramid** is a shape, object, or pile of things with a flat base and sloping triangular sides that meet at a point.

- On a plate in front of him was piled a pyramid of flat white biscuits.

3. countable noun

You can describe something as a **pyramid** when it is organized so that there are fewer people at each level as you go towards the top.

- The structure of the group is more like a loose net than a hierarchical pyramid.

respective

Explain

1. adjective

Respective means relating or belonging separately to the individual people you have just mentioned.

- Steve and I were at very different stages in our respective careers.
- They went into their respective bedrooms to pack.

quality

qualities

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **quality** of something is how good or bad it is.

- Everyone can greatly improve the quality of life.
- Other services vary dramatically in quality.
- ...high-quality paper and plywood.

2. uncountable noun

Something of **quality** is of a high standard.

- ...a college of *quality*.
- In our work, *quality* is paramount.
- We have been successful because we are offering a *quality* service.

3. countable noun

Someone's **qualities** are the good characteristics that they have which are part of their nature.

- Sometimes you wonder where your kids get their good *qualities*.
- He wanted to introduce mature people with leadership *qualities*.
- A job analysis should also include what skills and personal *qualities* are required.

4. countable noun

You can describe a particular characteristic of a person or thing as a **quality**.

- ...a childlike *quality*.
- ...the pretentious *quality* of the poetry.
- Thyme tea can be used by adults for its antiseptic *qualities*.

5. adjective

The **quality** papers or the **quality** press are the more serious newspapers which give detailed accounts of world events, as well as reports on business, culture, and society.

- Even the *quality* papers agreed that it was a triumph.

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **safe** does not cause physical harm or danger.

- Officials arrived to assess whether it is *safe* to bring emergency food supplies into the city.
- Most foods that we eat are *safe* for birds.
- ...a *safe* and reliable birth control option.
- ...a programme to make nuclear reactors *safer*.

2. adjective

If a person or thing is **safe from** something, they cannot be harmed or damaged by it.

- In the future people can go to a football match knowing that they are *safe from* hooliganism.
- There are lots of gadgets you can install to make your home *safer*.

3. adjective

If you are **safe**, you have not been harmed, or you are not in danger of being harmed.

- Where is Sophy? Is she *safe*?
- A baby boy is *safe* after rescue workers pulled him from a 12-foot-deep construction hole.

4. adjective

A **safe** place is one where it is unlikely that any harm, damage, or unpleasant things will happen to the people or things that are there.

- Many refugees have fled to *safer* areas.
- The elimination of all nuclear weapons would make the world a *safer* place.
- We shall take the treasure away to a *safe* place.

safe

safer safest safes

5. adjective

If people or things have a **safe** journey , they reach their destination without harm, damage, or unpleasant things happening to them.

- 'I'm heading back home for the weekend.'—'Have a safe journey.'
- ...the U.N. plan to deploy 500 troops to ensure the safe delivery of food and other supplies.

6. adjective

If you are at a **safe** distance from something or someone, you are far enough away from them to avoid any danger, harm, or unpleasant effects .

- I shall conceal myself at a safe distance from the battlefield.
- He thinks he can find a way to vaccinate the elephants from a safe distance.

7. adjective

If something you have or expect to obtain is **safe** , you cannot lose it or be prevented from having it.

- We as consumers need to feel confident that our jobs are safe before we will spend spare cash.
- Is the National Health Service safe with the Conservative party?
- Rovers made the game safe with a spectacular second goal in the 84th minute.

8. adjective

A **safe** course of action is one in which there is very little risk of loss or failure .

- Electricity shares are still a safe investment.
- Baldwin called the 1935 election a year early to get the country behind rearmament - not the politically safe option.

9. adjective

If you disapprove of something because you think it is not very exciting or original , you can describe it as **safe** .

- ...frustrated artists who became lawyers at an early age because it seemed a safe option.
- Rock'n'roll has become so commercialised and safe since punk.

10. adjective

If **it is safe to** say or assume something, you can say it with very little risk of being wrong .

- It is safe to say that some students make no effort to do quality work in school.
- The only safe assumption is that the world's financial markets will have to find solutions themselves.

11. graded adjective

If you say to someone that their secret is **safe with** you, you are promising not to tell it to anyone.

- Don't worry, Mr Palin, your secret is safe with me.

12. countable noun

A **safe** is a strong metal cupboard with special locks, in which you keep money, jewellery , or other valuable things.

- The files are now in a safe to which only he has the key.

13. in safe hands / safe in someone's hands

14. safe as houses

15. make somewhere safe for something

16. to play safe

17. to be on the safe side

18. it's better to be safe than sorry

19. safe and sound

reptile

reptiles

Explain

1. countable noun

Reptiles are a group of cold-blooded animals which have skins covered with small hard plates called scales and lay eggs. Snakes, lizards, and crocodiles are reptiles.

secondary

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **secondary**, you mean that it is less important than something else.

- The street erupted in a huge explosion, with secondary explosions in the adjoining buildings.
- They argue that human rights considerations are now of only secondary importance.
- The actual damage to the brain cells is secondary to the damage caused to the blood supply.

2. adjective

Secondary diseases or infections happen as a result of another disease or infection that has already happened.

- He had kidney cancer, with secondary tumours in the brain and lungs.

3. adjective

Secondary education is given to pupils between the ages of 11 or 12 and 17 or 18.

- She went to a 'very minor' private school for the whole of her secondary education.

routine

routines

Explain

1. variable noun

A **routine** is the usual series of things that you do at a particular time. A **routine** is also the practice of regularly doing things in a fixed order.

- The players had to change their daily routine and lifestyle.
- They include the floor exercises as a regular part of their fitness routine.
- He checked up on you as a matter of routine.

2. adjective

You use **routine** to describe activities that are done as a normal part of a job or process.

- ...a series of routine medical tests.
- The operator has to be able to carry out routine maintenance of the machine.

3. adjective

A **routine** situation, action, or event is one which seems completely ordinary, rather than interesting, exciting, or different.

- So many days are routine and uninteresting, especially in winter.
- ...this routine thriller about a CIA man and a KGB operative.

4. variable noun

You use **routine** to refer to a way of life that is uninteresting and ordinary, or hardly ever changes.

- ...the mundane routine of her life.
- Family holidays are meant to be a break from routine.

5. countable noun

A **routine** is a computer program, or part of a program, that performs a specific function.

- ... an installation routine.

6. countable noun

A **routine** is a short sequence of jokes , remarks , actions, or movements that forms part of a longer performance .

- ... like a Marx Brothers routine.
- ...an athletic dance routine.

solemn

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **solemn** is very serious rather than cheerful or humorous .

- His solemn little face broke into smiles.
- He looked solemn.

2. adjective

A **solemn** promise or agreement is one that you make in a very formal , sincere way.

- ...a solemn pledge that he would never remarry.

scout

scouts scouting scouted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **scout** is someone who is sent to an area of countryside to find out the position of an enemy army .

- They sent two men out in front as scouts.

2. countable noun

A **scout** is the same as a talent scout .

3. verb

If you **scout** somewhere **for** something, you go through that area searching for it.

- I wouldn't have time to scout the area for junk.
- A team of four was sent to scout for a nuclear test site.
- I have people scouting the hills already.

spare

spares sparing spared

Explain

1. adjective

You use **spare** to describe something that is the same as things that you are already using, but that you do not need yet and are keeping ready in case another one is needed. **Spare** is also a noun .

- If possible keep a spare pair of glasses accessible in case your main pair is broken or lost.
- Don't forget to take a few spare batteries.
- He could have taken a spare key.
- The wagons carried spare ammunition.
- Give me the trunk key and I'll get the spare.

2. adjective

You use **spare** to describe something that is not being used by anyone, and is therefore available for someone to use.

- They don't have a lot of spare cash.
- The spare bedroom is on the second floor.

- *There was hardly a spare inch of space to be found.*

3. verb

*If you have something such as time, money, or space **to spare** , you have some extra time, money, or space that you have not used or which you do not need.*

- *You got here with ninety seconds to spare.*
- *It's not as if he has money to spare.*
- *The car suddenly darted ahead, squeezing past him with only inches to spare.*
- *Miranda has drive and energy to spare and has now taken on an even bigger challenge.*

4. verb

*If you **spare** time or another resource **for** a particular purpose, you make it available for that purpose.*

- *She said that she could only spare 35 minutes for our meeting.*
- *He's a very busy man, and it's good of him to spare the time to visit.*
- *He suggested that his country could not spare the troops for such an operation.*

5. verb

*If a person or a place **is spared** , they are not harmed, even though other people or places have been.*

- *We have lost everything, but thank God, our lives have been spared.*
- *Not a man was spared.*
- *The area was largely spared from the famine.*

6. verb

*If you **spare** someone an unpleasant experience , you prevent them from suffering it.*

- *I wanted to spare Frances the embarrassment of discussing this subject.*

- *Prisoners are spared the indignity of wearing uniforms.*

- *Spare me the gory details.*

- *She's just trying to spare Shawna's feelings.*

- *The policy has not spared the farming community from severe financial pressure.*

7. graded adjective

*Someone who is described as **spare** is tall and not at all fat .*

- *She was thin and spare, with a sharply intelligent face.*

8. graded adjective

*Something such as a room that is **spare** is very plain with no unnecessary features .*

- *Inside, the two small rooms were spare and neat, stripped bare of ornaments.*

9. spare no effort

10. spare a thought for

shuttle

shuttles shuttling shuttled

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **shuttle** is the same as a space shuttle .*

2. countable noun

*A **shuttle** is a plane , bus, or train which makes frequent journeys between two places.*

- *...the BA shuttle to Glasgow.*

- *...shuttle flights between London and Manchester.*

3. verb

If someone or something **shuttles** or **is shuttled** from one place to another place, they frequently go from one place to the other.

- He and colleagues have shuttled back and forth between the three capitals.
- Machine parts were also being shuttled across the border without authorisation.

4. countable noun

A **shuttle** is a piece of equipment used in weaving. It takes a thread backwards and forwards over the other threads in order to make a piece of cloth.

spectacular

spectaculars

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **spectacular** is very impressive or dramatic.

- ...spectacular views of the Sugar Loaf Mountain.
- They have revamped the business with spectacular success.
- The results have been spectacular.

2. countable noun

A **spectacular** is a show or performance which is very grand and impressive.

- ...a television spectacular.
- ...one of the world's great sporting spectacles.

slum

slums slumming slummed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **slum** is an area of a city where living conditions are very bad and where the houses are in bad condition.

- ...a slum area of St Louis.
- ...inner-city slums in the old cities of the north and east.

2. verb

If someone **is slumming it** or **is slumming**, they are spending time in a place or in conditions that are at a much lower social level than they are used to.

- ...rich kids slumming it.
- ...aristocratic types who enjoyed slumming around in musty old castles.

splendid

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **splendid**, you mean that it is very good.

- The book includes a wealth of splendid photographs.
- Our house has got a splendid view across to the Cotswolds.
- I found him to be splendid company during the hour of our acquaintance.

2. adjective

If you describe a building or work of art as **splendid**, you mean that it is beautiful, impressive, and extremely well made.

- ...a splendid Victorian mansion.

3. exclamation

You can say '**splendid**' in a conversation to indicate that you approve of a particular situation or something that someone has said .

- 'I was thinking I might do a lemon cream sauce and baked potatoes.' 'Splendid!' Midge applauded.

soap

soaps soaping soaped

Explain

1. variable noun

Soap is a substance that you use with water for washing yourself or sometimes for washing clothes .

- ...a bar of lavender soap.
- ...a large packet of soap powder.
- ...a soap bubble.

2. verb

If you **soap yourself** , you rub soap on your body in order to wash yourself.

- She soaped herself all over.

3. countable noun

A **soap** is the same as a soap opera .

superfluous

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **superfluous** is unnecessary or is no longer needed .

- My presence at the afternoon's proceedings was superfluous.
- I rid myself of many superfluous belongings and habits that bothered me.

stall

stalls stalling stalled

Explain

1. verb

If a process **stalls** , or if someone or something **stalls** it, the process stops but may continue at a later time.

- They will try to stall the bill until the current session ends.
- ...but the peace process stalled.
- Negotiations remained stalled yesterday in New York.

2. verb

If you **stall** , you try to avoid doing something until later.

- Some parties have accused the governor of stalling.
- Thomas had spent all week stalling over his decision.

3. verb

If you **stall** someone, you prevent them from doing something until a later time.

- Shop manager Brian Steel stalled the man until the police arrived.

4. verb

If a vehicle **stalls** or if you accidentally **stall** it, the engine stops suddenly .

- The engine stalled.
- Your foot falls off the pedal and you stall the car.

5. countable noun

A **stall** is a large table on which you put goods that you want to sell, or information that you want to give people.

- ...market stalls selling local fruits.

6. plural noun

The stalls in a theatre or concert hall are the seats on the ground floor directly in front of the stage.

7. countable noun

A **stall** is a small enclosed area in a room which is used for a particular purpose, for example a shower .

synthetic

Explain

1. adjective

Synthetic products are made from chemicals or artificial substances rather than from natural ones.

- Boots made from synthetic materials can usually be washed in a machine.
- ...synthetic rubber.

version

versions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **version of** something is a particular form of it in which some details are different from earlier or later forms.

- ...an updated version of his book.
- Ludo is a version of an ancient Indian racing game.
- The second-hand version is a poor copy of the original.

2. countable noun

Someone's **version of** an event is their own description of it, especially when it is different to other people's.

- Yesterday afternoon the White House put out a new version of events.
- She and her friends wanted to go public with their version of the incident.
- There have been widely differing versions in the newspapers about the prison siege.

various

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that there are **various** things, you mean there are several different things of the type mentioned .

- His plan is to spread the capital between various building society accounts.
- The school has received various grants from the education department.

2. adjective

If a number of things are described as **various** , they are very different from one another.

- The methods are many and various.
- ...the country's rich and various heritage.

wire

wires wiring wired

Explain

1. variable noun

A **wire** is a long thin piece of metal that is used to fasten things or to carry electric current.

- ...fine copper wire.
- ...gadgets which detect electrical wires, pipes and timbers in walls.

2. countable noun

A **wire** is a cable which carries power or signals from one place to another.

- I ripped out the phone wire that ran through to his office.
- ...the voltage of the overhead wires.

3. verb

If you **wire** something such as a building or piece of equipment , you put wires inside it so that electricity or signals can pass into or through it.

Wire up means the same as wire .

- ...learning to wire and plumb the house herself.
- Lamps should be safely wired.
- Each of the homes has a security system and is wired for cable television.
- ...a badly wired appliance.
- He was helping wire up the Channel Tunnel last season.
- Wire the thermometers up to trigger off an alarm bell if the temperature drops.
- Security experts wired up dozens of expensive plants to the main alarm system at his mansion.

4. countable noun

A **wire** is the same as a telegram .

5. verb

If you **wire** a person, you send them a telegram.

- He wired the chairman immediately.
- They wired back a long list of books.

- If I get another tummy ache, I will wire you to come.

6. verb

If you **wire** an amount of money to a person or place, you tell a bank to send it to the person or place using a telegram message.

- I'm wiring you some money.
- They arranged to wire the money from the United States.

- Investigators say nearly 100,000 was wired into the suspect's bank accounts.

7. to the wire

awful

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone or something is **awful** , you dislike that person or thing or you think that they are not very good .

- We met and I thought he was awful.
- I couldn't stand London! Bloody awful place.
- ...an awful smell of paint.
- Even if the weather's awful there's lots to do.
- Jeans look awful on me.

2. adjective

If you say that something is **awful** , you mean that it is extremely unpleasant, shocking , or bad.

- Her injuries were massive. It was awful.
- Some of their offences are so awful they would chill the blood.

3. adjective

If you look or feel **awful** , you look or feel ill .

- *I hardly slept at all and felt pretty awful.*
- *I looked awful and felt quite shaky.*

4. adjective

You can use **awful** with noun groups that refer to an amount in order to emphasize how large that amount is.

- *I've got an awful lot of work to do.*

5. adverb

You can use **awful** with adjectives that describe a quality in order to emphasize that particular quality.

- *Gosh, you're awful pretty.*
- *You know, 10 years sounds like an awful long time.*

amplifier

amplifiers

Explain

1. countable noun

An **amplifier** is an electronic device in a radio or stereo system which causes sounds or signals to get louder .

bare

barer barest bares baring bared

Explain

1. adjective

If a part of your body is **bare** , it is not covered by any clothing.

- *She was wearing only a thin robe over a flimsy nightdress, and her feet were bare.*
- *She had bare arms and a bare neck.*

2. adjective

A **bare** surface is not covered or decorated with anything.

- *They would have liked bare wooden floors throughout the house.*

3. adjective

If a tree or a branch is **bare** , it has no leaves on it.

- *...an old, twisted tree, its bark shaggy, many of its limbs brittle and bare.*

4. adjective

If a room , cupboard , or shelf is **bare** , it is empty .

- *His fridge was bare apart from three very withered tomatoes.*
- *He led me through to a bare, draughty interviewing room.*

5. adjective

An area of ground that is **bare** has no plants growing on it.

- *That's probably the most bare, bleak, barren and inhospitable island I've ever seen.*

6. adjective

If someone gives you the **bare** facts or the **barest** details of something, they tell you only the most basic and important things.

- *Newspaper reporters were given nothing but the bare facts by the Superintendent in charge of the investigation.*

7. adjective

If you talk about the **bare** minimum or the **bare** essentials , you mean the very least that is necessary .

- *The army would try to hold the western desert with a bare minimum of forces.*

- *These are the bare essentials you'll need to dress your baby during the first few months.*

8. adjective

Bare is used in front of an amount to emphasize how small it is.

- *Sales are growing for premium wines, but at a bare 2 percent a year.*

9. verb

If you **bare** something, you uncover it and show it.

- *Walsh bared his teeth in a grin.*

10. with one's bare hands

11. to lay something bare

12. lay sth bare

13. to bare one's soul

bachelor

bachelors

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bachelor** is a man who has never married .

critical

Explain

1. adjective

A **critical** time, factor , or situation is extremely important .

- *The incident happened at a critical point in the campaign.*
- *Environmentalists say a critical factor in the city's pollution is its population.*

- *He says setting priorities is of critical importance.*

- *How you finance a business is critical to the success of your venture.*

2. adjective

A **critical** situation is very serious and dangerous .

- *The authorities are considering an airlift if the situation becomes critical.*
- *Its day-to-day finances are in a critical state.*

3. adjective

If a person is **critical** or in a **critical** condition in hospital , they are seriously ill.

- *Ten of the injured are said to be in critical condition.*

4. adjective

To be **critical of** someone or something means to criticize them.

- *His report is highly critical of the trial judge.*
- *...a few dozen intellectuals who've been critical of the regime.*
- *He has apologised for critical remarks he made about the referee.*

5. adjective

A **critical** approach to something involves examining and judging it carefully.

- *We need to become critical text-readers.*
- *Marx's work was more than a critical study of capitalist production.*
- *...the critical analysis of political ideas.*

6. adjective

If something or someone receives **critical** acclaim , critics say that they are very good.

- The film met with considerable critical and public acclaim.
- The show was also a resounding critical success.

bottom

bottoms bottoming bottomed

Explain

1. countable noun

The bottom of something is the lowest or deepest part of it.

- He sat at the bottom of the stairs.
- Answers can be found at the bottom of page 8.
- ...the bottom of the sea.

2. adjective

The **bottom** thing or layer in a series of things or layers is the lowest one.

- There's an extra duvet in the bottom drawer of the cupboard.

3. countable noun

The bottom of an object is the flat surface at its lowest point. You can also refer to the inside or outside of this surface as the **bottom**.

- Spread the onion slices on the bottom of the dish.
- ...the bottom of their shoes.
- ...a suitcase with a false bottom.

4. singular noun

If you say that **the bottom** has dropped or fallen out of a market or industry, you mean that people have stopped buying the products it sells.

- The bottom had fallen out of the city's property market.

5. singular noun

The bottom of a street or garden is the end farthest away from you or from your house.

- ...the Cathedral at the bottom of the street.

6. singular noun

The bottom of a table is the end farthest away from where you are sitting. **The bottom of** a bed is the end where you usually rest your feet.

- Malone sat down on the bottom of the bed.

7. singular noun

The bottom of an organization or career structure is the lowest level in it, where new employees often start.

- He had worked in the theatre for many years, starting at the bottom.
- ...a contract researcher at the bottom of the pay scale.

8. singular noun

If someone is **bottom** or at **the bottom** in a survey, test, or league, their performance is worse than that of all the other people involved.

- He was always bottom of the class.
- The team is close to bottom of the League.

9. countable noun

Your **bottom** is the part of your body that you sit on.

- If there was one thing she could change about her body it would be her bottom.

10. countable noun

The lower part of a bikini, tracksuit, or pair of pyjamas can be referred to as the **bottoms** or the **bottom**.

- *She wore blue tracksuit bottoms.*
- *...a skimpy bikini bottom.*

11. *at bottom*
12. *at the bottom of sth*
13. *from the bottom of one's heart*
14. *get to the bottom of sth*
15. *bottoms up*

curious

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **curious about** something, you are interested in it and want to know more about it.

- *Steve was intensely curious about the world I came from.*
- *Children are naturally curious.*
- *...a group of curious villagers.*

2. adjective

If you describe something as **curious**, you mean that it is unusual or difficult to understand.

- *There is a curious thing about her writings in this period.*
- *The pageant promises to be a curious mixture of the ancient and modern.*
- *The naval high command's response to these developments is rather curious.*

bubble

bubbles bubbling bubbled

Explain

1. countable noun

Bubbles are small balls of air or gas in a liquid.

- *Ink particles attach themselves to air bubbles and rise to the surface.*
- *...a bubble of gas trapped under the surface.*

2. countable noun

A **bubble** is a hollow ball of soapy liquid that is floating in the air or standing on a surface.

- *With soap and water, bubbles and boats, children love bathtime.*

3. countable noun

A **bubble** is a situation in which large numbers of people want to buy shares in a company that is new or not yet financially successful, and pay more than the shares are worth. When it becomes clear that the shares are worth less than people paid for them, you can say that the **bubble** has burst.

- *This is the point when a rising market turns into a speculative bubble.*
- *They vie to cash in before the bubble bursts.*

4. countable noun

In a cartoon, a speech **bubble** is the shape which surrounds the words that a character is thinking or saying.

5. verb

When a liquid **bubbles**, bubbles move in it, for example because it is boiling or moving quickly.

- *Heat the seasoned stock until it is bubbling.*
- *The coffeepot bubbled, filling the room with fragrance.*
- *The fermenting wine has bubbled up and over the top.*

- Danny looked down at the stream bubbling through the trees nearby.

6. verb

If something **bubbles** , it is very busy or lively .

- The book bubbles with appreciation of the joys of the sport.
- The show bubbles like pink champagne with pretty sets and enchanting dance routines.

7. verb

A feeling , influence , or activity that **is bubbling** away continues to occur.

- ...political tensions that have been bubbling away for years.
- Rumours of financial scandals have come bubbling back to the surface.
- Retail sales and car sales have been bubbling along, quite nicely, for some months.

8. verb

Someone who **is bubbling with** a good feeling is so full of it that they keep expressing the way they feel to everyone around them. **Bubble over** means the same as bubble . **Bubble** is also a noun .

- She came to the phone bubbling with excitement.
- She came back bubbling with ideas.
- He was quite tireless, bubbling over with vitality.
- As she spoke she felt a bubble of optimism rising inside her.

delicate

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **delicate** is small and beautifully shaped.

- He had delicate hands.

- ...an evergreen tree with large flame-coloured leaves and delicate blossom.

2. adjective

Something that is **delicate** has a colour, taste, or smell which is pleasant and not strong or intense

- Young haricot beans have a tender texture and a delicate, subtle flavour.
- The colours are delicate and shimmering.

3. adjective

If something is **delicate** , it is easy to harm , damage, or break , and needs to be handled or treated carefully.

- Although the coral looks hard, it is very delicate.
- ...a washing machine catering for every fabric—even the most delicate.

4. adjective

Someone who is **delicate** is not healthy and strong, and becomes ill easily.

- She was physically delicate and psychologically unstable.

5. adjective

You use **delicate** to describe a situation , problem , matter , or discussion that needs to be dealt with carefully and sensitively in order to avoid upsetting things or offending people.

- The members are afraid of upsetting the delicate balance of political interests.
- This sensitive book tackles the delicate issue of adoption with care and simplicity.
- She turned to Mary Ann. 'This is kind of delicate. Would you excuse us for a moment?'

6. adjective

A **delicate** task , movement, action, or product needs or shows great skill and attention to detail .

- ...a long and delicate operation carried out at a hospital in Florence.
- Each motion must be delicate and precise, involving tiny movements.

clothing

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Clothing is the things that people wear.

- Some locals offered food and clothing to the refugees.
- What is your favourite item of clothing?
- Wear protective clothing.
- ...the clothing industry.

dirty

dirtier dirtiest dirties dirtying dirtied

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **dirty** , it is marked or covered with stains, spots , or mud , and needs to be cleaned .

- She still did not like the woman who had dirty fingernails.
- The dress had been brightly coloured, but it was stained and dirty now.

2. verb

To **dirty** something means to cause it to become dirty.

- He was afraid the dog's hairs might dirty the seats.

- A little girl dirties her clothing by climbing a tree.

3. adjective

If you describe an action as **dirty** , you disapprove of it and consider it unfair, immoral , or dishonest. **Dirty** is also an adverb .

- The gunman had been hired by a rival Mafia family to do the dirty deed.
- Jim Browne is the kind of fellow who can fight dirty.

4. adjective

If you describe something such as a joke , a book , or someone's language as **dirty** , you mean that it refers to sex in a way that some people find offensive . **Dirty** is also an adverb.

- They told dirty jokes and sang raucous ballads.
- I'm often asked whether the men talk dirty to me. The answer is no.

5. adjective

Dirty is used before words of criticism to emphasize that you do not approve of someone or something.

- You dirty liar.

6. to wash your dirty linen in public

7. dirty look

8. dirty old man

9. do someone's dirty work

10. dirty weekend

11. a dirty word

court

courts

Explain

1. countable noun

A **court** is a place where legal matters are decided by a judge and jury or by a magistrate .

- At this rate, we could find ourselves in the divorce courts!
- ...a county court judge.
- He was deported on a court order following a conviction for armed robbery.
- The 28-year-old striker was in court last week for breaking a rival player's jaw.

2. countable noun

You can refer to the people in a court, especially the judge, jury, or magistrates, as a **court** .

- A court at Tampa, Florida has convicted five officials on fraud charges.

3. countable noun

A **court** is an area in which you play a game such as tennis, basketball , badminton , or squash.

- The hotel has several tennis and squash courts.
- She watched a few of the games while waiting to go on court.

4. countable noun

The **court** of a king or queen is the place where he or she lives and carries out ceremonial or administrative duties.

- She came to visit England, where she was presented at the court of James I.
- Their family was certainly well regarded at court.

5. noun, in names

In Britain, **Court** is used in the names of large houses and blocks of flats.

- ...7 Ivebury Court, Latimer Rd, London W10 6RA.

6. go to court/ take sb to court

7. your day in court

8. to hold court

9. to laugh someone out of court

10. out of court

distant

Explain

1. adjective

Distant means very far away.

- The mountains rolled away to a distant horizon.
- ...the war in that distant land.

2. adjective

You use **distant** to describe a time or event that is very far away in the future or in the past .

- There is little doubt, however, that things will improve in the not too distant future.
- Last summer's drought is a distant memory.

3. adjective

A **distant** relative is one who you are not closely related to.

- He's a distant relative of the mayor.
- They were distant cousins.

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **distant** , you mean that you find them cold and unfriendly .

- He found her cold, ice-like and distant.
- He is direct and courteous but distant.

5. adjective

If you describe someone as **distant** , you mean that they are not concentrating on what they are doing because they are thinking about other things.

- There was a distant look in her eyes from time to time, her thoughts elsewhere.

dog

dogs dogging dogged

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dog** is a very common four-legged animal that is often kept by people as a pet or to guard or hunt . There are many different breeds of dog.

- Outside, a dog was barking.
- The dog growled again.
- The British are renowned as a nation of dog lovers.

2. countable noun

You use **dog** to refer to a male dog, or to the male of some related species such as wolves or foxes .

- Is this a dog or a bitch?
- ...a dog fox.

3. countable noun

If someone calls a man a **dog** , they strongly disapprove of him.

4. countable noun

People use **dog** to refer to something that they consider unsatisfactory or of poor quality.

- It's a real dog.

5. countable noun

If someone, especially a man, calls a woman or girl a **dog** , they mean that she is very ugly , unattractive, or boring.

6. verb

If problems or injuries **dog** you, they are with you all the time.

- The problems that have dogged him all year are just a temporary setback.
- His career has been dogged by bad luck.

7. plural noun

The dogs is a sports meeting where dogs, especially greyhounds , race and people bet on which dog will win.

8. dog's dinner/breakfast

9. dog eat dog

10. going to the dogs

11. to let sleeping dogs lie

12. you can't teach an old dog new tricks

dramatic

Explain

1. adjective

A **dramatic** change or event happens suddenly and is very noticeable and surprising .

- Changes in sea level could have a dramatic effect.

- *This policy has led to a dramatic increase in our prison populations.*

2. adjective

A **dramatic** action, event, or situation is exciting and impressive .

- *He witnessed many dramatic escapes as people jumped from as high as the fourth floor.*
- *Their arrival was dramatic and exciting.*

3. adjective

You use **dramatic** to describe things connected with or relating to the theatre , drama, or plays.

- *...a dramatic arts major in college.*
- *I had no thoughts of making a dramatic film. I was working in documentary.*

dose

doses dosing dosed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dose of** medicine or a drug is a measured amount of it which is intended to be taken at one time.

- *One dose of penicillin can wipe out the infection.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to an amount of something as a **dose of** that thing, especially when you want to emphasize that there is a great deal of it.

- *She was born with a healthy dose of self-confidence.*
- *The West is getting a heavy dose of snow and rain today.*

3. verb

If you **dose** a person or animal **with** medicine, you give them an amount of it. **Dose up** means the same as dose .

- *The doctor fixed the rib, dosed him heavily with drugs, and said he would probably get better.*
- *I dosed myself with quinine.*
- *I dosed him up with Valium.*

expensive

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **expensive** , it costs a lot of money.

- *Fuel's so expensive in this country.*
- *I get very nervous because I'm using a lot of expensive equipment.*

dress

dresses dressing dressed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dress** is a piece of clothing worn by a woman or girl . It covers her body and part of her legs.

- *She was wearing a black dress.*

2. uncountable noun

You can refer to clothes worn by men or women as **dress** .

- *He's usually smart in his dress.*
- *...hundreds of Cambodians in traditional dress.*

3. verb

When you **dress** or **dress yourself** , you put on clothes.

- He told Sarah to wait while he dressed.
- Sue had dressed herself neatly for work.

4. verb

If you **dress** someone, for example a child, you put clothes on them.

- She bathed her and dressed her in clean clothes.

5. verb

If someone **dresses** in a particular way, they wear clothes of a particular style or colour.

- He dresses in a way that lets everyone know he's got authority.
- She used to dress in jeans.

6. verb

If you **dress for** something, you put on special clothes for it.

- We don't dress for dinner here.

7. verb

When someone **dresses** a wound, they clean it and cover it.

- The poor child never cried or protested when I was dressing her wounds.

8. verb

If you **dress** a salad , you cover it with a mixture of oil, vinegar , and herbs or flavourings .

- Scatter the tomato over, then dress the salad.
- ...a bowl of dressed salad.

9. verb

To **dress** meat , chicken , or fish means to prepare it for cooking by cleaning it and removing the parts that you cannot eat.

- Her mother dressed the meat.
- ...dressed crab.

gloomy

gloomier gloomiest

Explain

1. adjective

If a place is **gloomy** , it is almost dark so that you cannot see very well .

- Inside it's gloomy after all that sunshine.
- ...this huge gloomy church.

2. adjective

If people are **gloomy** , they are unhappy and have no hope .

- Graduates are feeling gloomy about the jobs market.

3. adjective

If a situation is **gloomy** , it does not give you much hope of success or happiness.

- ...a gloomy picture of an economy sliding into recession.
- Officials say the outlook for next year is gloomy.

fox

foxes foxing foxed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **fox** is a wild animal which looks like a dog and has reddish-brown fur, a pointed face and ears, and a thick tail. Foxes eat smaller animals.

2. verb

If you **are foxed** by something, you cannot understand it or solve it.

- I admit I was foxed for some time.
- Only once did we hit on a question which foxed one of the experts.
- They're a bit foxed by the colours of the riders' jerseys and hats.

3. singular noun

If you describe someone as a **fox**, you mean they are very clever and deceitful.

- Enrico was too good, an old fox, cunning.

furnace

furnaces

Explain

1. countable noun

A **furnace** is a container or enclosed space in which a very hot fire is made, for example to melt metal, burn rubbish, or produce steam.

2. singular noun

If you say that a place is **a furnace**, you mean that it is very hot there.

- How can we walk? It's a furnace out there.

good

better best

Explain

1. adjective

Good means pleasant or enjoyable.

- We had a really good time together.
- I know they would have a better life here.
- There's nothing better than a good cup of hot coffee.
- It's so good to hear your voice after all this time.

2. adjective

Good means of a high quality, standard, or level.

- Exercise is just as important to health as good food.
- His parents wanted Raymond to have the best possible education.
- The train's average speed was no better than that of our bicycles.
- ...good quality furniture.

3. adjective

If you are **good at** something, you are skilful and successful at doing it.

- He was very good at his work.
- I'm not very good at singing.
- He is one of the best players in the world.
- I always played football with my older brother because I was good for my age.

4. adjective

If you describe a piece of news, an action, or an effect as **good**, you mean that it is likely to result in benefit or success.

- On balance biotechnology should be good news for developing countries.

- *I had the good fortune to be selected.*
 - *This is not a good example to set other children.*
 - *I think the response was good.*
5. adjective
A **good** idea, reason, method, or decision is a sensible or valid one.
- *They thought it was a good idea to make some offenders do community service.*
 - *There is good reason to doubt this.*
 - *Could you give me some advice on the best way to do this?*
6. adjective
If you say that **it is good that** something should happen or **good to** do something, you mean it is desirable, acceptable, or right.
- *I think it's good that some people are going.*
 - *It is always best to choose organically grown foods if possible.*
7. adjective
A **good** estimate or indication of something is an accurate one.
- *We have a fairly good idea of what's going on.*
 - *This is a much better indication of what a school is really like.*
 - *Laboratory tests are not always a good guide to what happens in the world.*
8. adjective
If you get a **good** deal or a **good** price when you buy or sell something, you receive a lot in exchange for what you give.
- *Whether such properties are a good deal will depend on individual situations.*
- *The merchandise is reasonably priced and offers exceptionally good value.*
9. adjective
If something is **good for** a person or organization, it benefits them.
- *Rain water was once considered to be good for the complexion.*
 - *Nancy chose the product because it is better for the environment.*
10. singular noun
If something is done for **the good** of a person or organization, it is done in order to benefit them.
- *Furlaud urged him to resign for the good of the country.*
 - *Victims want to see justice done not just for themselves, but for the greater good of society.*
 - *I'm only telling you this for your own good!*
11. uncountable noun
If someone or something is **no good** or is **not any good**, they are not satisfactory or are of a low standard.
- *If the weather's no good then I won't take any pictures.*
 - *I was never any good at maths.*
12. uncountable noun
If you say that doing something is **no good** or does **not** do **any good**, you mean that doing it is not of any use or will not bring any success.
- *It's no good worrying about it now.*
 - *We gave them water and kept them warm, but it didn't do any good.*
 - *There is no way to measure these effects; the chances are it did some good.*

13. *uncountable noun*
Good is what is considered to be right according to moral standards or religious beliefs.
- Good and evil may co-exist within one family.
14. *adjective*
 Someone who is **good** is morally correct in their attitudes and behaviour.
- The president is a good man.
 - For me to think I'm any better than a homeless person on the street is ridiculous.
15. *adjective*
 Someone, especially a child, who is **good** obeys rules and instructions and behaves in a socially correct way.
- The children were very good.
 - I'm going to be a good boy now.
 - Both boys had good manners, politely shaking hands.
16. *adjective*
 Someone who is **good** is kind and thoughtful .
- You are good to me.
 - Her good intentions were thwarted almost immediately.
 - Just ask the Admiral if he will be good enough to drop me a note.
17. *adjective*
 Someone who is in a **good** mood is cheerful and pleasant to be with.
- People were in a pretty good mood.
 - He exudes natural charm and good humour.
 - A relaxation session may put you in a better frame of mind.
18. *adjective*
 If people are **good** friends, they get on well together and are very close.
- She and Gavin are good friends.
 - She's my best friend, and I really love her.
19. *adjective*
 A person's **good** eye, arm, or leg is the one that is healthy and strong, if the other one is injured or weak.
- He turned his good eye on me and laughed.
20. *adjective*
 You use **good** to emphasize the great extent or degree of something.
- We waited a good fifteen minutes.
 - This whole thing's got a good bit more dangerous.
21. *convention*
 You say '**Good**' or '**Very good**' to express pleasure, satisfaction, or agreement with something that has been said or done, especially when you are in a position of authority.
- 'Are you all right?'—'I'm fine.'—'Good. So am I.'
 - Oh good, Tom's just come in.
 - 'Strike Force Three are here, sir.'—'Good.'
22. *as good as*
23. *the common good*
24. *do sb good*
25. *for good*
26. *good for you/him/her/them*
27. *be good for*

28. *it's a good job*

29. *make good*

30. *make good*

31. *make good*

32. *as good as new*

33. *good old*

34. *the good life*

judge

judges judging judged

Explain

1. *countable noun*

A **judge** is the person in a court of law who decides how the law should be applied, for example how criminals should be punished.

- *The judge adjourned the hearing until next Tuesday.*
- *Judge Mr Justice Schiemann jailed him for life.*

2. *countable noun*

A **judge** is a person who decides who will be the winner of a competition.

- *A panel of judges is now selecting the finalists.*

3. *verb*

If you **judge** something such as a competition, you decide who or what is the winner.

- *Colin Mitchell will judge the entries each week.*
- *Entrants will be judged in two age categories: 5-10 years and 11-14 years.*

- *A grade B judge could only be allowed to judge alongside a qualified grade A judge.*

4. *verb*

If you **judge** something or someone, you form an opinion about them after you have examined the evidence or thought carefully about them.

- *It will take a few more years to judge the impact of these ideas.*
- *I am ready to judge any book on its merits.*
- *It's for other people to judge how much I have improved.*
- *The U.N. withdrew its relief personnel because it judged the situation too dangerous.*
- *I judged it to be one of the worst programmes ever screened.*
- *The doctor judged that the man's health had, up to the time of the wound, been good.*
- *This may or may not be judged as reasonable.*

5. *verb*

If you **judge** something, you guess its amount, size, or value or you guess what it is.

- *It is important to judge the weight of your washing load correctly.*
- *I judged him to be about forty.*
- *Though the shoreline could be dimly seen, it was impossible to judge how far away it was.*
- *I would judge that my earnings as a teacher have, over the years, been considerably below those of Mr Foot.*

6. *countable noun*

If someone is a good **judge of** something, they understand it and can make sensible decisions about it. If someone is a bad **judge of** something, they cannot do this.

- *I'm a pretty good judge of character.*

7. *judging by/judging from/to judge from*

8. *as far as one can judge*

grim

grimmer grimmest

Explain

1. *adjective*

*A situation or piece of information that is **grim** is unpleasant, depressing , and difficult to accept .*

- *They painted a grim picture of growing crime.*
- *There was further grim economic news yesterday.*
- *The mood could not have been grimmer.*

2. *adjective*

*A place that is **grim** is unattractive and depressing in appearance.*

- *The city might be grim at first, but there is a vibrancy and excitement.*
- *...the tower blocks on the city's grim edges.*

3. *adjective*

*If a person or their behaviour is **grim** , they are very serious , usually because they are worried about something.*

- *She was a grim woman with a turned-down mouth.*
- *Her expression was grim and unpleasant.*

4. *adjective*

*If you say that something is **grim** , you think that it is very bad , ugly , or depressing.*

- *Things were pretty grim for a time.*

junk

junks junking junked

Explain

1. *uncountable noun*

***Junk** is old and used goods that have little value and that you do not want any more.*

- *Rose finds her furniture in junk shops.*
- *What are you going to do with all that junk, Larry?*

2. *uncountable noun*

*In computing , **junk** refers to unwanted emails that have been sent to a large number of people or organizations, usually as advertising .*

- *...an increased threat from junk email.*

3. *verb*

*If you **junk** something, you get rid of it or stop using it.*

- *We junk 10 million pieces of furniture every year in the UK.*
- *The Socialists junked dogma when they came to office in 1982.*

4. *countable noun*

*A **junk** is a Chinese sailing boat that has a flat bottom and square sails.*

jolly

jollier jolliest

Explain

1. *adjective*

*Someone who is **jolly** is happy and cheerful in their appearance or behaviour.*

- *She was a jolly, kindhearted woman.*

2. adjective

A **jolly** event is lively and enjoyable.

- I was looking forward to a jolly party.
- She had a very jolly time in Korea.

3. adverb

Jolly is sometimes used to emphasize an adjective or adverb .

- She was jolly good at jigsaws.
- It was jolly hard work, but I loved it.

4. jolly well

law

laws

Explain

1. singular noun

The law is a system of rules that a society or government develops in order to deal with crime , business agreements, and social relationships. You can also use the **law** to refer to the people who work in this system.

- Obscene and threatening phone calls are against the law.
- He had broken the law on election funding and illegally received money from abroad.
- There must be changes in the law to stop this sort of thing happening.
- The book analyses why women kill and how the law treats them.

2. uncountable noun

Law is used to refer to a particular branch of the law, such as **criminal law** or **company law** .

- He was a professor of criminal law at Harvard University law school.

- Under international law, diplomats living in foreign countries are exempt from criminal prosecution.

- Important questions of constitutional law were involved.

3. countable noun

A **law** is one of the rules in a system of law which deals with a particular type of agreement, relationship, or crime.

- ...the country's liberal political asylum law.
- The law was passed on a second vote.

4. plural noun

The laws of an organization or activity are its rules, which are used to organize and control it.

- ...the laws of the Church of England.
- Match officials should not tolerate such behaviour but instead enforce the laws of the game.

5. countable noun

A **law** is a rule or set of rules for good behaviour which is considered right and important by the majority of people for moral , religious, or emotional reasons .

- ...inflexible moral laws.

6. countable noun

A **law** is a natural process in which a particular event or thing always leads to a particular result.

- The laws of nature are absolute.

7. countable noun

A **law** is a scientific rule that someone has invented to explain a particular natural process.

- ...the law of gravity.

8. *uncountable noun*

Law or **the law** is all the professions which deal with advising people about the law, representing people in court, or giving decisions and punishments .

- A career in law is becoming increasingly attractive to young people.
- Nearly 100 law firms are being referred to the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal.

9. *uncountable noun*

Law is the study of systems of law and how laws work.

- He came to Oxford and studied law.
- He holds a law degree from Bristol University.

10. *above the law*

11. *law of averages*

12. *by law*

13. *go to law*

14. *to lay down the law*

15. *take the law into your own hands*

16. *a law unto yourself*

many

Explain

1. *determiner*

You use **many** to indicate that you are talking about a large number of people or things. **Many** is also a pronoun. **Many** is also a quantifier . **Many** is also an adjective .

- I don't think many people would argue with that.

- Not many films are made in Finland.

- Do you keep many books and papers and memorabilia?

- Many holidaymakers had avoided the worst of the delays by consulting tourist offices.

- Acting is definitely a young person's profession in many ways.

- We stood up, thinking through the possibilities. There weren't many.

- So, once we have cohabited, why do many of us feel the need to get married?

- It seems there are not very many of them left in the sea.

- In many of these neighborhoods a lot of people don't have telephones.

- Among his many hobbies was the breeding of fine horses.

- The possibilities are many.

2. *adverb*

You use **many** in expressions such as 'not many', 'not very many', and 'too many' when replying to questions about numbers of things or people.

- 'How many of the songs that dealt with this theme became hit songs?'—'Not very many.'

- How many years is it since we've seen each other? Too many, anyway.

3. *predeterminer*

You use **many** followed by 'a' and a noun to emphasize that there are a lot of people or things involved in something.

- Many a mother tries to act out her unrealized dreams through her daughter.

- I have spent many a happy hour in the hills.

4. determiner

You use **many** after 'how' to ask questions about numbers or quantities . You use **many** after 'how' in reported clauses to talk about numbers or quantities. **Many** is also a pronoun.

- How many years have you been here?
- No-one knows how many people have been killed since the war began.
- How many do you need?

5. determiner

You use **many** with 'as' when you are comparing numbers of things or people. **Many** is also a pronoun.

- I've always entered as many photo competitions as I can.
- We produced ten times as many tractors as the United States.
- Let the child try on as many as she likes.

6. pronoun

You use **many** to mean 'many people'.

- Iris Murdoch was regarded by many as a supremely good and serious writer.

7. singular noun

The many means a large group of people, especially the ordinary people in society , considered as separate from a particular small group.

- The printing press gave power to a few to change the world for the many.
- He wanted to create a society of opportunity where benefits became available to the many.

8. as many as

9. a good many/a great many

legislation

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Legislation consists of a law or laws passed by a government .

- ...a letter calling for legislation to protect women's rights.

merry

merrier merriest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone's character or behaviour as **merry** , you mean that they are happy and cheerful.

- He was much loved for his merry nature.
- From the house come the bursts of merry laughter.
- Merry black eyes glinted at them.

2. graded adjective

A **merry** sound or sight makes you feel cheerful.

- ...the merry sounds of a seven-piece brass band.
- She was humming a merry little tune.

3. adjective

If you get **merry** , you get slightly drunk.

- They went off to Glengarriff to get merry.

4. adjective

Some people use **merry** to emphasize something that they are saying , often when they want to express disapproval or humour .

- *It hasn't stopped the British Navy proceeding on its merry way.*
- *In the merry world of American lawyers it is the simplest thing in the world to start an action.*

5. Merry Christmas

6. make merry

night

nights

Explain

1. variable noun

The **night** is the part of each day when the sun has set and it is dark outside, especially the time when people are sleeping .

- *He didn't sleep a wink all night.*
- *The fighting began in the late afternoon and continued all night.*
- *Our reporter spent the night crossing the border from Austria into Slovenia.*
- *Finally night fell.*

2. countable noun

The **night** is the period of time between the end of the afternoon and the time that you go to bed, especially the time when you relax before going to bed.

- *So whose party was it last night?*
- *Demiris took Catherine to dinner the following night.*

3. countable noun

A particular **night** is a particular evening when a special event takes place, such as a show or a play .

- *The first night crowd packed the building.*

- *...election night.*

4. at night

5. at night

6. day and night/night and day

7. early night

militant

militants

Explain

1. adjective

You use **militant** to describe people who believe in something very strongly and are active in trying to bring about political or social change , often in extreme ways that other people find unacceptable . **Militant** is also a noun .

- *Militant mineworkers in the Ukraine have voted for a one-day stoppage next month.*
- *...one of the most active militant groups.*
- *The militants might still find some new excuse to call a strike.*

obedience

Explain

1. noun

1. 2. 3. 4.

oil

oils oiling oiled

Explain

1. variable noun

Oil is a smooth, thick liquid that is used as a fuel and for making the parts of machines move smoothly. Oil is found underground .

- The company buys and sells about 600,000 barrels of oil a day.
- ...the rapid rise in prices for oil and petrol.
- ...a small oil lamp.

2. verb

If you **oil** something, you put oil onto or into it, for example to make it work smoothly or to protect it.

- A crew of assistants oiled and adjusted the release mechanism until it worked perfectly.
- The leather may need to be oiled every two to three weeks in order to retain its suppleness.

3. variable noun

Oil is a smooth, thick liquid made from plants and is often used for cooking .

- Combine the beans, chopped mint and olive oil in a large bowl.
- Drop the slices into the oil and fry until golden brown.

4. variable noun

Oil is a smooth, thick liquid, often with a pleasant smell , that you rub into your skin or add to your bath .

- Try a hot bath with some relaxing bath oil.

5. countable noun

Oils are oil paintings .

- Her colourful oils and works on paper have a naive, dreamlike quality.

6. plural noun

When an artist paints in **oils** , he or she uses oil paints.

- When she paints in oils she always uses the same range of colours.

7. to pour oil on troubled waters

8. to oil the wheels

progressive

progressives

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **progressive** or has **progressive** ideas has modern ideas about how things should be done, rather than traditional ones. A **progressive** is someone who is progressive.

- ...a progressive businessman who had voted for Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936.
- Willan was able to point to the progressive changes he had already introduced.
- The children go to a progressive school.
- The Republicans were deeply split between progressives and conservatives.

2. adjective

A **progressive** change happens gradually over a period of time.

- One prominent symptom of the disease is progressive loss of memory.
- ...the progressive development of a common foreign and security policy.

3. adjective

In grammar , **progressive** means the same as continuous .

outskirts

Explain

1. plural noun

*The **outskirts** of a city or town are the parts of it that are farthest away from its centre.*

- *Hours later we reached the outskirts of New York.*

punctual

Explain

1. adjective

*If you are **punctual**, you do something or arrive somewhere at the right time and are not late.*

- *He's always very punctual. I'll see if he's here yet.*

oven

ovens

Explain

1. countable noun

*An **oven** is a device for cooking that is like a box with a door. You heat it and cook food inside it.*

- *Put the onions and ginger in the oven and let them roast for thirty minutes.*

red

reds redder reddest

Explain

1. colour

*Something that is **red** is the colour of blood or fire.*

- *...a bunch of red roses.*

- *She had small hands with nails painted bright red.*

2. adjective

*If you say that someone's face is **red**, you mean that it is redder than its normal colour, because they are embarrassed, angry, or out of breath.*

- *With a bright red face I was forced to admit that I had no real idea.*

- *She was red with shame.*

3. adjective

*You describe someone's hair as **red** when it is between red and brown in colour.*

- *...a girl with red hair.*

- *He is still vain enough to dye his hair red.*

4. adjective

*Your **red** blood cells or **red** corpuscles are the cells in your blood which carry oxygen around your body.*

5. variable noun

*You can refer to red wine as **red**.*

- *The spicy flavours in these dishes call for reds rather than whites.*

6. countable noun

*If you refer to someone as a **red** or a **Red**, you disapprove of the fact that they are a communist, a socialist, or have left-wing ideas.*

- *They're all so terrified of Reds.*

7. in the red

8. to see red

paint

paints painting painted

Explain

1. variable noun

Paint is a coloured liquid that you put onto a surface with a brush in order to protect the surface or to make it look nice , or that you use to produce a picture.

- ...a pot of red paint.
- They saw some large letters in white paint.
- ...water-based artist's paints.

2. singular noun

On a wall or object, **the paint** is the covering of dried paint on it.

- The paint was peeling on the window frames.
- They'll probably scrape the paint off and make it look like a regular patrol car.

3. verb

If you **paint** a wall or an object, you cover it with paint.

- They started to mend the woodwork and paint the walls.
- I made a guitar and painted it red.
- ...painted furniture.

4. verb

If you **paint** something or **paint** a picture of it, you produce a picture of it using paint.

- He is painting a huge volcano.
- Why do people paint pictures?
- I had come here to paint.

5. verb

When you **paint** a design or message on a surface, you put it on the surface using paint.

- ...a machine for painting white lines down roads.

- They went around painting rude slogans on cars.

- The recesses are decorated with gold stars, with smaller stars painted along the edges.

6. verb

If a woman **paints** her lips or nails , she puts a coloured cosmetic on them.

- She propped the mirror against her handbag and began to paint her lips.
- She painted her fingernails bright red.

7. verb

If you **paint** a grim or vivid picture of something, you give a description of it that is grim or vivid.

- The report paints a grim picture of life there.
- He went on to paint a rosy picture about how much has already been accomplished.

remote

remoter remotest

Explain

1. adjective

Remote areas are far away from cities and places where most people live , and are therefore difficult to get to.

- Landslides have cut off many villages in remote areas.
- ...a remote farm in the Yorkshire dales.

2. adjective

The **remote** past or **remote** future is a time that is many years distant from the present .

- Slabs of rock had slipped sideways in the remote past, and formed this hole.

3. adjective

If something is **remote from** a particular subject or area of experience , it is not relevant to it because it is very different.

- This government depends on the wishes of a few who are remote from the people.
- Teenagers are forced to study subjects that seem remote from their daily lives.

4. adjective

If you say that there is a **remote** possibility or chance that something will happen , you are emphasizing that there is only a very small chance that it will happen.

- I use a sunscreen whenever there is even a remote possibility that I will be in the sun.
- The chances of his surviving are pretty remote.

5. adjective

If you describe someone as **remote** , you mean that they behave as if they do not want to be friendly or closely involved with other people.

- She looked so beautiful, and at the same time so remote.

projector

projectors

Explain

1. countable noun

A **projector** is a machine that projects images onto a screen or wall.

- The chain is introducing digital projectors and broadcasts of live sports.

rigorous

Explain

1. adjective

A test, system, or procedure that is **rigorous** is very thorough and strict.

- The selection process is based on rigorous tests of competence and experience.
- ...a rigorous system of blood analysis.
- ...rigorous military training.

2. adjective

If someone is **rigorous** in the way that they do something, they are very careful and thorough.

- He is rigorous in his control of expenditure.

rabbit

rabbits rabbiting rabbited

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rabbit** is a small furry animal with long ears. Rabbits are sometimes kept as pets , or live wild in holes in the ground. **Rabbit** is the flesh of this animal eaten as food.

- ...rabbit stew.

sarcastic

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **sarcastic** says or does the opposite of what they really mean in order to mock or insult someone.

- She poked fun at people's shortcomings with sarcastic remarks.

reel

reels reeling reeled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **reel** is a cylindrical object around which you wrap something such as cinema film, magnetic tape, fishing line, or cotton thread.

- ...a 30m reel of cable.

2. countable noun

You can talk about a **reel** as a way of referring to all the scenes in a film which fit onto one reel of film.

- I shall not reveal the movie's final reel.

3. verb

If someone **reels**, they move about in an unsteady way as if they are going to fall.

- He was reeling a little. He must be very drunk.
- He lost his balance and reeled back.
- I stood up and almost fell, reeling against the deck rail.

4. verb

If you **are reeling** from a shock, you are feeling extremely surprised or upset because of it.

- I'm still reeling from the shock of hearing of it.
- It left us reeling with disbelief.

5. verb

If you say that your brain or your mind **is reeling**, you mean that you are very confused because you have too many things to think about.

- His mind reeled at the question.

6. countable noun

A **reel** is a type of fast Scottish dance, or fast country dance.

serious

Explain

1. adjective

Serious problems or situations are very bad and cause people to be worried or afraid.

- Crime is an increasingly serious problem in modern society.
- The government still face very serious difficulties.
- Doctors said his condition was serious but stable.

2. adjective

Serious matters are important and deserve careful and thoughtful consideration.

- I regard this as a serious matter.
- Don't laugh boy. This is serious.
- ...the serious business of running the country.

3. adjective

When important matters are dealt with in a **serious** way, they are given careful and thoughtful consideration.

- We had never discussed marriage in any serious way.
- It was a question which deserved serious consideration.
- ...serious discussions.

4. adjective

Serious music or literature requires concentration to understand or appreciate it.

- ...serious classical music.
- There is no point reviewing a blockbuster as you might review a serious novel.

5. adjective

If someone is **serious about** something, they are sincere about what they are saying , doing, or intending to do.

- You really are serious about this, aren't you?
- I hope you're not serious.

6. adjective

Serious people are thoughtful and quiet , and do not laugh very often.

- He's quite a serious person.
- She looked at me with big, serious eyes.

7. adjective

Serious money is a very large amount of money.

- He started earning serious money only in the sixties.

river

rivers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **river** is a large amount of fresh water flowing continuously in a long line across the land.

- ...a chemical works on the banks of the river.
- ...boating on the River Danube.

severe

severer severest

Explain

1. adjective

You use **severe** to indicate that something bad or undesirable is great or intense .

- ...a business with severe cash flow problems.
- I suffered from severe bouts of depression.
- Steve passed out on the floor and woke up blinded and in severe pain.
- Shortages of professional staff are very severe in some places.

2. adjective

Severe punishments or criticisms are very strong or harsh.

- This was a dreadful crime and a severe sentence is necessary.
- Before she could reply, my mother launched into a severe reprimand.

3. graded adjective

If you describe the appearance of someone or something as **severe** , you do not like its plain appearance and lack of decoration .

- ...wearing her felt hats and severe grey suits.
- The cushions add a touch of colour in a room that might otherwise look severe.

scale

scales scaling scaled

Explain

1. singular noun

If you refer to the **scale** of something, you are referring to its size or extent, especially when it is very big .

- However, he underestimates the scale of the problem.
 - You may feel dwarfed by the sheer scale of the place.
 - The break-down of law and order could result in killing on a massive scale.
 - The British aid programme is small in scale.
2. countable noun
A **scale** is a set of levels or numbers which are used in a particular system of measuring things or are used when comparing things.
- ...an earthquake measuring five-point-five on the Richter scale.
 - The patient rates the therapies on a scale of zero to ten.
 - The higher up the social scale they are, the more the men have to lose.
3. countable noun
A pay **scale** or **scale of fees** is a list that shows how much someone should be paid, depending , for example, on their age or what work they do.
- ...those on the high end of the pay scale.
 - A Registered Osteopath will be pleased to tell you his scale of fees before you decide on a consultation.
4. countable noun
The **scale** of a map , plan, or model is the relationship between the size of something in the map, plan, or model and its size in the real world.
- The map, on a scale of 1:10,000, shows over 5,000 individual paths.
5. adjective
A **scale** model or **scale** replica of a building or object is a model of it which is smaller than the real thing but has all the same parts and features .
- Franklin made his mother an intricately detailed scale model of the house.
6. countable noun
In music, a **scale** is a fixed sequence of musical notes, each one higher than the next , which begins at a particular note.
- ...the scale of C major.
7. countable noun
The **scales** of a fish or reptile are the small, flat pieces of hard skin that cover its body.
8. plural noun
Scales are a piece of equipment used for weighing things, for example for weighing amounts of food that you need in order to make a particular meal .
- ...a pair of kitchen scales.
 - ...bathroom scales.
 - I step on the scales practically every morning.
9. verb
If you **scale** something such as a mountain or a wall, you climb up it or over it.
- ...Rebecca Stephens, the first British woman to scale Everest.
 - The men scaled a wall and climbed down scaffolding on the other side.
10. out of scale
11. to scale

sociable

Explain

1. adjective
Sociable people are friendly and enjoy talking to other people.

- *She was, and remained, extremely sociable, enjoying dancing, golf and bicycling.*
- *Some children have more sociable personalities than others.*

scrutiny

Explain

1. uncountable noun

*If a person or thing is under **scrutiny** , they are being studied or observed very carefully.*

- *His private life came under media scrutiny.*
- *The President promised a government open to public scrutiny.*

stern

sterner sternest sterns

Explain

1. adjective

***Stern** words or actions are very severe.*

- *She issued a stern warning to those who persist in violence.*
- *He said stern measures would be taken against the killers.*
- *Michael gave the dog a stern look.*

2. adjective

*Someone who is **stern** is very serious and strict.*

- *Her father was stern and hard to please.*

3. countable noun

*The **stern** of a boat is the back part of it.*

4. made of sterner stuff

service

services servicing serviced

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **service** is something that the public needs, such as transport, communications facilities , hospitals , or energy supplies, which is provided in a planned and organized way by the government or an official body.*

- *Britain still boasts the cheapest postal service.*
- *We have started a campaign for better nursery and school services.*
- *The authorities have said they will attempt to maintain essential services.*

2. countable noun

*You can sometimes refer to an organization or private company as a particular **service** when it provides something for the public or acts on behalf of the government.*

- *...the BBC World Service.*
- *...Careers Advisory Services.*

3. countable noun

*If an organization or company provides a particular **service** , they can do a particular job or a type of work for you.*

- *The kitchen maintains a twenty-four-hour service and can be contacted via Reception.*
- *The larger firm was capable of providing a better range of services.*

4. plural noun

***Services** are activities such as tourism , banking , and selling things which are part of a country's economy , but are not concerned with producing or manufacturing goods.*

- Mining rose by 9.1
 - ...the doctrine that a highly developed service sector was the sign of a modern economy.
5. *uncountable noun*
The level or standard of **service** provided by an organization or company is the amount or quality of the work it can do for you.
- Taking risks is the only way employees can provide effective and efficient customer service.
 - The current level of service will be maintained during the holidays.
6. *countable noun*
A bus or train **service** is a route or regular journey that is part of a transport system.
- A bus service operates between Bolton and Salford.
7. *plural noun*
Your **services** are the things that you do or the skills that you use in your job, which other people find useful and are usually willing to pay you for.
- I have obtained the services of a top photographer to take our pictures.
 - The performers have all offered their services free of charge.
8. *uncountable noun*
If you refer to someone's **service** or **services** to a particular organization or activity, you mean that they have done a lot of work for it or spent a lot of their time on it.
- You've given a lifetime of service to athletics.
 - More than half his long service in parliament has been as a cabinet minister.
- ...the two policemen, who have a total of 31 years' service between them.
 - He was awarded the OBE in 1990 for services to fashion.
9. *countable noun*
The Services are the army, the navy, and the air force.
- In June 1945, Britain still had forty-five per cent of its workforce in the Services and munitions industries.
10. *uncountable noun*
Service is the work done by people or equipment in the army, navy, or air force, for example during a war.
- The regiment was recruited from the Highlands specifically for service in India.
 - ...an aircraft carrier that saw service in World War II.
11. *uncountable noun*
When you receive **service** in a restaurant, hotel, or shop, an employee asks you what you want or gives you what you have ordered.
- Bill was £68 including service and a couple of bar drinks and wine.
 - ...clean stores with respectful service and fair prices.
12. *countable noun*
A **service** is a religious ceremony that takes place in a church.
- After the hour-long service, his body was taken to a cemetery in the south of the city.
 - ...the church in which the President was attending morning service.

13. countable noun

A **dinner service** or a **tea service** is a complete set of plates, cups, saucers , and other pieces of china.

- ...a 60-piece dinner service.

14. countable noun

A **services** is a place beside a motorway where you can buy petrol and other things, or have a meal .

- They had to pull up, possibly go to a motorway services or somewhere like that.
- We have repeatedly told planners that services are vital on a motorway.

15. countable noun

In tennis , badminton , and some other sports, when it is your **service** , it is your turn to serve.

- She conceded just three points on her service during the first set.

16. adjective

Service is used to describe the parts of a building or structure that are used by the staff who clean , repair , or look after it, and are not usually used by the public.

- He wheeled the trolley down the corridor and disappeared with it into the service lift.
- ...the bigger tunnels, which run either side of the service tunnel.

17. uncountable noun

If someone is in **service** , they are working as a servant.

- If a young woman did not have a dowry, she went into domestic service.

18. verb

If you have a vehicle or machine **serviced** , you arrange for someone to examine , adjust , and clean it so that it will keep working efficiently and safely. **Service** is also a noun .

- I had my car serviced at the local garage.

- Make sure that all gas fires and central heating boilers are serviced annually.

- The car needs a service.

- The company sends a service engineer to fix the disk drive before it fails.

19. verb

If a country or organization **services** its debts, it pays the interest on them.

- Almost a quarter of the country's export earnings go to service a foreign debt of 29billion.

20. verb

If someone or something **services** an organization, a project, or a group of people, they provide it with the things that it needs in order to function properly or effectively.

- There are now 400 staff at headquarters, servicing our regional work.

- Fossil fuels such as oil and gas will service our needs for some considerable time to come.

21. at the service of

22. at your service

23. do someone a service

24. in service / out of service

25. of service

shopkeeper

shopkeepers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **shopkeeper** is a person who owns or manages a small shop.

superb

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **superb** , its quality is very good indeed.

- There is a superb 18-hole golf course 6 miles away.
- The waters are crystal clear and offer a superb opportunity for swimming.

2. adjective

If you say that someone has **superb** confidence , control, or skill , you mean that they have very great confidence, control, or skill.

- With superb skill he managed to make a perfect landing.

stale

staler stalest

Explain

1. adjective

Stale food is no longer fresh or good to eat .

- Their daily diet consisted of a lump of stale bread, a bowl of rice and stale water.

2. adjective

Stale air or a **stale** smells is unpleasant because it is no longer fresh.

- A layer of smoke hung low in the stale air.
- ...the smell of stale sweat.

3. graded adjective

If you feel **stale** , you are bored because you have no new ideas or enthusiasm for what you are doing.

- I believe in progression, in taking risks, in never getting stale.

4. adjective

If you say that a place, an activity , or an idea is **stale** , you mean that it has become boring because it is always the same.

- Her relationship with Mark has become stale.
- The Government, he said, were sticking to stale ideas.

supreme

Explain

1. adjective

Supreme is used in the title of a person or an official group to indicate that they are at the highest level in a particular organization or system.

- MacArthur was Supreme Commander for the allied powers in the Pacific.
- ...the Supreme Court.
- ...the Supreme Being.

2. adjective

You use **supreme** to emphasize that a quality or thing is very great.

- Her approval was of supreme importance.
- The lady conspired to seize supreme power.

stock

stocks stocking stocked

Explain

1. countable noun

Stocks are shares in the ownership of a company, or investments on which a fixed amount of interest will be paid.

- ...the buying and selling of stocks and shares.
- As stock prices have dropped, so too has bank capital.

2. uncountable noun

A company's **stock** is the amount of money which the company has through selling shares.

- The stock was valued in the market at 460million. The Fisher family holds 40

3. verb

If a shop **stocks** particular goods, it keeps a supply of them to sell.

- The shop stocks everything from chocolate to recycled loo paper.

4. uncountable noun

A shop's **stock** is the total amount of goods which it has available to sell.

- We took the decision to withdraw a quantity of stock from sale.

5. verb

If you **stock** something such as a cupboard, shelf, or room, you fill it with food or other things. **Stock up** means the same as stock.

- I worked stocking shelves in a grocery store.
- Some families stocked their cellars with food and water.
- The kitchen cupboard was stocked with tins of soup.
- I had to stock the boat up with food.

- Customers travel from hundreds of miles away to stock up their deep freezers.

- You can stock up the freezer with ice cream ready for the next sunny day

6. countable noun

If you have a **stock of** things, you have a supply of them stored in a place ready to be used.

- Keep a stock of essentials such as bread in the freezer.
- Stocks of ammunition were running low.

7. singular noun

The **stock** of something is the total amount of it that is available in a particular area.

- ...the stock of accommodation available to be rented.

8. uncountable noun

If you are from a particular **stock**, you are descended from a particular group of people.

- We are both from working class stock.
- The World Service no longer reflects the interests of listeners of British stock.

9. plural noun

Stock are cattle, sheep, pigs, or other animals which are kept by a farmer, usually ones which have been specially bred.

- I am carefully selecting the breeding stock.
- His herd of 170 dairy cattle and 200 young stock are kept on the land.

10. adjective

A **stock** answer, expression, or way of doing something is one that is very commonly used, especially because people cannot be bothered to think of something new.

- My boss had a stock response—'If it ain't broke, don't fix it!'.
- National security is the stock excuse for keeping things confidential.

11. variable noun

Stock is a liquid, usually made by boiling meat, bones, or vegetables in water, that is used to give flavour to soups and sauces .

12. plural noun

In former times, the **stocks** were an instrument of punishment. A criminal's hands and legs were locked into holes in a wooden frame while people threw things at them.

13. in stock/out of stock

14. take stock

tame

tamer tamest tames taming tamed

Explain

1. adjective

A **tame** animal or bird is one that is not afraid of humans.

- The deer never became tame; they would run away if you approached them.

2. adjective

If you say that something or someone is **tame** , you are criticizing them for being weak and uninteresting , rather than forceful or shocking .

- Some of today's political demonstrations look rather tame.
- The report was pretty tame stuff.

3. verb

If someone **tames** a wild animal or bird, they train it not to be afraid of humans and to do what they say.

- The Amazons were believed to have been the first to tame horses.

4. verb

If you **tame** someone or something that is dangerous , uncontrolled , or likely to cause trouble , you bring them under control.

- Two regiments of cavalry were called out to tame the crowds.

stove

stoves

Explain

1. countable noun

A **stove** is a piece of equipment which provides heat, either for cooking or for heating a room .

- She put the kettle on the gas stove.

2. countable noun

A **stove** is the top of a cooker .

technical

Explain

1. adjective

Technical means involving the sorts of machines, processes, and materials that are used in industry , transport , and communications .

- In order to reach this limit a number of technical problems will have to be solved.
- ...jobs that require technical knowledge.
- Many technical experts at the time had doubts about the technology.

2. adjective

You use **technical** to describe the practical skills and methods used to do an activity such as an art, a craft , or a sport .

- *Their technical ability is exceptional.*
- *In the realm of sculpture too, the technical skill of foreign artists was long recognised.*

3. adjective

Technical language involves using special words to describe the details of a specialized activity.

- *The technical term for sunburn is erythema.*
- *He's just written a book: large format, nicely illustrated and not too technical.*

terrific

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **terrific**, you are very pleased with them or very impressed by them.

- *What a terrific idea!*
- *Everybody there was having a terrific time.*
- *You look terrific, Ann. You really do.*

2. adjective

Terrific means very great in amount, degree, or intensity.

- *He did a terrific amount of fundraising.*
- *All of a sudden there was a terrific bang and a flash of smoke.*

tanker

tankers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tanker** is a very large ship used for transporting large quantities of gas or liquid, especially oil.

- *An oil tanker has run aground.*

2. countable noun

A **tanker** is a large truck, railway vehicle, or aircraft used for transporting large quantities of a substance.

- *...an accident involving a petrol tanker on the M27, east of Southampton.*

tiny

tinier tiniest

Explain

1. adjective

Something or someone that is **tiny** is extremely small.

- *The living room is tiny.*
- *Though she was tiny, she had a very loud voice.*
- *The crop represents a tiny fraction of U.S. production.*

temple

temples

Explain

1. countable noun

A **temple** is a building used for the worship of a god or gods, especially in the Buddhist and Hindu religions, and in ancient Greek and Roman times.

- ...a small Hindu temple.
- ...the Temple of Diana at Ephesus.

2. countable noun

Your **temples** are the flat parts on each side of the front part of your head, near your forehead .

- Threads of silver ran through his beard and the hair at his temples.

vocal

Explain

1. adjective

You say that people are **vocal** when they speak forcefully about something that they feel strongly about.

- He has been very vocal in his displeasure over the results.
- A public inquiry earlier this year produced vocal opposition from residents.

2. adjective

Vocal means involving the use of the human voice, especially in singing.

- ...a wider range of vocal styles.
- ...vocal training.

2. countable noun

A **unit** is a group of people who work together at a specific job , often in a particular place.

- ...the health services research unit.
- The results from this unit are staggering.

3. countable noun

A **unit** is a group within an armed force or police force, whose members fight or work together or carry out a particular task .

- One secret military unit tried to contaminate the drinking water of the refugees.
- Two small Marine units are trapped inside the city.

4. countable noun

A **unit** is a small machine which has a particular function, often part of a larger machine.

- The unit plugs into any TV set.

5. countable noun

A **unit** of measurement is a fixed standard quantity, length, or weight that is used for measuring things. The litre , the centimetre , and the ounce are all units.

6. countable noun

A **unit** is one of the parts that a textbook is divided into.

unit

units

Explain

1. countable noun

If you consider something as a **unit** , you consider it as a single, complete thing.

- Agriculture was based in the past on the family as a unit.

waterproof

waterproofs waterproofing waterproofed

Explain

1. adjective

Something which is **waterproof** does not let water pass through it.

- Take waterproof clothing—Orkney weather is unpredictable.

- Designed to be completely waterproof, the lights are manufactured from heavy duty plastic.

2. countable noun

Waterproofs are items of clothing which do not let water in.

- For staying dry you'll want nice lightweight waterproofs to wear over your leathers.

3. verb

If something **is waterproofed**, it is treated so that water cannot pass through it or damage it.

- The whole boat has been totally waterproofed.
- Waterproofed fabric pants are more expensive than plastic pants.

variation

variations

Explain

1. countable noun

A **variation on** something is the same thing presented in a slightly different form.

- This delicious variation on an omelette is quick and easy to prepare.
- Many theories on punishment exist, all of which are variations on a theme.

2. variable noun

A **variation** is a change or slight difference in a level, amount, or quantity.

- The survey found a wide variation in the prices charged for canteen food.
- Every day without variation my grandfather ate a plate of cold ham.

wicked

Explain

1. adjective

You use **wicked** to describe someone or something that is very bad and deliberately harmful to people.

- She described the shooting as a wicked attack.
- She flew at me, shouting how wicked and evil I was.

2. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **wicked**, you mean that they are rather naughty, but in a way that you find attractive or enjoyable.

- She had a wicked sense of humour.
- I adore white chocolate, and I always feel very wicked when eating it.

weekend

weekends

Explain

1. countable noun

A **weekend** is Saturday and Sunday.

- She had agreed to have dinner with him in town the following weekend.
- He told me to give you a call over the weekend.

annual

annuals

Explain

1. adjective

Annual events happen once every year.

- ...the annual conference of Britain's trade union movement.
- In its annual report, UNICEF says at least 40,000 children die every day.

2. adjective

Annual quantities or rates relate to a period of one year.

- Annual costs, tuition and fees, £1,600.
- The electronic and printing unit has annual sales of about 80million.

3. countable noun

An **annual** is a book or magazine that is published once a year.

- I looked for Wyman's picture in my high-school annual.
- He tried the various almanacs, annuals and gazettes which were held in the library.

4. countable noun

An **annual** is a plant that grows and dies within one year.

- The simplest way to deal with these hardy annuals is to sow them where they are to flower.

air

airs airing aired

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Air is the mixture of gases which forms the Earth's atmosphere and which we breathe .

- Draughts help to circulate air.

- Keith opened the window and leaned out into the cold air.

- ...water and air pollutants.

2. singular noun

The air is the space around things or above the ground.

- Government troops broke up the protest by firing their guns in the air.

- Smoke seemed to hang in the air.

3. uncountable noun

Air is used to refer to travel in aircraft.

- Air travel will continue to grow at about 6
- Casualties had to be brought to hospital by air.

4. countable noun

An **air** is a simple tune which can be easily recognized and remembered .

5. singular noun

If you say that someone or something has a particular **air** , you mean that they give this general impression .

- Jennifer regarded him with an air of amusement.

- The meal gave the occasion an almost festive air.

6. plural noun

If you say that someone is putting on **airs** or giving themselves **airs** , you are criticizing them for behaving as if they are better than other people.

- We're poor and we never put on airs.

7. verb

If a broadcasting company **airs** a television or radio programme, they show it on television or broadcast it on the radio.

- Tonight PBS will air a documentary called 'Democracy In Action'.

8. verb

If you **air** your opinions, you make them known to people.

- They sat for more than six hours, and both sides agreed they had aired all their differences.
- The whole issue was thoroughly aired at the meeting.

9. verb

If you **air** a room or building, you let fresh air into it.

- One day a week her mother systematically cleaned and aired each room.

10. verb

If you **air** clothing or bedding, you put it somewhere warm to make sure that it is completely dry.

- I ironed the shirts myself, aired them and placed them in drawers in his room.

11. to clear the air

12. airs and graces

13. in the air

14. on the air

15. into thin air/out of thin air

16. up in the air

17. to be walking on air

aural

Explain

1. adjective

Aural means related to the sense of hearing. Compare acoustic .

- He became famous as an inventor of astonishing visual and aural effects.

bald

balder baldest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **bald** has little or no hair on the top of their head.

- The man's bald head was beaded with sweat.
- She is going bald.

2. adjective

If a tyre is **bald**, its surface has worn down and it is no longer safe to use.

3. adjective

A **bald** statement is in plain language and contains no extra explanation or information .

- The announcement came in a bald statement from the official news agency.
- The bald truth is he's just not happy.

bureaucracy

bureaucracies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bureaucracy** is an administrative system operated by a large number of officials.

- State bureaucracies can tend to stifle enterprise and initiative.

2. uncountable noun

Bureaucracy refers to all the rules and procedures followed by government departments and similar organizations, especially when you think that these are complicated and cause long delays .

- People usually complain about having to deal with too much bureaucracy.

consecutive

Explain

1. adjective

Consecutive periods of time or events happen one after the other without interruption.

- The Cup was won for the third consecutive year by the Toronto Maple Leafs.
- ...two consecutive wet British summers.

chamber

chambers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **chamber** is a large room, especially one that is used for formal meetings.

- We are going to make sure we are in the council chamber every time he speaks.

2. countable noun

You can refer to a country's parliament or to one section of it as a **chamber** .

- More than 80 parties are contesting seats in the two-chamber parliament.
- His government has only a 16-seat majority in the Chamber of Deputies.

3. countable noun

A **chamber** is a room designed and equipped for a particular purpose .

- For many, the dentist's surgery remains a torture chamber.

4. countable noun

A **chamber** is a hollow place inside the body of a person or animal, or inside a plant.

5. plural noun

The offices used by judges and barristers are referred to as **chambers** .

continuous

Explain

1. adjective

A **continuous** process or event continues for a period of time without stopping .

- Residents report that they heard continuous gunfire.
- ...all employees who had a record of five years' continuous employment with the firm.
- There is a continuous stream of phone calls.

2. adjective

A **continuous** line or surface has no gaps or holes in it.

- ...a continuous line of boats.

- ...the continuous frieze of sculpted figures.

3. adjective

In English grammar, **continuous** verb groups are formed using the auxiliary 'be' and the present participle of a verb, as in 'I'm feeling a bit tired' and 'She had been watching them for some time'. Continuous verb groups are used especially when you are focusing on a particular moment. Compare simple.

character

characters

Explain

1. countable noun

The **character** of a person or place consists of all the qualities they have that make them distinct from other people or places.

- Perhaps there is a negative side to his character that you haven't seen yet.
- The character of this country has been formed by immigration.

2. singular noun

If something has a particular **character**, it has a particular quality.

- The financial concessions granted to British Aerospace were, he said, of a precarious character.
- The state farms were semi-military in character.

3. singular noun

You can use **character** to refer to the qualities that people from a particular place are believed to have.

- Individuality is a valued and inherent part of the British character.

4. countable noun

You use **character** to say what kind of person someone is. For example, if you say that someone is a strange **character**, you mean they are strange.

- It's that kind of courage and determination that makes him such a remarkable character.
- What a sad character that Nigel is.

5. variable noun

Your **character** is your personality, especially how reliable and honest you are. If someone is **of** good **character**, they are reliable and honest. If they are **of** bad **character**, they are unreliable and dishonest.

- He's begun a series of personal attacks on my character.
- Mr Bartman was a man of good character.

6. uncountable noun

If you say that someone has **character**, you mean that they have the ability to deal effectively with difficult, unpleasant, or dangerous situations.

- She showed real character in her attempts to win over the crowd.
- I didn't know Ron had that much strength of character.

7. uncountable noun

If you say that a place has **character**, you mean that it has an interesting or unusual quality which makes you notice it and like it.

- An ugly shopping centre stands across from one of the few buildings with character.

8. countable noun

The **characters** in a film, book, or play are the people that it is about.

- The film is autobiographical and the central character is played by Collard himself.
- He's made the characters believable.

9. countable noun

If you say that someone is a **character**, you mean that they are interesting, unusual, or amusing.

- He'll be sadly missed. He was a real character.

10. countable noun

A **character** is a letter, number, or other symbol that is written or printed.

11. in character/out of character

daily

dailies

Explain

1. adverb

If something happens **daily**, it happens every day. **Daily** is also an adjective.

- Cathay Pacific flies daily non-stop to Hong Kong from Heathrow.
- The Visitor Centre is open daily 8.30 a.m.–4.30 p.m.
- They held daily press briefings.

2. adjective

Daily quantities or rates relate to a period of one day.

- ...a diet containing adequate daily amounts of fresh fruit.
- Our average daily turnover is about £300.

3. countable noun

A **daily** is a newspaper that is published every day of the week except Sunday. **Daily** is also an adjective.

- Copies of the local daily had been scattered on a table.
- He studied the daily papers.

4. daily life

college

colleges

Explain

1. variable noun

A **college** is an institution where students study after they have left school.

- Their daughter Joanna is doing business studies at a local college.
- Stephanie took up making jewellery after leaving art college this summer.
- He is now a professor of economics at Western New England College in Springfield, Massachusetts.

2. countable noun

A **college** is one of the institutions which some British universities are divided into.

- He was educated at Balliol College, Oxford.

3. countable noun

At some universities in the United States, **colleges** are divisions which offer degrees in particular subjects.

- ...a professor at the University of Florida College of Law.

4. countable noun

College is used in Britain in the names of some secondary schools which charge fees .

- In 1854, Cheltenham Ladies' College became the first girls' public school.

5. countable noun

A **college** of a particular kind is an organized group of people who have special duties and powers.

- He is a member of the Royal College of Physicians.
- There is a college of international supervisors working together.

decent

Explain

1. adjective

Decent is used to describe something which is considered to be of an acceptable standard or quality.

- Nearby is a village with a decent pub.
- He didn't get a decent explanation.
- The lack of a decent education did not defeat Rey.

2. adjective

Decent is used to describe something which is morally correct or acceptable.

- But, after a decent interval, trade relations began to return to normal.
- As soon as it was decent, he turned and left the cemetery.

3. adjective

Decent people are honest and behave in a way that most people approve of.

- The majority of people around here are decent people.

- The jury will see what a decent guy he is.

4. do the decent thing

comment

comments commenting commented

Explain

1. verb

If you **comment on** something, you give your opinion about it or you give an explanation for it.

- So far, Mr Cook has not commented on these reports.
- Stratford police refuse to comment on whether anyone has been arrested.
- You really can't comment till you know the facts.
- 'I'm always happy with new developments,' he commented.
- Stuart commented that this was very true.

2. variable noun

A **comment** is something that you say which expresses your opinion of something or which gives an explanation of it.

- He made his comments at a news conference in Amsterdam.
- I was wondering whether you had any comments about that?
- There's been no comment so far from police about the allegations.
- The Prime Minister, who is abroad, was not available for comment.

3. singular noun

If an event or situation is a **comment on** something, it reveals something about that thing, usually something bad .

- He argues that family problems are typically a comment on some unresolved issues in the family.

4. no comment

difficult

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **difficult** is not easy to do, understand, or deal with.

- Hobart found it difficult to get her first book published.
- The lack of childcare provisions made it difficult for single mothers to get jobs.
- It was a very difficult decision to make.
- We're living in difficult times.

2. adjective

Someone who is **difficult** behaves in an unreasonable and unhelpful way .

- I had a feeling you were going to be difficult about this.

definition

definitions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **definition** is a statement giving the meaning of a word or expression , especially in a dictionary .

- There is no general agreement on a standard definition of intelligence.

- A nice meal with friends is my definition of a good time.

2. uncountable noun

Definition is the quality of being clear and distinct .

- Give your brows extra definition with eyebrow pencil.

- The speakers criticised his new programme for lack of definition.

every

Explain

1. determiner

You use **every** to indicate that you are referring to all the members of a group or all the parts of something and not only some of them. **Every** is also an adjective .

- Every village has a green, a church, a pub and a manor house.

- Record every expenditure you make.

- ...Mediterranean fish of every shape and hue.

- We need help, every kind of help.

- ...recipes for every occasion.

- His every utterance will be scrutinized.

- He will find his every step more harshly spotlighted than has been the case previously.

2. determiner

You use **every** in order to say how often something happens or to indicate that something happens at regular intervals .

- We were made to attend meetings every day.

- A burglary occurs every three minutes in London.
- She will need to have the therapy repeated every few months.
- They meet here every Friday morning.

3. determiner

You use **every** in front of a number when you are saying what proportion of people or things something happens to or applies to.

- Human beings spend about eight out of every 24 hours sleeping.
- About one in every 20 people have clinical depression.
- He said Africa was suffering badly from deforestation: for every ten trees cut down, only one was planted.

4. determiner

You can use **every** before some nouns, for example 'sign', 'effort', 'reason', and 'intention' in order to emphasize what you are saying.

- Like most of those on the dance floor, they give every sign of delight.
- I think that there is every chance that you will succeed.
- Make every effort to visit a person suffering a significant loss, rather than writing or telephoning.
- Every care has been taken in compiling this list.

5. adjective

If you say that someone's **every** whim, wish, or desire will be satisfied, you are emphasizing that everything they want will happen or be provided.

- Dozens of servants had catered to his every whim.

6. every now and then etc

7. every other day/every second day etc

entity

entities

Explain

1. countable noun

An **entity** is something that exists separately from other things and has a clear identity of its own.

- ...the earth as a living entity.
- They did not see government and society as two separate entities.

financial

Explain

1. adjective

Financial means relating to or involving money.

- The company is in financial difficulties.
- ...the government's financial advisers.

estate

estates

Explain

1. countable noun

An **estate** is a large area of land in the country which is owned by a person, family, or organization.

- ...a shooting party on Lord Wyville's estate in Yorkshire.

2. countable noun

People sometimes use **estate** to refer to a housing estate or an industrial estate.

- He used to live on the estate.

3. countable noun

Someone's **estate** is all the money and property that they leave behind them when they die .

- His estate was valued at 150,000.

4. countable noun

An **estate** is the same as an estate car .

firm

firms firming firmed firmer firmest

Explain

1. countable noun

A **firm** is an organization which sells or produces something or which provides a service which people pay for.

- The firm's employees were expecting large bonuses.
- ...a firm of heating engineers.

2. adjective

If something is **firm** , it does not change much in shape when it is pressed but is not completely hard.

- Fruit should be firm and in excellent condition.
- Choose a soft, medium or firm mattress to suit their individual needs.

3. adjective

If something is **firm** , it does not shake or move when you put weight or pressure on it, because it is strongly made or securely fastened .

- If you have to climb up, use a firm platform or a sturdy ladder.

4. adjective

If someone's grip is **firm** or if they perform a physical action in a **firm** way, they do it with quite a lot of force or pressure but also in a controlled way.

- The quick handshake was firm and cool.
- He managed to grasp the metal, get a firm grip of it and heave his body upwards.

5. adjective

If you describe someone as **firm** , you mean they behave in a way that shows that they are not going to change their mind, or that they are the person who is in control.

- She had to be firm with him. 'I don't want to see you again.'
- Perhaps they need the guiding hand of a firm father figure.

6. adjective

A **firm** decision or opinion is definite and unlikely to change.

- He made a firm decision to leave Fort Muly by boat.
- It is my firm belief that partnership between police and the public is absolutely necessary.

7. adjective

Firm evidence or information is based on facts and so is likely to be true .

- This man may have killed others but unfortunately we have no firm evidence.
- There's unlikely to be firm news about the convoy's progress for some time.

8. adjective

You use **firm** to describe control or a basis or position when it is strong and unlikely to be ended or removed.

- A goalkeeping mistake put Dagenham in firm control of the first half.
- The company, a household name in the States, has a firm foothold in the British market.

9. graded adjective

If people are **firm** friends, they have been close friends for a long time and their friendship is likely to continue.

- The couple met about two years ago and soon became firm friends.

10. adjective

If a price, value, or currency is **firm**, it is not decreasing in value or amount.

- Cotton prices remain firm and demand is strong.
- The shares held firm at 280p.
- Firm prices and stability will allow both producers and consumers to plan confidently.

11. verb

If you **firm** soil around a plant, you press it so that it is fairly solid rather than loose.

- Firm more soil over the roots and water thoroughly.

12. to stand firm

experiment

experiments experimenting experimented

Explain

1. variable noun

An **experiment** is a scientific test which is done in order to discover what happens to something in particular conditions.

- He carried out a series of experiments on the properties of plants.
- ...a proposed new law on animal experiments.
- This question can be answered only by experiment.

2. verb

If you **experiment with** something or **experiment on** it, you do a scientific test on it in order to discover what happens to it in particular conditions.

- In 1857 Mendel started experimenting with peas in his monastery garden.
- The scientists have already experimented at each other's test sites.

3. variable noun

An **experiment** is the trying out of a new idea or method in order to see what it is like and what effects it has.

- As an experiment, we bought Ted a watch.
- ...the country's five year experiment in democracy.
- She needs plenty of room for experiment in her life.

4. verb

To **experiment** means to try out a new idea or method to see what it is like and what effects it has.

- ...if you like cooking and have the time to experiment.
- He believes that students should be encouraged to experiment with bold ideas.

frequent

frequents frequenting frequented

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **frequent**, it happens often.

- Bordeaux is on the main Paris-Madrid line so there are frequent trains.
- He is a frequent visitor to the house.

2. verb

If someone **frequents** a particular place, they regularly go there.

- I hear he frequents the Cajun restaurant in Hampstead.

institute

institutes instituting instituted

Explain

1. countable noun

An **institute** is an organization set up to do a particular type of work, especially research or teaching. You can also use **institute** to refer to the building the organization occupies.

- ...the National Cancer Institute.
- ...an elite research institute devoted to computer software.
- Directly in front of the institute is Kelly Ingram Park.

2. verb

If you **institute** a system, rule, or course of action, you start it.

- We will institute a number of measures to better safeguard the public.
- Hormone replacement therapy is very important and should be instituted early.

immune

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **immune to** a particular disease, you cannot be affected by it.

- This blood test will show whether or not you're immune to the disease.
- Most adults are immune to rubella.

2. adjective

An **immune** response or reaction is a reaction by the body's immune system to something harmful that is affecting it.

- It is hoped the procedure will trigger an immune response that will wipe out HIV-infected cells while leaving non-infected cells unharmed.

3. adjective

If you are **immune to** something that happens or is done, you are not affected by it.

- Whilst Marc did gradually harden himself to the poverty, he did not become immune to the sight of death.
- Football is not immune to economic recession.

4. adjective

Someone or something that is **immune from** a particular process or situation is able to escape it.

- Members of the Bundestag are immune from prosecution for corruption.
- No one is immune from scandal.

journal

journals

Explain

1. countable noun

A **journal** is a magazine , especially one that deals with a specialized subject.

- All our results are published in scientific journals.

2. countable noun

A **journal** is a daily or weekly newspaper. The word journal is often used in the name of the paper .

- He was a newspaperman for The New York Times and some other journals.
- ...The Wall Street Journal.

3. countable noun

A **journal** is an account which you write of your daily activities.

- Sara confided to her journal.
- On the plane he wrote in his journal.

implicit

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **implicit** is expressed in an indirect way.

- This is seen as an implicit warning not to continue with military action.
- The specific reference to the latter phenomenon was only implicit in the text.

2. adjective

If a quality or element is **implicit in** something, it is involved in it or is shown by it.

- ...the delays implicit in formal council meetings.

- Try and learn from the lessons implicit in the failure of your marriage.

3. adjective

If you say that someone has an **implicit** belief or faith in something, you mean that they have complete faith in it and no doubts at all.

- He had implicit faith in the noble intentions of the Emperor.

landlord

landlords

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **landlord** is the man who allows them to live or work in a building which he owns, in return for rent .

- His landlord doubled the rent.

2. countable noun

The **landlord** of a pub is the man who owns or runs it, or the husband of the person who owns or runs it.

- The landlord refused to serve him because he considered him too drunk.

3. countable noun

A **landlord** is the man who owns or runs a boarding house or inn .

inside

insides

Explain

1. preposition

Something or someone that is **inside** a place, container , or object is in it or is surrounded by it. **Inside** is also an adverb . **Inside** is also an adjective .

- *Inside the passport was a folded slip of paper.*
 - *There is a phone inside the entrance hall.*
 - *The couple chatted briefly on the doorstep before going inside.*
 - *He ripped open the envelope and read what was inside.*
 - *I could hear music coming from inside.*
 - *At a table inside, a man and woman were awaiting her.*
 - *Inside, a few workers went about their work.*
 - *...four-berth inside cabins with en-suite bathroom and shower.*
2. countable noun
The **inside** of something is the part or area that its sides surround or contain. **Inside** is also an adjective. **Inside** is also an adverb.
- *The doors were locked from the inside.*
 - *I painted the inside of the house.*
 - *Kiwi fruit can be eaten by cutting off the tops and scooping out the insides with a teaspoon.*
 - *The popular papers all have photo features on their inside pages.*
 - *The potato cakes should be crisp outside and meltingly soft inside.*
3. adverb
You can say that someone is **inside** when they are in prison.
- *He's been inside three times.*
4. adjective
On a wide road, the **inside** lane is the one which is closest to the edge of the road. Compare outside. **Inside** is also a noun.
- *I was driving up at seventy miles an hour on the inside lane on the motorway.*
 - *I overtook Charlie on the inside.*
5. adjective
Inside information is obtained from someone who is involved in a situation and therefore knows a lot about it.
- *Sloane used inside diplomatic information to make himself rich.*
 - *It's fascinating to get the inside story so many years after this incident.*
6. preposition
If you are **inside** an organization, you belong to it. **Inside** is also an adjective. **Inside** is also a noun.
- *75 percent of chief executives come from inside the company.*
 - *He hasn't looked very carefully into what was happening inside the ruling party.*
 - *...a recent book about the inside world of pro football.*
 - *McAvoy was convinced he could control things from the inside but he lost control.*
7. plural noun
Your **insides** are your internal organs, especially your stomach.
8. adverb
If you say that someone has a feeling **inside**, you mean that they have it but have not expressed it. **Inside** is also a preposition. **Inside** is also a noun.
- *There is nothing left inside—no words, no anger, no tears.*
 - *Do you get a feeling inside when you write something you like?*

- *He felt a great weight of sorrow inside him.*
- *There was a little anger inside me.*
- *What is needed is a change from the inside, a real change in outlook and attitude.*

9. preposition

*If you do something **inside** a particular time, you do it before the end of that time.*

- *They should have everything working inside an hour.*
- *New Zealand were ahead inside five minutes.*

10. inside out

11. inside out

12. turn inside out

leisure

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Leisure is the time when you are not working and you can relax and do things that you enjoy .

- *...a relaxing way to fill my leisure time.*
- *...one of Britain's most popular leisure activities.*

2. at leisure/at sb's leisure

masculine

Explain

1. adjective

Masculine qualities and things relate to or are considered typical of men, in contrast to women .

- *...masculine characteristics like a husky voice and facial hair.*
- *...masculine pride.*

2. adjective

*If you say that someone or something is **masculine** , you mean that they have qualities such as strength or confidence which are considered typical of men.*

- *...her aggressive, masculine image.*
- *The Duke's study was very masculine, with deep red wall-covering and dark oak shelving.*

3. adjective

*In some languages, a **masculine** noun, pronoun , or adjective has a different form from a feminine or neuter one, or behaves in a different way .*

mud

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Mud is a sticky mixture of earth and water.

- *His uniform was crumpled, untidy, splashed with mud.*
- *Their lorry got stuck in the mud.*

medical

medicals

Explain

1. adjective

Medical means relating to illness and injuries and to their treatment or prevention .

- *Several police officers received medical treatment for cuts and bruises.*

- ...the medical profession.

2. countable noun

A **medical** is a thorough examination of your body by a doctor , for example before you start a new job .

officer

officers

Explain

1. countable noun

In the armed forces, an **officer** is a person in a position of authority.

- ...a retired British army officer.
- He was an officer in the Cadet Corps.

2. countable noun

An **officer** is a person who has a responsible position in an organization, especially a government organization.

- ...a local authority education officer.

3. countable noun

Members of the police force can be referred to as **officers** .

- ...senior officers in the West Midlands police force.
- Thank you, Officer.

monthly

monthlies

Explain

1. adjective

A **monthly** event or publication happens or appears every month. **Monthly** is also an adverb .

- Many people are now having trouble making their monthly house payments.
- Kidscape runs monthly workshops for teachers.
- ...Young Guard, a monthly journal founded in 1922.
- In some areas the property price can rise monthly.

2. countable noun

You can refer to a publication that is published monthly as a **monthly** .

- ...Sallywag, a London satirical monthly.
- ...the Nairobi Law Monthly.

3. adjective

Monthly quantities or rates relate to a period of one month.

- The monthly rent for a two-bedroom flat would be £953.33.
- Monthly interest costs vary.

official

officials

Explain

1. adjective

Official means approved by the government or by someone in authority.

- According to the official figures, over one thousand people died during the revolution.

- *An official announcement is expected in the next few days.*

- *A report in the official police newspaper gave no reason for the move.*

2. adjective

Official activities are carried out by a person in authority as part of their job .

- *The President is in Brazil for an official two-day visit.*

3. adjective

Official things are used by a person in authority as part of their job.

- *...the official residence of the Head of State.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone's explanation or reason for something as the **official** explanation, you are suggesting that it is probably not true , but is used because the real explanation is embarrassing .

- *The official explanation for the cancellation is that there are no premises available.*
- *The official reason given for the President's absence was sickness.*

5. countable noun

An **official** is a person who holds a position of authority in an organization.

- *A senior U.N. official hopes to visit Baghdad this month.*

6. countable noun

An **official** at a sports event is a referee , umpire , or other person who checks that the players follow the rules .

more

Explain

1. determiner

You use **more** to indicate that there is a greater amount of something than before or than average , or than something else. You can use 'a little', 'a lot', 'a bit', 'far', and 'much' in front of **more** . **More** is also a pronoun. **More** is also a quantifier .

- *More and more people are surviving heart attacks.*
- *He spent more time perfecting his dance moves instead of gym work.*
- *...teaching more children foreign languages other than English.*
- *It's a good idea to give adolescents a little more information than they ask for.*
- *As the level of work increased from light to heavy, workers ate more.*
- *He had four hundred dollars in his pocket. Billy had more.*
- *Employees may have to take on more of their own medical costs.*
- *The urgent need to bolster the reforms is beginning to demand more of his attention.*

2. phrase

You use **more than** before a number or amount to say that the actual number or amount is even greater.

- *The Afghan authorities say the airport had been closed for more than a year.*
- *...classy leather and silk jackets at more than £250.*
- *...a survey of more than 1,500 schools.*

3. *adverb*

You use **more** to indicate that something or someone has a greater amount of a quality than they used to or than is average or usual .

- *Prison conditions have become more brutal.*
- *We can satisfy our basic wants more easily than in the past.*

4. *adverb*

If you say that something is **more** one thing **than** another, you mean that it is like the first thing rather than the second .

- *The exhibition at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts is more a production than it is a museum display.*
- *He's more like a film star than a life-guard, really.*
- *She looked more sad than in pain.*
- *Sue screamed, not loudly, more in surprise than terror.*
- *She's more of a social animal than me.*

5. *adverb*

If you do something **more** than before or **more** than someone else, you do it to a greater extent or more often.

- *When we are tired, tense, depressed or unwell, we feel pain much more.*
- *What impressed me more was that she knew Tennessee Williams.*

6. *adverb*

You can use **more** to indicate that something continues to happen for a further period of time.

- *Things might have been different if I'd talked a bit more.*

7. *adverb*

You use **more** to indicate that something is repeated . For example , if you do something 'once more', you do it again once.

- *This train would stop twice more in the suburbs before rolling southeast toward Munich.*
- *The breathing exercises should be repeated several times more.*

8. *determiner*

You use **more** to refer to an additional thing or amount. You can use 'a little', 'a lot', 'a bit', 'far' and 'much' in front of **more** . **More** is also an adjective. **More** is also a pronoun.

- *They needed more time to consider whether to hold an inquiry.*
- *We stayed in Danville two more days.*
- *Are you sure you wouldn't like some more coffee?*
- *Oxfam has appealed to western nations to do more to help the refugees.*
- *'None of them are very nice folks.'—'Tell me more.'*

9. *pronoun*

You can use **more** in expressions like 'no more, no less' and 'neither more nor less' to indicate that what you are saying is exactly true or correct .

- *I told him the truth. No more, no less.*
- *I'm sixty-two. I feel sixty-two, neither more nor less.*

10. *adverb*

You use **more** in conversations when you want to draw someone's attention to something interesting or important that you are about to say.

- *The way we dress reflects who we are and, more interestingly, who we wish we could be.*

- More seriously for him, there are members who say he is wrong on this issue.

11. more and more

12. more or less

13. more than

14. more than

15. no more than/not more than

16. nothing more than

17. what is more

poem

poems

Explain

1. countable noun

A **poem** is a piece of writing in which the words are chosen for their beauty and sound and are carefully arranged , often in short lines which rhyme.

poet

poets

Explain

1. countable noun

A **poet** is a person who writes poems .

- He was a painter and poet.

negative

negatives

Explain

1. adjective

A fact, situation, or experience that is **negative** is unpleasant, depressing , or harmful .

- The news from overseas is overwhelmingly negative.
- All this had an extremely negative effect on the criminal justice system.

2. adjective

If someone is **negative** or has a **negative** attitude , they consider only the bad aspects of a situation, rather than the good ones.

- When asked for your views about your current job, on no account must you be negative about it.
- Why does the media present such a negative view of this splendid city?

3. adjective

A **negative** reply or decision indicates the answer 'no'.

- Dr Velayati gave a vague but negative response.
- Upon a negative decision, the applicant loses the protection offered by Belgian law.
- The Tory response to that was negative.

4. countable noun

A **negative** is a word, expression, or gesture that means 'no' or 'not'.

- In the past we have heard only negatives when it came to following a healthy diet.

5. adjective

In grammar , a **negative** clause contains a word such as 'not', 'never ', or 'no-one'.

6. adjective

If a medical test or scientific test is **negative** , it shows no evidence of the medical condition or substance that you are looking for.

- So far 57 have taken the test and all have been negative.
- ...negative test results.

7. countable noun

In photography, a **negative** is an image that shows dark areas as light and light areas as dark. Negatives are made from a camera film, and are used to print photographs.

8. adjective

A **negative** charge or current has the same electrical charge as an electron.

- Stimulate the site of greatest pain with a small negative current.

9. adjective

A **negative** number, quantity, or measurement is less than zero.

- The weakest students can end up with a negative score.

10. in the negative

11. in the negative

poetry

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Poems , considered as a form of literature, are referred to as **poetry** .

- ...Russian poetry.
- His first encounter with poetry had been the Tennyson given him by his father.

- Since when have you been interested in poetry?

2. uncountable noun

You can describe something very beautiful as **poetry** .

- His music is purer poetry than a poem in words.

neither

Explain

1. conjunction

You use **neither** in front of the first of two or more words or expressions when you are linking two or more things which are not true or do not happen . The other thing is introduced by 'nor'.

- Professor Hisamatsu spoke neither English nor German.
- The play is neither as funny nor as disturbing as Tabori thinks it is.

2. determiner

You use **neither** to refer to each of two things or people, when you are making a negative statement that includes both of them. **Neither** is also a quantifier . **Neither** is also a pronoun.

- At first, neither man could speak.
- Neither of us felt like going out.
- They both smiled; neither seemed likely to be aware of my absence for long.

3. conjunction

If you say that one person or thing does not do something and **neither** does another, what you say is true of all the people or things that you are mentioning .

- I never learned to swim and neither did they.

- *I don't have all the answers and neither do you.*

4. conjunction

You use **neither** after a negative statement to emphasize that you are introducing another negative statement.

- *I can't ever recall Dad hugging me. Neither did I sit on his knee.*

5. neither here nor there

practitioner

practitioners

Explain

1. countable noun

Doctors are sometimes referred to as **practitioners** or **medical practitioners** .

noisy

noisier noisiest

Explain

1. adjective

A **noisy** person or thing makes a lot of loud or unpleasant noise.

- *...my noisy old typewriter.*
- *His daughter was very active and noisy in the mornings.*

2. adjective

A **noisy** place is full of a lot of loud or unpleasant noise.

- *It's a noisy place with film clips showing constantly on one of the cafe's giant screens.*
- *The baggage hall was crowded and noisy.*

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **noisy** , you are critical of them for trying to attract attention to their views by frequently and forcefully discussing them.

- *It might, at last, silence the small but noisy intellectual clique.*

pupil

pupils

Explain

1. countable noun

The **pupils** of a school are the children who go to it.

- *Many secondary schools in Wales have over 1,000 pupils.*
- *Eleanor was a reluctant, anxious pupil.*

2. countable noun

A **pupil** of a painter , musician , or other expert is someone who studies under that expert and learns his or her skills .

- *...the only drawing firmly attributed to Cesare Magni (1511-1534), a pupil of Leonardo da Vinci.*

3. countable noun

The **pupils** of your eyes are the small, round , black holes in the centre of them.

religion

religions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Religion is belief in a god or gods and the activities that are connected with this belief, such as praying or worshipping in a building such as a church or temple .

- ...his understanding of Indian philosophy and religion.
- Do avoid potentially contentious subjects such as religion, sex or politics.

2. countable noun

A **religion** is a particular system of belief in a god or gods and the activities that are connected with this system.

- ...the Christian religion.

3. get religion

polar

Explain

1. adjective

Polar means near the North and South Poles.

- ...the rigours of life in the polar regions.
- Warmth melted some of the polar ice.
- ...polar explorers.

2. adjective

Polar is used to describe things which are completely opposite in character, quality, or type.

- In many ways, Brett and Bernard are polar opposites.
- ...economists at polar ends of the politico-economic spectrum.

private

privates

Explain

1. adjective

Private industries and services are owned or controlled by an individual person or a commercial company , rather than by the state or an official organization.

- ...a joint venture with private industry.
- Bupa runs private hospitals in Britain.
- Brazil says its constitution forbids the private ownership of energy assets.

2. adjective

Private individuals are acting only for themselves, and are not representing any group, company, or organization.

- ...the law's insistence that private citizens are not permitted to have weapons.
- The King was on a private visit to enable him to pray at the tombs of his ancestors.
- The family tried to bring a private prosecution against him for assault.

3. adjective

Your **private** things belong only to you, or may only be used by you.

- The landowners have had to sell their private aircraft.
- They want more State control over private property.
- There are 76 individually furnished bedrooms, all with private bathrooms.
- He later travelled with the Prince of Wales as his private secretary.

4. adjective

Private places or gatherings may be attended only by a particular group of people, rather than by the general public.

- 673 private golf clubs took part in a recent study.
- The door is marked 'Private'.
- He was buried in a private ceremony in Liverpool.

5. adjective

Private meetings, discussions, and other activities involve only a small number of people, and very little information about them is given to other people.

- Don't bug private conversations, and don't buy papers that reprint them.

6. adjective

Your **private life** is that part of your life that is concerned with your personal relationships and activities, rather than with your work or business.

- I've always kept my private and professional life separate.
- My private affairs are no one's business but my own.

7. adjective

Your **private** thoughts or feelings are ones that you do not talk about to other people.

- We all felt as if we were intruding on his private grief.
- It's just that it's something very private, and I simply can't talk about it.

8. adjective

You can use **private** to describe situations or activities that are understood only by the people involved in them, and not by anyone else.

- Chinese waiters stood in a cluster, sharing a private joke.

- As many as 40 per cent of twins have a private language that excludes the rest of the family.

9. adjective

If you describe a place as **private**, or as somewhere where you can be **private**, you mean that it is a quiet place and you can be alone there without being disturbed.

- It was the only reasonably private place they could find.
- ...a very attractive country house set within a uniquely beautiful and private position.
- We were alone, completely private, with not even Angela present.

10. adjective

If you describe someone as a **private** person, you mean that they are very quiet by nature and do not reveal their thoughts and feelings to other people.

- She has always been a rather private person.
- Gould was an intensely private individual.

11. adjective

You can use **private** to describe lessons that are not part of ordinary school activity, and which are given by a teacher to an individual pupil or a small group, usually in return for payment.

- Martial arts: Private lessons: £8 per hour.
- ...Donald Tovey, who took her as his private pupil for the piano.

12. countable noun

A **private** is a soldier of the lowest rank in an army or the marines.

- One gunner in each battery was an NCO and the rest were privates.

- ...Private Martin Ferguson.

13. plural noun

Your **privates** are your genitals.

- You should wash your feet and your privates every day.

14. in private

scholar

scholars

Explain

1. countable noun

A **scholar** is a person who studies an academic subject and knows a lot about it.

- The library attracts thousands of scholars and researchers.
- ...an influential Islamic scholar.

2. countable noun

You can use the word **scholar** to refer to someone who learns things at school in a particular way. For example, if someone is a good **scholar**, they are good at learning things.

- She could be a good scholar if she didn't let her mind wander so much.

3. countable noun

A **scholar** is a student who has obtained a scholarship.

- He came to Oxford as a Rhodes scholar and studied law.

quarterly

quarterlies

Explain

1. adjective

A **quarterly** event happens four times a year, at intervals of three months. **Quarterly** is also an adverb.

- ...the latest Bank of Japan quarterly survey of 5,000 companies.
- It makes no difference whether dividends are paid quarterly or annually.

2. countable noun

A **quarterly** is a magazine that is published four times a year, at intervals of three months.

- The quarterly had been a forum for sound academic debate.
- ...'Foreign Policy', a quarterly journal published in Paris.

school

schools schooling schooled

Explain

1. variable noun

A **school** is a place where children are educated. You usually refer to this place as **school** when you are talking about the time that children spend there and the activities that they do there.

- ...a boy who was in my class at school.
- Even the good students say homework is what they most dislike about school.
- I took the kids for a picnic in the park after school.
- ...a school built in the Sixties.
- He favors extending the school day and school year.

- ...two boys wearing school uniform.
2. countable noun
A **school** is the pupils or staff at a school.
- Deirdre, the whole school's going to hate you.
 - ...a children's writing competition open to schools or individuals.
3. countable noun
A privately-run place where a particular skill or subject is taught can be referred to as a **school**.
- ...a riding school and equestrian centre near Chepstow.
 - ...the Kingsley School of English.
4. variable noun
A university, college, or university department specializing in a particular type of subject can be referred to as a **school**.
- ...a lecturer in the School of Veterinary Medicine.
 - Stella, 21, is at art school training to be a fashion designer.
5. uncountable noun
School is used to refer to university or college.
- Moving rapidly through school, he graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Kentucky at age 18.
6. countable noun
A particular **school of** writers, artists, or thinkers is a group of them whose work, opinions, or theories are similar.
- ...the Chicago school of economists.
 - O'Keeffe was influenced by various painters but she was never a member of any school.
7. countable noun
A **school of** fish or dolphins is a large group of them moving through water together.
8. verb
If you **school** someone **in** something, you train or educate them to have a certain skill, type of behaviour, or way of thinking.
- Many mothers schooled their daughters in the myth of female inferiority.
 - He is schooled to spot trouble.
9. verb
To **school** a child means to educate him or her.
- She's been schooling her kids herself.
10. verb
If you **school** a horse, you train it so that it can be ridden in races or competitions.
- She bought him as a £1,000 colt of six months and schooled him.
11. of the old school

resolute

Explain

1. adjective
If you describe someone as **resolute**, you approve of them because they are very determined not to change their mind or not to give up a course of action.
- Voters perceive him as a decisive and resolute international leader.
 - He described the situation as very dangerous and called for resolute action.

semester

semesters

Explain

1. countable noun

In colleges and universities in some countries, a **semester** is one of the two main periods into which the year is divided.

resultant

Explain

1. adjective

Resultant means caused by the event just mentioned .

- At least a quarter of a million people have died in the fighting and the resultant famines.

situated

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **situated** in a particular place or position, it is in that place or position.

- His hotel is situated in one of the loveliest places on the Loire.
- The pain was situated above and around the eyes.
- The new store is better situated to attract customers.

shoulder

shoulders shouldering shouldered

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **shoulders** are between your neck and the tops of your arms.

- She led him to an armchair, with her arm round his shoulder.

- He glanced over his shoulder and saw me watching him.

2. countable noun

The **shoulders** of a piece of clothing are the parts that cover your shoulders.

- ...extravagant fashions with padded shoulders.

3. plural noun

When you talk about someone's problems or responsibilities, you can say that they carry them **on their shoulders** .

- No one suspected the anguish he carried on his shoulders.
- I hope he understands the burden that's on his shoulders.

4. verb

If you **shoulder** the responsibility or the blame for something, you accept it.

- He has had to shoulder the responsibility of his father's mistakes.
- Some of the blame for the disastrous night must be shouldered by the promoters.

5. verb

If you **shoulder** something heavy , you put it across one of your shoulders so that you can carry it more easily .

- The rest of the group shouldered their bags, gritted their teeth and set off.
- He shouldered his bike and walked across the finish line.

6. verb

If you **shoulder** someone **aside** or if you **shoulder** your **way** somewhere , you push past people roughly using your shoulder.

- The policemen rushed past him, shouldering him aside.
- She could do nothing to stop him as he shouldered his way into the house.
- He shouldered past Harlech and opened the door.

7. variable noun

A **shoulder** is a joint of meat from the upper part of the front leg of an animal.

- ...shoulder of lamb.

8. a shoulder to cry on

9. head and shoulders

10. look over one's shoulder

11. shoulder to shoulder

12. shoulder to shoulder

sturdy

sturdier sturdiest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **sturdy** looks strong and is unlikely to be easily injured or damaged .

- She was a short, sturdy woman in her early sixties.
- The camera was mounted on a sturdy tripod.

soil

soils soiling soiled

Explain

1. variable noun

Soil is the substance on the surface of the earth in which plants grow .

- We have the most fertile soil in Europe.
- ...regions with sandy soils.

2. uncountable noun

You can use **soil** in expressions like **British soil** to refer to a country's territory .

- The issue of foreign troops on Turkish soil is a sensitive one.

3. verb

If you **soil** something, you make it dirty.

- Young people don't want to do things that soil their hands.
- He raised his eyes slightly as though her words might somehow soil him.

thorough

Explain

1. adjective

A **thorough** action or activity is one that is done very carefully and in a detailed way so that nothing is forgotten .

- We are making a thorough investigation.
- This very thorough survey goes back to 1784.
- How thorough is the assessment?

2. adjective

Someone who is **thorough** is always very careful in their work, so that nothing is forgotten.

- Martin would be a good judge, I thought. He was calm and thorough.

- The men were expert, thorough and careful.

3. adjective

Thorough is used to emphasize the great degree or extent of something.

- I was a thorough little academic snob.
- We regard the band as a thorough shambles.

swamp

swamps swamping swamped

Explain

1. variable noun

A **swamp** is an area of very wet land with wild plants growing in it.

2. verb

If something **swamps** a place or object, it fills it with water.

- A rogue wave swamped the boat.
- The Ventura river burst its banks, swamping a mobile home park.

3. verb

If you **are swamped** by things or people, you have more of them than you can deal with.

- He is swamped with work.
- The railway station was swamped with thousands of families trying to flee the city.

tough

tougher toughest toughs toughing toughed

Explain

1. adjective

A **tough** person is strong and determined , and can tolerate difficulty or suffering .

- He built up a reputation as a tough businessman.
- She is tough and ambitious.

2. adjective

If you describe someone as **tough** , you mean that they are rough and violent . A **tough** is a tough person.

- He had shot three people dead, earning himself a reputation as a tough guy.
- Three burly toughs elbowed their way to the front.

3. adjective

A **tough** place or area is considered to have a lot of crime and violence .

- She doesn't seem cut out for this tough neighbourhood.
- Arthur grew up in a tough city.

4. adjective

A **tough** way of life or period of time is difficult or full of suffering.

- She had a pretty tough childhood.
- It's been a tough day.
- He was having a really tough time at work.

5. adjective

A **tough** task or problem is difficult to do or solve .

- It was a very tough decision but we feel we made the right one.

- *Whoever wins the election is going to have a tough job getting the economy back on its feet.*
- *It may be tough to raise cash.*
- *Change is often tough to deal with.*

6. adjective

Tough policies or actions are strict and firm.

- *He is known for taking a tough line on security.*
- *He announced tough measures to limit the money supply.*

7. adjective

A **tough** substance is strong, and difficult to break , cut , or tear .

- *In industry, diamond can form a tough, non-corrosive coating for tools.*
- *...dark brown beans with a rather tough outer skin.*

8. adjective

Tough meat is difficult to cut and chew .

- *The steak was tough and the peas were like bullets.*

9. hang tough

term

terms terming termed

Explain

1. in terms of

2. in particular terms

3. countable noun

A **term** is a word or expression with a specific meaning , especially one which is used in relation to a particular subject.

- *Myocardial infarction is the medical term for a heart attack.*

4. verb

If you say that something **is termed** a particular thing, you mean that that is what people call it or that is their opinion of it.

- *He had been termed a temporary employee.*
- *He termed the war a humanitarian nightmare.*

5. variable noun

A **term** is one of the periods of time that a school, college, or university divides the year into.

- *...the summer term.*
- *...the last day of term.*

6. countable noun

A **term** is a period of time between two elections during which a particular party or government is in power.

- *He won a fourth term of office in the election.*

7. countable noun

A **term** is a period of time that someone spends doing a particular job or in a particular place.

- *...a 12 month term of service.*
- *Offenders will be liable to a seven-year prison term.*

8. countable noun

A **term** is the period for which a legal contract or insurance policy is valid .

- *Premiums are guaranteed throughout the term of the policy.*

9. uncountable noun

The **term** of a woman's pregnancy is the nine month period that it lasts . **Term** is also used to refer to the end of the nine month period.

- Two of her pregnancies failed to reach full term.
- Women over 40 seem to be just as capable of carrying a baby to term as younger women.

10. plural noun

The **terms** of an agreement, treaty , or other arrangement are the conditions that must be accepted by the people involved in it.

- They are discussing the terms of the peace agreement.
- Mayor Rendell imposed the new contract terms.

11. come to terms with

12. on equal terms/on the same terms

13. on good terms

14. in the long term

15. on your terms

16. think in terms of

disastrous

Explain

1. adjective

A **disastrous** event has extremely bad consequences and effects.

- ...the recent, disastrous earthquake.
- The effect on coffee prices has been disastrous for the producers.

2. adjective

If you describe something as **disastrous** , you mean that it was very unsuccessful .

- England's cricketers have had another disastrous day.
- ...their disastrous performance in the general election of 1906.

clue

clues

Explain

1. countable noun

A **clue** to a problem or mystery is something that helps you to find the answer to it.

- Geneticists in Canada have discovered a clue to the puzzle of why our cells get old and die.
- How a man shaves may be a telling clue to his age.

2. countable noun

A **clue** is an object or piece of information that helps someone solve a crime .

- The vital clue to the killer's identity was his nickname, Peanuts.

3. countable noun

A **clue** in a crossword or game is information which is given to help you to find the answer to a question .

4. haven't a clue

dubious

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **dubious** , you

mean that you do not consider it to be completely honest , safe , or reliable .

- This claim seems to us to be rather dubious.
- Soho was still a highly dubious area.
- Those figures alone are a dubious basis for such a conclusion.

2. adjective

If you are **dubious about** something, you are not completely sure about it and have not yet made up your mind about it.

- My parents were dubious about it at first but we soon convinced them.

3. adjective

If you say that someone has the **dubious** honour or the **dubious** pleasure **of** doing something, you are indicating that what they are doing is not an honour or pleasure at all, but is, in fact, unpleasant or bad .

- Nagy has the dubious honour of being the first athlete to be banned in this way.

construction

constructions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Construction is the building of things such as houses , factories , roads , and bridges .

- He'd already started construction on a hunting lodge.
- ...the only nuclear power station under construction in Britain.
- ...the downturn in the construction industry.

- Quincy wants a job in construction.

2. uncountable noun

The **construction** of something such as a vehicle or machine is the making of it.

- ...companies who have long experience in the construction of those types of equipment.
- With the exception of teak, this is the finest wood for boat construction.

3. uncountable noun

The **construction** of something such as a system is the creation of it.

- ...the construction of a just system of criminal justice.

4. countable noun

You can refer to an object that has been built or made as a **construction** .

- The British pavilion is an impressive steel and glass construction the size of Westminster Abbey.

5. uncountable noun

You use **construction** to refer to the structure of something and the way it has been built or made.

- The Shakers believed that furniture should be plain, simple, useful, practical and of sound construction.
- The chairs were light in construction yet extremely strong.

6. countable noun

The **construction** that you put on what someone says or does is your interpretation of what it means .

- The denial was limited to rejecting the construction put on his remarks.

- He put the wrong construction on what he saw.

7. countable noun

A grammatical **construction** is a particular arrangement of words in a sentence, clause, or phrase.

- Avoid complex verbal constructions.

elementary

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **elementary** is very simple and basic .

- ...elementary computer skills.

driver

drivers

Explain

1. countable noun

The **driver** of a vehicle is the person who is driving it.

- The driver got out of his van.
- ...a taxi driver.

2. countable noun

A **driver** is a computer program that controls a device such as a printer .

- ...printer driver software.

exempt

exempts exempting exempted

Explain

1. adjective

If someone or something is **exempt from** a particular rule , duty , or obligation, they do not have to follow it or do it. **Exempt** is also a combining form.

- Men in college were exempt from military service.
- Children under two years are exempt.
- The fund was in danger of losing its tax-exempt status.

2. verb

To **exempt** a person or thing **from** a particular rule, duty, or obligation means to state officially that they are not bound or affected by it.

- South Carolina claimed the power to exempt its citizens from the obligation to obey federal law.
- Companies with fifty-five or fewer employees would be exempted from the requirements.

fast

faster fastest fasts fasting fasted

Explain

1. adjective

Fast means happening , moving, or doing something at great speed. You also use **fast** in questions or statements about speed. **Fast** is also an adverb .

- ...fast cars with flashing lights and sirens.
- Brindley was known as a very, very fast driver.
- The party aims to attract votes from the business and professional communities, which want a faster pace of political reform.

- The only question is how fast the process will be.
 - They work terrifically fast.
 - It would be nice to go faster and break the world record.
 - He thinks they're not adapting fast enough.
 - Barnes also knows that he is fast running out of time.
 - How fast were you driving?
 - How fast would the disease develop?
2. *adverb*
You use **fast** to say that something happens without any delay . **Fast** is also an adjective .
- When you've got a crisis like this you need professional help—fast!
 - We'd appreciate your leaving as fast as possible.
 - That would be an astonishingly fast action on the part of the Congress.
3. *adjective*
If a watch or clock is **fast** , it is showing a time that is later than the real time.
- That clock's an hour fast.
4. *to hold fast*
5. *adverb*
If you hold **fast** to a principle or idea, or if you stand **fast** , you do not change your mind about it, even though people are trying to persuade you to.
- We can only try to hold fast to the age-old values of honesty, decency and concern for others.
 - He told supporters to stand fast over the next few vital days.
6. *adjective*
If colours or dyes are **fast** , they do not come out of the fabrics they are used on when they get wet .
- The fabric was ironed to make the colours fast.
7. *adjective*
A **fast** way of life is one which involves a lot of enjoyable and expensive or dangerous activities.
- Life in Detroit no longer satisfied him; he wanted the fast life of California.
8. *verb*
If you **fast** , you eat no food for a period of time, usually for either religious or medical reasons , or as a protest . **Fast** is also a noun .
- I fasted for a day and half and asked God to help me.
 - The fast is broken at sunset, traditionally with dates and water.
9. *fast asleep*
10. *to play fast and loose*
11. *to pull a fast one*

hardship

hardships

Explain

1. *variable noun*
Hardship is a situation in which your life is difficult or unpleasant , often because you do not have enough money.
- Many people are suffering economic hardship.
 - One of the worst hardships is having so little time to spend with one's family.

forthcoming

Explain

1. adjective

A **forthcoming** event is planned to happen soon

- ...his opponents in the forthcoming elections.

2. adjective

If something that you want, need, or expect is **forthcoming**, it is given to you or it happens.

- They promised that the money would be forthcoming.
- We must first see some real evidence. So far it has not been forthcoming.
- One source predicts no major shift in policy will be forthcoming at the committee hearings.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **forthcoming**, you mean that they willingly give information when you ask them.

- If he set his alarm clock for midnight, it would wake the whole house.

3. countable noun

House is used in the names of types of places where people go to eat and drink.

- ...a steak house.
- ...an old Salzburg coffee house.

4. countable noun

House is used in the names of types of companies, especially ones which publish books, lend money, or design clothes.

- Many of the clothes come from the world's top fashion houses.
- Eventually she was fired from her job at a publishing house.

5. countable noun

House is sometimes used in the names of office buildings and large private homes or expensive houses.

- I was to go to the very top floor of Bush House in Aldwych.
- ...Harewood House near Leeds.

house

houses housing housed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **house** is a building in which people live, usually the people belonging to one family.

- She has moved to a smaller house.
- ...her parents' house in Warwickshire.

2. singular noun

You can refer to all the people who live together in a house as **the house**.

6. countable noun

You can refer to the two main bodies of Britain's parliament and the United States of America's legislature as **the House** or a **House**.

- Some members of the House and Senate worked all day yesterday.
- The Republicans have majorities in both Houses.

7. singular noun

You can refer to all the people at a debate as **the house**.

- The club is planning a public debate on 'This house believes that journalism has not gained from the introduction of new technology'.

8. countable noun

In a British school, a **house** is a group of children of different ages who compete against other groups in sports and other activities. Each house usually has a name.

- He was a prefect and house captain.

9. countable noun

A **house** is a family which has been or will be important for many generations, especially the family of a king or queen.

- ...the Saudi Royal House.
- ...the House of Windsor.

10. countable noun

The **house** is the part of a theatre, cinema, or other place of entertainment where the audience sits. You can also refer to the audience at a particular performance as the **house**.

- They played in front of a packed house.

11. adjective

A restaurant's **house** wine is the cheapest wine it sells, which is not listed by name on the wine list.

- Tweed ordered a carafe of the house wine.
- ...a bottle of house red or white.

12. verb

To **house** someone means to provide a house or flat for them to live in.

- Part III of the Housing Act 1985 imposes duties on local authorities to house homeless people.

- Regrettably we have to house families in these inadequate flats.

13. verb

A building or container that **houses** something is the place where it is located or from where it operates.

- The château itself is open to the public and houses a museum of motorcycles and cars.
- Many years later, the temple erected in her name was used to house the Roman mint.

14. verb

If you say that a building **houses** a number of people, you mean that is the place where they live or where they are staying.

- The building will house twelve boys and eight girls.
- Their villas housed army officers now.

15. to bring the house down

16. like a house on fire

17. to keep house

18. on the house

19. get/set one's house in order

frank

franker frankest franks franking franked

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **frank**, they state or express things in an open and honest way.

- 'It is clear that my client has been less than frank with me,' said his lawyer.

- They had a frank discussion about the issue.

2. verb

When a letter or parcel **is franked** , it is marked with a symbol that shows that the proper charge has been paid or that no stamp is needed .

- The letter was franked in London on August 6.
- ...a self-addressed, franked envelope.

3. to be frank

inhabitant

inhabitants

Explain

1. countable noun

The **inhabitants** of a place are the people who live there.

- ...the inhabitants of Glasgow.

furious

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **furious** is extremely angry.

- He is furious at the way his wife has been treated.
- I am furious that it has taken so long to uncover what really happened.

2. adjective

Furious is also used to describe something that is done with great energy, effort , speed, or violence .

- A furious gunbattle ensued.

inventory

inventories

Explain

1. countable noun

An **inventory** is a written list of all the objects in a particular place.

- Before starting, he made an inventory of everything that was to stay.

2. variable noun

An **inventory** is a supply or stock of something.

- ...one inventory of twelve sails for each yacht.

gay

gays gayer gayest

Explain

1. adjective

A **gay** person is homosexual.

- ...the gay community.

2. adjective

A **gay** person is fun to be with because they are lively and cheerful .

- I am happy and free, in good health, gay and cheerful.

3. adjective

A **gay** object is brightly coloured and pretty to look at.

- I like gay, relaxing paintings.

limitation

limitations

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **limitation** of something is the act or process of controlling or reducing it.

- All the talk had been about the limitation of nuclear weapons.
- ...damage limitation.

2. variable noun

A **limitation on** something is a rule or decision which prevents that thing from growing or extending beyond certain limits.

- ...a limitation on the tax deductions for people who make more than 100,000 a year. There is to be no limitation on the number of opposition parties.

3. plural noun

If you talk about the **limitations** of someone or something, you mean that they can only do some things and not others, or cannot do something very well.

- The theory is a useful tool, but it has limitations.
- Parents are too likely to blame schools for the educational limitations of their children.

4. variable noun

A **limitation** is a fact or situation that allows only some actions and makes others impossible.

- This drug has one important limitation. Its effects only last six hours.
- ...an acute disc collapse in the spine, causing limitation of movement.

line

lines lining lined

Explain

1. countable noun

A **line** is a long thin mark which is drawn or painted on a surface.

- Draw a line down that page's center.
- ...a dotted line.
- The ball had clearly crossed the line.

2. countable noun

The **lines** on someone's skin, especially on their face, are long thin marks that appear there as they grow older.

- He has a large, generous face with deep lines.
- ...fine lines and wrinkles.

3. countable noun

A **line** of people or things is a number of them arranged one behind the other or side by side.

- The sparse line of spectators noticed nothing unusual.

4. countable noun

A **line** of people or vehicles is a number of them that are waiting one behind another, for example in order to buy something or to go in a particular direction.

- Children clutching empty bowls form a line.

5. countable noun

A **line** of a piece of writing is one of the rows of words, numbers, or other symbols in it.

- The next line should read: Five days, 23.5 hours.
- Tina wouldn't have read more than three lines.

6. plural noun

In school, if a child is given **lines**, he or she is punished by being made to write out a sentence many times or to write out a passage from a book.

7. countable noun

A **line** of a poem, song, or play is a group of words that are spoken or sung together. If an actor **learns** his or her **lines** for a play or film, they learn what they have to say.

- ...a line from Shakespeare's *Othello*: 'one that loved not wisely but too well'.
- Every time I sing that line, I have to compete with that bloody trombone!
- Learning lines is very easy. Acting is very difficult.

8. countable noun

A particular type of **line** in a conversation is a remark that is intended to have a particular effect.

- 'In time perhaps you'll marry again'. 'That's a great line, coming from you!'.
- ...chat-up lines like 'You've got beautiful eyes'.

9. variable noun

You can refer to a long piece of wire, string, or cable as a **line** when it is used for a particular purpose.

- She put her washing on the line.
- ...a piece of fishing-line.
- The winds downed power lines.

10. countable noun

A **line** is a connection which makes it possible for two people to speak to each other on the phone.

- The phone lines went dead.

- It's not a very good line. Shall we call you back Susan?

- She's on the line from her home in Boston.

11. countable noun

You can use **line** to refer to a phone number which you can ring in order to get information or advice.

- ...the 24-hours information line.
- ...details from Lesbian Line.

12. countable noun

A **line** is a route, especially a dangerous or secret one, along which people move or send messages or supplies.

- The American continent's geography severely limited the lines of attack.
- Negotiators say they're keeping communication lines open.
- ...the guerrillas' main supply lines.

13. countable noun

The **line** in which something or someone moves is the particular route that they take, especially when they keep moving straight ahead.

- Walk in a straight line.
- The wings were at right angles to the line of flight.

14. countable noun

A **line** is a particular route, involving the same stations, roads, or stops along which a train or bus service regularly operates.

- They've got to ride all the way to the end of the line.
- Fires halted service on two commuter lines for several hours.

- *I would be able to stay on the Piccadilly Line and get off the tube at South Kensington.*
15. countable noun
A railway **line** consists of the pieces of metal and wood which form the track that the trains travel along.
- *Leaves on the line are an expensive problem for the railways.*
16. countable noun
A shipping, air, or bus **line** is a company which provides services for transporting people or goods by sea, air, or bus.
- *The Foreign Office offered to pay the shipping line all the costs of diverting the ship to Bermuda.*
17. countable noun
You can use **line** to refer to the edge, outline, or shape of an object or a person's body.
- *The garden has an informal feel to soften the architectural lines of the conservatory.*
 - *...a sculptured evening dress that follows the lines of the body.*
18. countable noun
A state or county **line** is a boundary between two states or counties.
- *...the California state line.*
19. countable noun
You can use **lines** to refer to the set of physical defences or the soldiers that have been established along the boundary of an area occupied by an army.
- *Their unit was shelling the German lines only seven miles away.*
 - *...the stupendous fortification they called the Maginot Line.*
20. countable noun
The particular **line** that a person has towards a problem is the attitude that they have towards it. For example, if someone takes a **hard line** on something, they have a firm strict policy which they refuse to change.
- *Forty members of the governing Conservative party rebelled, voting against the government line.*
 - *Most members of Parliament took a hard line on this issue.*
21. countable noun
You can use **line** to refer to the way in which someone's thoughts or activities develop, particularly if it is logical.
- *Our discussion in the previous chapter continues this line of thinking.*
 - *What are some of the practical benefits likely to be of this line of research?*
22. plural noun
If you say that something happens **along** particular **lines**, or **on** particular **lines**, you are giving a general summary or approximate account of what happens, which may not be correct in every detail.
- *There followed praise along the lines of 'Hey, this coffee is fantastic!'.*
 - *He'd said something along those lines already.*
 - *Our forecast was on the right lines.*
 - *The main lines of the plan were reduced expenditure and fewer government controls.*
23. plural noun
If something is organized **on** particular **lines**, or **along** particular **lines**, it is organized according to that method or principle.

- ...so-called autonomous republics based on ethnic lines.
 - ...reorganising old factories to work along Japanese lines.
24. countable noun
Your **line of** business or work is the kind of work that you do.
- So what was your father's line of business?
 - In my line of work I often get home too late for dinner.
25. singular noun
If someone says that something is **your line** , or that it is **in your line** , they mean that it is the sort of thing that you often do because you enjoy doing it.
- Wild guesses aren't much in my line.
 - Perhaps doing voluntary work is more your line?
26. countable noun
A **line** is a particular type of product that a company makes or sells.
- His best selling line is the cheapest lager at £1.99.
27. singular noun
You can use **line** to refer to something connected with a particular activity. For example, something **in the sports line** is connected with sports.
- Most kids can do something in the art line.
28. countable noun
In a factory, a **line** is an arrangement of workers or machines where a product passes from one worker to another until it is finished.
- ...a production line capable of producing three different products.
29. countable noun
You can use **line** to refer to all the generations of a family, especially when you are considering the social status or the physical characteristics that the various members inherit .
- ...the old Welsh royal line descended from Arthur and Uther Pendragon.
 - This title will only pass down through the male line.
30. countable noun
You can use **line** when you are referring to a number of people who are ranked according to status.
- Nicholas Paul Patrick was seventh in the line of succession to the throne.
 - The line of command went from head office in Chicago to a regional boss and then down to a country boss and finally to a local-office managing-partner.
 - ...the man who stands next in line for the presidency.
31. countable noun
A particular **line of** people or things is a series of them that has existed over a period of time, when they have all been similar in some way, or done similar things.
- We were part of a long line of artists.
 - It's the latest in a long line of tragedies.
32. verb
If people or things **line** a road, room, or other place, they are present in large numbers along its edges or sides.
- Thousands of local people lined the streets and clapped as the procession went by.
 - ...a square lined with pubs and clubs.

33. verb

If you **line** a wall, container, or other object, you put a layer of something such as leaves or paper on the inside surface of it in order to make it stronger, warmer, or cleaner .

- Scoop the blanket weed out and use it to line hanging baskets.
- Female bears tend to line their dens with leaves or grass.

34. verb

If something **lines** a container or area, especially an area inside a person, animal, or plant, it forms a layer on the inside surface.

- ...the muscles that line the intestines.

35. along the line/down the line

36. down the line

37. to draw the line

38. draw a line

39. to drop someone a line

40. in the line of duty

41. the first line of

42. in line

43. in/into line

44. in/into line

45. stand/wait in line

46. in line/into line

47. on line

48. on line

49. on the line

50. out of line

51. out of line

52. out of line

53. to read between the lines

indifferent

Explain

1. adjective

If you accuse someone of being **indifferent** to something, you mean that they have a complete lack of interest in it.

- People have become indifferent to the suffering of others.

2. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **indifferent** , you mean that their standard or quality is not very good, and often quite bad .

- She had starred in several very indifferent movies.
- Much of the food we eat is of very poor or indifferent quality.

microphone

microphones

Explain

1. countable noun

A **microphone** is a device that is used to make sounds louder or to record them.

intact

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **intact** is complete and has not been damaged or changed.

- Most of the cargo was left intact after the explosion.
- If the family unit is still intact, the patient frequently does very well.

orphan

orphans orphaned

Explain

1. countable noun

An **orphan** is a child whose parents are dead.

- I'm an orphan and pretty much grew up on my own.
- ...a young orphan girl brought up by peasants.

2. passive verb

If a child **is orphaned**, their parents die, or their remaining parent dies.

- Jones was orphaned at the age of ten, and taken in by next-door neighbours.
- Some ten million children have been orphaned by the disease.
- ...a fifteen-year-old boy left orphaned by the recent disaster.

intermittent

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **intermittent** happens occasionally rather than continuously.

- After three hours of intermittent rain, the game was abandoned.

parachute

parachutes parachuting parachuted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **parachute** is a device which enables a person to jump from an aircraft and float safely to the ground. It consists of a large piece of thin cloth attached to your body by strings.

- They fell 41,000 ft. before opening their parachutes.
- U.N. troops could be landed by helicopter or even by parachute.

2. verb

If a person **parachutes** or someone **parachutes** them somewhere, they jump from an aircraft using a parachute.

- He was a courier for the Polish underground and parachuted into Warsaw.
- He was parachuted in.

3. verb

To **parachute** something somewhere means to drop it somewhere by parachute.

- Planes parachuted food and water into the rugged mountainous border region.

- *Supplies were parachuted into the mountains.*

4. verb

If a person **parachutes into** an organization or if they **are parachuted into** it, they are brought in suddenly in order to help it.

- *...a consultant who parachutes into corporations and helps provide strategic thinking.*
- *There was intense speculation 18 months ago that the former foreign secretary might be parachuted into the Scottish Parliament.*

late

later latest

Explain

1. adverb

Late means near the end of a day , week , year , or other period of time. **Late** is also an adjective

- *It was late in the afternoon.*
- *She had to work late at night.*
- *His autobiography was written late in life.*
- *The case is expected to end late next week.*
- *Since late last year the border area has been the scene of heavy fighting.*
- *The talks eventually broke down in late spring.*
- *He was in his late 20s.*
- *...the late 1960s.*

2. adjective

If it is **late** , it is near the end of the day or it is past the time that you feel something should have been done .

- *It was very late and the streets were deserted.*

- *We've got to go now. It's getting late.*

3. adverb

Late means after the time that was arranged or expected. **Late** is also an adjective.

- *Steve arrived late.*
- *The talks began some fifteen minutes late.*
- *We got up late.*
- *His campaign got off to a late start.*
- *We were a little late.*
- *The train was 40 minutes late.*
- *He's a half hour late.*

4. adverb

Late means after the usual time that a particular event or activity happens . **Late** is also an adjective.

- *We went to bed very late.*
- *He married late.*
- *They had a late lunch in a cafe.*
- *He was a very late developer.*

5. adjective

You use **late** when you are talking about someone who is dead , especially someone who has died recently.

- *...my late husband.*
- *...the late Mr Parkin.*

6. adjective

Someone who is **late of** a particular place or institution lived or worked there until recently.

- *...Cousin Zachary, late of Bellevue Avenue.*

- The restaurant is managed by Angelo, late of the Savoy Grill.

7. better late than never

8. late in the day

9. of late

10. too late

parameter

parameters

Explain

1. countable noun

Parameters are factors or limits which affect the way that something can be done or made.

- That would be enough to make sure we fell within the parameters of our loan agreement.
- A person's stride length has certain parameters.

latin

Latins

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Latin is the language which the ancient Romans used to speak .

2. adjective

Latin countries are countries where Spanish , or perhaps Portuguese , Italian , or French , is spoken. You can also use **Latin** to refer to things and people that come from these countries.

- Cuba was one of the least Catholic of the Latin countries.

- The enthusiasm for Latin music is world-wide.

3. countable noun

Latins are people who come from countries where Spanish, or perhaps Portuguese, Italian, or French, are spoken or whose families come from one of these countries.

- They are role models for thousands of young Latins.

participant

participants

Explain

1. countable noun

The **participants** in an activity are the people who take part in it.

- 40 of the course participants are offered employment with the company.
- You are expected to be an active participant.

prayer

prayers

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Prayer is the activity of speaking to God .

- They had joined a religious order and dedicated their lives to prayer and good works.
- The night was spent in prayer.

2. countable noun

A **prayer** is the words a person says when they speak to God.

- *They should take a little time and say a prayer for the people on both sides.*

- *...prayers of thanksgiving.*

3. countable noun

*You can refer to a strong hope that you have as your **prayer** .*

- *This drug could be the answer to our prayers.*

4. plural noun

*A short religious service at which people gather to pray can be referred to as **prayers** .*

- *He promised that the boy would be back at school in time for evening prayers.*
- *...Muslims attending prayers in the main mosque.*

5. to have not got a prayer

- *In many ways, it was a very modern school for its time.*

- *As the country's economy prospered, it was bound to want a modern army.*

3. adjective

*People are sometimes described as **modern** when they have opinions or ways of behaviour that have not yet been accepted by most people in a society .*

- *They were very modern Tories in almost every sense.*

- *She is very modern in outlook.*

4. adjective

***Modern** is used to describe styles of art, dance, music, and architecture that have developed in recent times, in contrast to classical styles. The **moderns** are artists who follow modern styles.*

- *...a modern dance company.*

- *...the Museum of Modern Art.*

- *I don't have much time for the moderns. Chaucer's my favourite.*

modern

moderns

Explain

1. adjective

***Modern** means relating to the present time, for example the present decade or present century.*

- *...the problem of materialism in modern society.*
- *...the risks facing every modern marriage.*
- *It's the sort of thing that would be very difficult to prove in any modern court of law.*

2. adjective

*Something that is **modern** is new and involves the latest ideas or equipment .*

- *Modern technology has opened our eyes to many things.*

resident

residents

Explain

1. countable noun

*The **residents** of a house or area are the people who live there.*

- *...building low-cost homes for local residents.*

- *More than 10 percent of the city's residents live below the poverty line.*

2. adjective

Someone who is **resident in** a country or a town lives there.

- He moved to Belgium to live with his son, who had been resident in Brussels since 1997.

3. adjective

A **resident** doctor or teacher lives in the place where he or she works.

- The morning after your arrival, you meet with the resident physician.

4. countable noun

A **resident** or a **resident** doctor is a doctor who is receiving a period of specialized training in a hospital after leaving university.

5. adjective

If an institution has a **resident** specialist, that specialist works for the institution.

- Having begun her career at Gray's Pottery, she stayed there as resident designer for seven years.

nearby

Explain

1. adverb

If something is **nearby**, it is only a short distance away. **Nearby** is also an adjective .

- He might easily have been seen by someone who lived nearby.
- He spoke softly to a couple standing nearby.
- There is less expensive accommodation nearby.
- There were one or two suspicious looks from nearby.
- At a nearby table a man was complaining in a loud voice.
- ...the nearby village of Crowthorne.

senate

Senates

Explain

1. proper noun

The Senate is the smaller and more important of the two parts of the parliament in some countries, for example the United States and Australia.

- The Senate is expected to pass the bill shortly.
- ...a Senate committee.

2. proper noun

Senate or **the Senate** is the governing council at some universities.

- By the time I was Vice Chancellor, Senate had become a much larger and a much more democratic body.
- The new bill would remove student representation from the university Senate.

oval

ovals

Explain

1. adjective

Oval things have a shape that is like a circle but is wider in one direction than the other. **Oval** is also a noun .

- He was a man in his late thirties, with fine, dark hair and a pale oval face.
- ...the small oval framed picture of a little boy.
- Using 2 spoons, mould the cheese into small balls or ovals.

senator

senators

Explain

1. countable noun

A **senator** is a member of a political Senate, for example in the United States or Australia .

sight

sights sighting sighted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Someone's **sight** is their ability to see.

- *My sight is failing, and I can't see to read any more.*
- *I use the sense of sound much more than the sense of sight.*

2. singular noun

The sight of something is the act of seeing it or an occasion on which you see it.

- *I faint at the sight of blood.*
- *The sight of her entering a room could flood her with anger.*

3. countable noun

A **sight** is something that you see.

- *The practice of hanging clothes across the street is a common sight in many parts of the city.*
- *We encountered the pathetic sight of a family packing up its home.*
- *Among the most spectacular sights are the great sea-bird colonies.*

4. verb

If you **sight** someone or something, you suddenly see them, often briefly.

- *The security forces sighted a group of young men that had crossed the border.*
- *A fleet of French ships was sighted in the North Sea.*

5. countable noun

The **sights** of a weapon such as a rifle are the part which helps you aim it more accurately.

6. plural noun

The sights are the places that are interesting to see and that are often visited by tourists .

- *We'd toured the sights of Paris.*
- *I am going to show you the sights of our wonderful city.*
- *Once at Elgin day-trippers visit a number of local sights.*

7. adverb

You can use **a sight** to mean a lot . For example , if you say that something is **a sight** worse than it was before, you are emphasizing that it is much worse than it was.

- *He's been no more difficult than most children and a sight better than some I could mention.*
- *We aren't doing anything different. We're just doing it a damn sight quicker.*

8. catch sight of someone

9. at first sight

10. in sight/within sight/out of sight

11. in sight/ within sight

12. to lose sight of

13. *know someone by sight*

14. *out of sight, out of mind*

15. *on sight*

16. *not a pretty sight*

17. *set one's sights on something*

18. *sight unseen*

pregnant

Explain

1. *adjective*

*If a woman or female animal is **pregnant** , she has a baby or babies developing in her body.*

- *She got pregnant soon after they married.*
- *Tina was pregnant with her first child.*
- *...a pregnant woman.*

2. *adjective*

*A **pregnant** silence or moment has a special meaning which is not obvious but which people are aware of.*

- *There was a long, pregnant silence.*
- *...a deceptive peace, pregnant with invisible threats.*

sister

sisters

Explain

1. *countable noun*

*Your **sister** is a girl or woman who has the same parents as you.*

- *His sister Sarah helped him.*
- *...Vanessa Bell, the sister of Virginia Woolf.*
- *I didn't know you had a sister.*

2. *countable noun*

***Sister** is a title given to a woman who belongs to a religious community .*

- *Sister Francesca entered the chapel.*
- *...the Hospice of the Sisters of Charity at Lourdes.*

3. *countable noun*

*A **sister** is a senior female nurse who supervises part of a hospital .*

- *Ask to speak to the sister on the ward.*
- *Sister Middleton followed the coffee trolley.*

4. *countable noun*

*You can describe a woman as your **sister** if you feel a connection with her, for example because she belongs to the same race , religion , country , or profession .*

- *Modern woman has been freed from many of the duties that befell her sisters in times past.*
- *...our Jewish brothers and sisters.*

5. *adjective*

*You can use **sister** to describe something that is of the same type or is connected in some way to another thing you have mentioned . For example, if a company has a **sister** company, they are connected.*

- *...the International Monetary Fund and its sister organisation, the World Bank.*
- *...Voyager 2 and its sister ship, Voyager 1.*

pure

purier purest

Explain

1. adjective

A **pure** substance is not mixed with anything else.

- ...a carton of pure orange juice.

2. adjective

Something that is **pure** is clean and does not contain any harmful substances.

- In remote regions, the air is pure and the crops are free of poisonous insecticides.
- ...demands for purer and cleaner river water.

3. adjective

If you describe something such as a colour, a sound, or a type of light as **pure**, you mean that it is very clear and represents a perfect example of its type.

- ...flowers in a whole range of blues with the occasional pure white.

4. adjective

If you describe a form of art or a philosophy as **pure**, you mean that it is produced or practised according to a standard or form that is expected of it.

- Nicholson never swerved from his aim of making pure and simple art.

5. adjective

Pure science or **pure** research is concerned only with theory and not with how this theory can be used in practical ways.

- Physics isn't just about pure science with no immediate applications.

- They did not approach their subject solely as a matter of 'pure' theory.

6. adjective

Pure means complete and total .

- The old man turned to give her a look of pure surprise.
- To sleep on my own and not hear the boys snore or grunt was pure bliss.

7. graded adjective

A person, especially a woman, who is described as **pure** is considered to be morally good, especially because they have no sexual experience or sexual thoughts .

- She was baptized and she was pure and clean of sin.

8. pure and simple

specification

specifications

Explain

1. countable noun

A **specification** is a requirement which is clearly stated, for example about the necessary features in the design of something.

- Troll's exclusive, personalized luggage is made to our own exacting specifications in heavy-duty PVC/nylon.
- Legislation will require U.K. petrol companies to meet an E.U. specification for petrol.
- ...officials constrained by rigid job specifications.

stranger

strangers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **stranger** is someone you have never met before.

- Telling a complete stranger about your life is difficult.
- Sometimes I feel like I'm living with a stranger.

2. plural noun

If two people are **strangers**, they do not know each other.

- The women knew nothing of the dead girl. They were strangers.

3. countable noun

If you are a **stranger** in a place, you do not know the place well.

- 'You don't know much about our town, do you?'—'No, I'm a stranger here.'

4. countable noun

If you are a **stranger to** something, you have had no experience of it or do not understand it.

- He is no stranger to controversy.
- We were both strangers to diplomatic life.

rapid

Explain

1. adjective

A **rapid** change is one that happens very quickly.

- ...the country's rapid economic growth in the 1980s.
- This signals a rapid change of mind by the government.
- ...the rapid decline in the birth rate.

2. adjective

A **rapid** movement is one that is very fast.

- He walked at a rapid pace along Charles Street.
- ...the St John Ambulance Air Wing, formed to provide for the rapid transport of patients in urgent need of specialist attention.
- Breathing becomes more rapid and sweating starts.

string

strings stringing strung

Explain

1. variable noun

String is thin rope made of twisted threads, used for tying things together or tying up parcels.

- He held out a small bag tied with string.
- ...a shiny metallic coin on a string.

2. countable noun

A **string of** things is a number of them on a piece of string, thread, or wire.

- She wore a string of pearls around her neck.
- ...a string of fairy lights.

3. countable noun

A **string of** places or objects is a number of them that form a line.

- The landscape is broken only by a string of villages.
- A string of five rowing boats set out from the opposite bank.

4. countable noun

A **string of** similar events is a series of them that happen one after the other.

- The incident was the latest in a string of **realistic** attacks.

- Between 1940 and 1943 he had a string of 62 consecutive victories.

5. countable noun

The **strings** on a musical instrument such as a violin or guitar are the thin pieces of wire or nylon stretched across it that make sounds when the instrument is played.

- He went off to change a guitar string.
- ...a twenty-one-string harp.

6. plural noun

The **strings** are the section of an orchestra which consists of stringed instruments played with a bow .

- The strings provided a melodic background to the passages played by the soloist.
- There was a 20-member string section.

7. countable noun

In computing , a **string** is a particular series of letters, numbers, symbols, or spaces, for example a word or phrase that you want to search for in a document.

8. verb

If you **string** something somewhere , you hang it up between two or more objects. **String up** means the same as string .

- He had strung a banner across the wall.
- People were stringing up decorations on the fronts of their homes.

9. a string to one's bow

10. no strings

11. to pull strings

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **realistic** about a situation , you recognize and accept its true nature and try to deal with it in a practical way.

- Police have to be realistic about violent crime.
- It's only realistic to acknowledge that something, some time, will go wrong.
- ...a realistic view of what we can afford.

2. adjective

Something such as a goal or target that is **realistic** is one which you can sensibly expect to achieve .

- Elections are scheduled for next year but many doubt this is a realistic goal.
- A more realistic figure is eleven million.
- Establish deadlines that are more realistic.

3. adjective

You say that a painting , story , or film is **realistic** when the people and things in it are like people and things in real life.

- ...extraordinarily realistic paintings of Indians.
- The language is foul and the violence horribly realistic.

suggestion

suggestions

Explain

1. countable noun

If you make a **suggestion**, you put forward an idea or plan for someone to think about.

- The dietitian was helpful, making suggestions as to how I could improve my diet.
- Perhaps he'd followed her suggestion of a stroll to the river.
- I have lots of suggestions for the park's future.

2. countable noun

A **suggestion** is something that a person says which implies that something is the case.

- We reject any suggestion that the law needs amending.
- There are suggestions that he might be supported by the Socialists.

3. singular noun

If there is no **suggestion that** something is the case, there is no reason to think that it is the case.

- There is no suggestion whatsoever that the two sides are any closer to agreeing.
- There is absolutely no suggestion of any mainstream political party involvement.

4. countable noun

If there is a **suggestion of** something, there is a slight amount or sign of it.

- ...that fashionably faint suggestion of a tan.
- ...a firm, well-sprung mattress with not one suggestion of a sag.

5. uncountable noun

Suggestion means giving people a particular idea by associating it with other ideas.

- The power of suggestion is very strong.

sheer

sheerer sheerest

Explain

1. adjective

You can use **sheer** to emphasize that a state or situation is complete and does not involve or is not mixed with anything else.

- His music is sheer delight.
- Sheer chance quite often plays an important part in sparking off an idea.
- ...acts of sheer desperation.

2. adjective

A **sheer** cliff or drop is extremely steep or completely vertical.

- There was a sheer drop just outside my window.
- A young man plunged from a sheer rock face to his death.

3. adjective

Sheer material is very thin, light, and delicate.

- ...sheer black tights.

surname

surnames

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **surname** is the name that you share with other members of your family. In English speaking countries and many other countries it is your last name.

- She'd never known his surname.
- Although they share a surname they are not related.

skeptical

Explain

sceptical

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **sceptical about** something, you have doubts about it.

- Other archaeologists are sceptical about his findings.
- ...scientists who are sceptical of global warming and its alleged consequences.
- The party has always had a cautious and sceptical attitude to Europe.

tenant

tenants

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tenant** is someone who pays rent for the place they live in, or for land or buildings that they use.

- Regulations placed clear obligations on the landlord for the benefit of the tenant.
- Landowners frequently left the management of their estates to tenant farmers.

social

socials

Explain

1. adjective

Social means relating to society or to the way society is organized.

- ...the worst effects of unemployment, low pay and other social problems.
- ...long-term social change.
- ...the acceptance that social conditions influenced crime.
- ...changing social attitudes.
- ...the tightly woven social fabric of small towns.
- ...research into housing and social policy.

2. adjective

Social means relating to the status or rank that someone has in society.

- Higher education is unequally distributed across social classes.
- The guests came from all social backgrounds.
- Morisot and Degas moved in the same social circles.
- ...a prosperous upper-middle-class couple with social aspirations.

3. adjective

Social means relating to leisure activities that involve meeting other people.

- We ought to organize more social events.
- Social activities might include walking tours of the Old Town.

4. countable noun

A **social** is a party, dance, or informal gathering that is organized for the members of a club or institution.

- ...church socials.

5. adjective

Social animals live in groups and do things together.

- These endangered gentle giants are highly social animals.
- ...social insects like bees and ants.

thread

threads threading threaded

Explain

1. variable noun

Thread or a **thread** is a long very thin piece of a material such as cotton, nylon , or silk , especially one that is used in sewing.

- This time I'll do it properly with a needle and thread.
- ...a tiny Nepalese hat embroidered with golden threads.

2. countable noun

The **thread** of an argument , a story , or a situation is an aspect of it that connects all the different parts together.

- The thread running through many of these proposals was the theme of opportunity.
- All religions are united by the common threads of fighting evil and helping others.
- The possible consequences so filled his mind that he lost the thread of Wan Da's narrative.

3. countable noun

A **thread of** something such as liquid, light, or colour is a long thin line or piece of it.

- A thin, glistening thread of moisture ran along the rough concrete sill.

- ...Venetian glass decorated with embedded threads of white.

- ...a corpulent man with threads of black hair plastered across his brow.

4. plural noun

You can refer to clothes as **threads** .

- ...a cheap place to pick up natty threads.

5. countable noun

The **thread** on a screw, or on something such as a lid or a pipe , is the raised spiral line of metal or plastic around it which allows it to be fixed in place by twisting.

- The screw threads will be able to get a good grip.

6. countable noun

On the internet, a **thread** is a series of messages from different people about a particular subject.

- I saw the post but I didn't read the thread below it.

7. verb

If you **thread** your **way** through a group of people or things, or **thread through** it, you move through it carefully or slowly, changing direction frequently as you move.

- Slowly, she threaded her way back through the moving mass of bodies.
- ...threading our way past little boats.
- We threaded through a network of back streets.

8. verb

If you **thread** a long thin object **through** something, you pass it through one or more holes or narrow spaces.

- ...threading the laces through the eyelets of his shoes.
- Air ducts and electrical cables were threaded through the complex structure.
- These instruments allow doctors to thread microscopic telescopes into the digestive tract.

9. verb

If you **thread** small objects such as beads onto a string or thread, you join them together by pushing the string through them.

- Wipe the mushrooms clean and thread them on a string.

10. verb

When you **thread** a needle, you put a piece of thread through the hole in the top of the needle in order to sew with it.

- I sit down, thread a needle, snip off an old button.

11. to hang by a thread

12. pick up the threads of sth

such

Explain

1. determiner

You use **such** to refer back to the thing or person that you have just mentioned, or a thing or person like the one that you have just mentioned. You use **such as** and **such...as** to introduce a reference to the person or thing that has just been mentioned. **Such** is also a predeterminer. **Such** is also used before **be**. **As such** is also used. **Such as** is also used.

- There have been previous attempts at coups. We regard such methods as entirely unacceptable.

- You're being made to choose. Such choices as this are a by-product of freedom.

- There'd be no telling how John would react to such news as this.

- If your request is for information about a child, please contact the Registrar to find out how to make such a request.

- She told us her family make her pay rent. We could not believe such a thing.

- How can we make sense of such a story as this?

- We are scared because we are being watched—such is the atmosphere in Pristina and other cities in Kosovo.

- There should be a law ensuring products tested on animals have to be labelled as such.

- Issues such as these were not really his concern.

- I wouldn't see another chance such as this in my lifetime.

2. determiner

You use **such...as** to link something or someone with a clause in which you give a description of the kind of thing or person that you mean. **Such as** is also used.

- Each member of the alliance agrees to take such action as it deems necessary.

- Britain is not enjoying such prosperity as it was in the mid-1980s.

- Children do not use inflections such as are used in mature adult speech.

3. determiner

You use **such...as** to introduce one or more examples of the kind of thing or person that you have just mentioned. **Such as** is also used.

- *He was said to have written such books as The Day of Locusts and Miss Lovely Hearts.*
- *...such careers as teaching, nursing, hair-dressing and catering.*
- *...delays caused by such things as bad weather or industrial disputes.*
- *...serious offences, such as assault on a police officer.*
- *He definitely wants to perform further tests, such as a biopsy and some x-rays.*
- *When I get tired, such as when I'm working on my computer, I turn to biscuits.*

4. determiner

You use **such** before noun groups to emphasize the extent of something or to emphasize that something is remarkable. **Such** is also a pre-determiner.

- *I think most of us don't want to read what's in the newspaper anyway in such detail.*
- *One will never be able to understand why these political issues can acquire such force.*
- *The economy was not in such bad shape, he says.*
- *You know the health service is in such a state and it's getting desperate now.*
- *He had such a way with the ladies.*
- *It was such a pleasant surprise.*
- *He's such a sweet boy, isn't he.*

5. predeterminer

You use **such...that** in order to emphasize the degree of something by mentioning the result or consequence of it. **Such** is also a determiner. **Such** is also used after **be**.

- *His tongue swelled up to such a size that he could no longer speak clearly.*

- *These changes take place over such a long time that we don't see them happening.*
- *He was in such a hurry that he almost pushed me over on the stairs.*
- *She looked at him in such distress that he had to look away.*
- *Though Vivaldi had earned a great deal in his lifetime, his extravagance was such that he died in poverty.*
- *He kept thinking the pain was such that he would faint.*

6. determiner

You use **such...that** or **such...as** in order to say what the result or consequence of something that you have just mentioned is. **Such** is also a predeterminer. **Such** is also used after **be**.

- *The operation uncovered such dealing in stolen property that police pressed for changes in the law.*
- *He could put an idea in such a way that Alan would believe it was his own.*
- *OFSTED's brief is such that it can conduct any inquiry or provide any advice which the Secretary of State requires.*

7. such and such

8. such as it is/such as they are

9. as such

10. as such

topic

topics

Explain

1. countable noun

A **topic** is a particular subject that you discuss or write about.

- The weather is a constant topic of conversation in Britain.
- The main topic for discussion is political union.
- They offer tips on topics such as home safety.

superficial

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **superficial**, you disapprove of them because they do not think deeply, and have little understanding of anything serious or important.

- This guy is a superficial yuppie with no intellect whatsoever.
- The tone of his book is consistently negative, occasionally arrogant, and often superficial.

2. adjective

If you describe something such as an action, feeling, or relationship as **superficial**, you mean that it includes only the simplest and most obvious aspects of that thing, and not those aspects which require more effort to deal with or understand.

- Their arguments do not withstand the most superficial scrutiny.
- His roommate had been pleasant on a superficial level.
- Father had no more than a superficial knowledge of music.

3. adjective

Superficial is used to describe the appearance of something or the impression that it gives, especially if its real nature is very different.

- Despite these superficial resemblances, this is a darker work than her earlier novels.
- Spain may well look different but the changes are superficial.

4. adjective

Superficial injuries are not very serious, and affect only the surface of the body. You can also describe damage to an object as **superficial**.

- The 69-year-old clergyman escaped with superficial wounds.
- The explosion caused superficial damage to the fortified house.

5. adjective

The **superficial** layers of the skin are the ones nearest the surface.

- ...superficial blood vessels in the forearm.

trick

tricks tricking tricked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **trick** is an action that is intended to deceive someone.

- We are playing a trick on a man who keeps bothering me.

2. verb

If someone **tricks** you, they deceive you, often in order to make you do something.

- Stephen is going to be pretty upset when he finds out how you tricked him.

- *She was said to have tricked him into going to a warehouse at night in the hope of securing a lucrative deal.*
- *His real purpose is to trick his way into your home to see what he can steal.*

3. countable noun

A **trick** is a clever or skilful action that someone does in order to entertain people.

- *He shows me card tricks.*

4. countable noun

A **trick** is a clever way of doing something.

- *Tiffany revamped her sitting room with simple decorative tricks.*
- *It is not just a little trick you can pick up in half an hour.*

5. do the trick

6. every trick in the book

7. a trick of the light

8. sb doesn't miss a trick

9. tricks of the trade

10. up to one's tricks

turbulent

Explain

1. adjective

A **turbulent** time, place, or relationship is one in which there is a lot of change, confusion, and disorder.

- *They had been together for five or six turbulent years of rows and reconciliations.*

- *The minister announced that he was taking a rest from the turbulent world of politics.*

2. adjective

Turbulent water or air contains strong currents which change direction suddenly.

- *I had to have a boat that could handle turbulent seas.*

view

views viewing viewed

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **views** on something are the beliefs or opinions that you have about it, for example whether you think it is good, bad, right, or wrong.

- *Neither of them had strong views on politics.*
- *I take the view that she should be stopped as soon as possible.*
- *My own view is absolutely clear. What I did was right.*
- *You should also make your views known to your local MP.*

2. singular noun

Your **view of** a particular subject is the way that you understand and think about it.

- *The drama takes an idealistic, even a naive view of the subject.*
- *The whole point was to get away from a Christian-centred view of religion.*
- *In the old animistic world view, people believed that nature was organised by invisible souls.*

3. verb

If you **view** something in a particular way, you think of it in that way.

- First-generation Americans view the United States as a land of golden opportunity.
- Abigail's mother Linda views her daughter's talent with a mixture of pride and worry.
- Sectors in the economy can be viewed in a variety of ways.
- We would view favourably any sensible suggestion for maintaining the business.

4. countable noun

The **view** from a window or high place is everything which can be seen from that place, especially when it is considered to be beautiful .

- The view from our window was one of beautiful green countryside.
- Each of the rooms has a superb view of Pissouri Bay.

5. singular noun

If you have a **view of** something, you can see it.

- He stood up to get a better view of the blackboard.
- He stopped in the doorway, blocking her view.

6. uncountable noun

You use **view** in expressions to do with being able to see something. For example, if something is **in view** , you can see it. If something is **in full view of everyone** , everyone can see it.

- She was lying there in full view of anyone who walked by.
- A group of riders came into view on the dirt road.

- On South Main Street, a huge brick building looms into view.

7. verb

If you **view** something, you look at it for a particular purpose.

- They came back to view the house again.
- Twenty-five thousand mourners passed to view the body.

8. verb

If you **view** a television programme , video , or film, you watch it.

- We have viewed the footage of the incident.
- 'Elizabeth R', a TV portrait of the Queen, had record viewing figures.

9. uncountable noun

View refers to the way in which a piece of text or graphics is displayed on a computer screen .

- To see the current document in full-page view, click the Page Zoom Full button.

10. to take a dim view

11. in my view

12. in view of

13. in view

14. to take the long view

15. on view

16. with a view to

date

dates dating dated

Explain

1. countable noun

A **date** is a specific time that can be named , for example a particular day or a particular year.

- What's the date today?
- You will need to give the dates you wish to stay and the number of rooms you require.

2. verb

If you **date** something, you give or discover the date when it was made or when it began .

- You cannot date the carving and it is difficult to date the stone itself.
- I think we can date the decline of Western Civilization quite precisely.
- Archaeologists have dated the fort to the reign of Emperor Antoninus Pius.

3. verb

When you **date** something such as a letter or a cheque , you write that day's date on it.

- Once the decision is reached, he can date and sign the sheet.
- The letter is dated 2 July 1993.

4. singular noun

If you want to refer to an event without saying exactly when it will happen or when it happened, you can say that it will happen or happened **at** some **date** in the future or past .

- Retain copies of all correspondence, since you may need them at a later date.
- He did leave open the possibility of direct American aid at some unspecified date in the future.
- He was content for her wedding to be at some date between July and September.

5. to date

6. verb

If something **dates** , it goes out of fashion and becomes unacceptable to modern tastes .

- A black coat always looks smart and will never date.
- This album has hardly dated at all.

7. verb

If your ideas , what you say, or the things that you like or can remember **date** you, they show that you are quite old or older than the people you are with.

- It's going to date me now. I attended that school from 1969 to 1972.

8. countable noun

A **date** is an appointment to meet someone or go out with them, especially someone with whom you are having, or may soon have, a romantic relationship .

- I have a date with Bob.
- I think we should make a date to go and see Gwendolen soon.

9. countable noun

If you have a date with someone with whom you are having, or may soon have, a romantic relationship, you can refer to that person as your **date** .

- He lied to Essie, saying his date was one of the girls in the show.

10. verb

If you **are dating** someone, you go out with them regularly because you are having, or may soon have, a romantic relationship with them. You can also say that two people **are dating** .

- For a year I dated a woman who was a research assistant.

- They've been dating for three months.
- In high school, he did not date very much.

11. countable noun

A **date** is a small, dark-brown, sticky fruit with a stone inside . Dates grow on palm trees in hot countries .

vision

visions

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **vision** of a future situation or society is what you imagine or hope it would be like , if things were very different from the way they are now .

- I have a vision of a society that is free of exploitation and injustice.
- That's my vision of how the world could be.
- Turning that vision into a practical reality is not easy.

2. countable noun

If you have a **vision** of someone in a particular situation, you imagine them in that situation, for example because you are worried that it might happen , or hope that it will happen.

- He had a vision of Cheryl, slumped on a plastic chair in the waiting-room.
- Maybe you had visions of being surrounded by happy, smiling children.

3. countable noun

A **vision** is the experience of seeing something that other people cannot see, for example in a religious experience or as a result of madness or taking drugs .

- It was on 24th June 1981 that young villagers first reported seeing the Virgin Mary in a vision.

4. uncountable noun

Your **vision** is your ability to see clearly with your eyes.

- It causes blindness or serious loss of vision.
- In spite of his otherwise excellent vision, he found he was colour-blind.

5. uncountable noun

Your **vision** is everything that you can see from a particular place or position .

- Jane blocked Cross's vision and he could see nothing.
- I saw other indistinct shapes that stayed out of vision.

aware

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **aware** of something, you know about it.

- Smokers are well aware of the dangers to their own health.
- He should have been aware of what his junior officers were doing.
- Some people may not be aware that this was a problem.

2. adjective

If you are **aware** of something, you realize that it is present or is happening because you hear it, see it, smell it, or feel it.

- She was acutely aware of the noise of the city.

- Jane was suddenly aware that she was digging her nails into her thigh.

3. adjective

Someone who is **aware** notices what is happening around them or happening in the place where they live .

- They are politically very aware.

bright

brights brighter brightest

Explain

1. adjective

A **bright** colour is strong and noticeable , and not dark .

- ...a bright red dress.
- ...the bright uniforms of the guards parading at Buckingham Palace.

2. adjective

A **bright** light, object, or place is shining strongly or is full of light.

- ...a bright October day.
- She leaned forward, her eyes bright with excitement.

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **bright** , you mean that they are quick at learning things.

- I was convinced that he was brighter than average.

4. adjective

A **bright** idea is clever and original .

- There are lots of books crammed with bright ideas.

- Ford had the bright idea of paying workers enough to buy cars.

5. adjective

If someone looks or sounds **bright** , they look or sound cheerful and lively .

- The boy was so bright and animated.
- 'May I help you?' said a bright American voice over the telephone.

6. adjective

If the future is **bright** , it is likely to be pleasant or successful .

- Both had successful careers and the future looked bright.
- There are much brighter prospects for a comprehensive settlement than before.

7. countable noun

The brights on a car or other vehicle are the headlights when they are switched on fully .

8. to look on the bright side

brittle

Explain

1. adjective

An object or substance that is **brittle** is hard but easily broken.

- Pine is brittle and breaks.
- ...the dry, brittle ends of the hair.

2. adjective

If you describe a situation , relationship , or someone's mood as **brittle** , you mean that it is unstable , and may easily change.

- They are nurturing a diplomatic relationship that is dangerously brittle but cannot be allowed to fail.

- This may help to undermine the brittle truce that currently exists.

3. graded adjective

Someone who is **brittle** seems rather sharp and insensitive and says things which are likely to hurt other people's feelings .

- His father, for all his brittle wit, was also a deeply sentimental man.

4. graded adjective

A **brittle** sound is short, loud , and sharp.

- Myrtle gave a brittle laugh.

concrete

concretes concreting concreted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Concrete is a substance used for building which is made by mixing together cement, sand, small stones, and water.

- The posts have to be set in concrete.
- They had lain on sleeping bags on the concrete floor.
- ...concrete barriers.

2. verb

When you **concrete** something such as a path , you cover it with concrete.

- He merely cleared and concreted the floors.

3. adjective

You use **concrete** to indicate that something is definite and specific.

- He had no concrete evidence.

- There were no concrete proposals on the table.

- I must have something to tell him. Something concrete.

4. adjective

A **concrete** object is a real , physical object.

- ...using concrete objects to teach addition and subtraction.

5. adjective

A **concrete** noun is a noun that refers to a physical object rather than to a quality or idea .

6. set in concrete/embedded in concrete

castle

castles

Explain

1. countable noun

A **castle** is a large building with thick , high walls . Castles were built by important people, such as kings , in former times, especially for protection during wars and battles .

2. countable noun

In chess , a **castle** is a piece that can be moved forwards , backwards , or sideways .

constant

constants

Explain

1. adjective

You use **constant** to describe something that happens all the time or is always there.

- Inflation is a constant threat.

- *He has been her constant companion for the last four months.*

2. adjective

If an amount or level is **constant** , it stays the same over a particular period of time.

- *The average speed of the winds remained constant.*

3. countable noun

A **constant** is a thing or value that always stays the same.

- *In the world of fashion it sometimes seems that the only constant is ceaseless change.*
- *Two significant constants have been found in a number of research studies.*

cell

cells

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cell** is the smallest part of an animal or plant that is able to function independently. Every animal or plant is made up of millions of cells.

- *Those cells divide and give many other different types of cells.*
- *...blood cells.*
- *Soap destroys the cell walls of bacteria.*

2. countable noun

A **cell** is a small room in which a prisoner is locked . A **cell** is also a small room in which a monk or nun lives.

3. countable noun

You can refer to a small group of people within a larger organization as a **cell** .

- *...Communist Party cells.*

costly

costlier costliest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **costly** , you mean that it costs a lot of money, often more than you would want to pay.

- *Having professionally-made curtains can be costly, so why not make your own?*

2. adjective

If you describe someone's action or mistake as **costly** , you mean that it results in a serious disadvantage for them, for example the loss of a large amount of money or the loss of their reputation .

- *Psychometric tests can save organizations from grim and costly mistakes.*
- *This sort of scandal in international banking has been politically costly.*

challenge

challenges challenging challenged

Explain

1. variable noun

A **challenge** is something new and difficult which requires great effort and determination .

- *I like a big challenge and they don't come much bigger than this.*
- *The new government's first challenge is the economy.*

2. to rise to the challenge

3. variable noun

A **challenge to** something is a questioning of its truth or value. A **challenge to** someone is a questioning of their authority.

- The demonstrators have now made a direct challenge to the authority of the government.

4. verb

If you **challenge** ideas or people, you question their truth, value, or authority.

- Democratic leaders have challenged the president to sign the bill.
- The move was immediately challenged by two of the republics.
- I challenged him on the hypocrisy of his political attitudes.

5. verb

If you **challenge** someone, you invite them to fight or compete with you in some way. **Challenge** is also a noun .

- A mum challenged her to a fight after their daughters fell out.
- He left a note at the scene of the crime, challenging detectives to catch him.
- We challenged a team who called themselves 'College Athletes'.
- A third presidential candidate emerged to mount a serious challenge.

6. verb

If someone **is challenged** by a guard , they are ordered to stop and say who they are or why they are there.

- The men apparently opened fire after they were challenged by a patrol.

dear

dearer dearest dears

Explain

1. adjective

You use **dear** to describe someone or something that you feel affection for.

- Mrs Cavendish is a dear friend of mine.
- At last I am back at my dear little desk.

2. adjective

If something is **dear to** you or **dear to your heart** , you care deeply about it.

- His family life was very dear to him.
- This is a subject very dear to the hearts of academics up and down the country.

3. adjective

You use **dear** in expressions such as ' **my dear fellow** ' , ' **dear girl** ' , or ' **my dear Richard** ' when you are addressing someone whom you know and are fond of. You can also use expressions like this in a rude way to indicate that you think you are superior to the person you are addressing.

- Of course, Toby, my dear fellow, of course.
- Take as long as you like, dear boy.

4. adjective

Dear is written at the beginning of a letter, followed by the name or title of the person you are writing to.

- Dear Peter, I have been thinking about you so much during the past few days.

5. convention

In British English, you begin formal letters with ' **Dear Sir** ' or ' **Dear Madam** '. In American English, you begin them with 'Sir' or 'Madam'.

- 'Dear sir,' she began.

6. countable noun

You can call someone **dear** as a sign of affection.

- You're a lot like me, dear.
- 'Good night, my dears,' she called to us as we closed her door behind us.

7. exclamation

You can use **dear** in expressions such as 'oh dear', 'dear me', and 'dear, dear' when you are sad, disappointed, or surprised about something.

- 'Oh dear, oh dear.' McKinnon sighed. 'You, too.'
- Outside, Bruce glanced at his watch: 'Dear me, nearly one o'clock.'

8. countable noun

You can call someone a **dear** when you are fond of them and think that they are nice.

- He's such a dear.

9. adjective

If you say that something is **dear**, you mean that it costs a lot of money, usually more than you can afford or more than you think it should cost.

- Clothes here are much dearer than in the States.
- They're too dear.

10. to cost someone dear

city

cities

Explain

1. countable noun

A **city** is a large town.

- ...the city of Bologna.
- ...a busy city centre.

definite

Explain

1. adjective

If something such as a decision or an arrangement is **definite**, it is firm and clear, and unlikely to be changed.

- It's too soon to give a definite answer.
- Her Royal Highness has definite views about most things.
- She made no definite plans for her future.

2. adjective

Definite evidence or information is true, rather than being someone's opinion or guess.

- We didn't have any definite proof.
- If you have any definite news of my husband, please let me know.
- The police had nothing definite against her.

3. adjective

You use **definite** to emphasize the strength of your opinion or belief.

- There has already been a definite improvement.
- That's a very definite possibility.

4. adjective

Someone who is **definite** behaves or talks in a firm, confident way.

- *Mary is very definite about this.*

5. *graded adjective*

A **definite** shape or colour is clear and noticeable .

- *Studying his face in the bathroom mirror he wished he had more definite features.*

component

components

Explain

1. *countable noun*

The **components** of something are the parts that it is made of.

- *Enriched uranium is a key component of a nuclear weapon.*
- *The management plan has four main components.*
- *They were automotive component suppliers to motor manufacturers.*

2. *adjective*

The **component** parts of something are the parts that make it up.

- *First we have to break the system down into its component parts.*
- *They manufacture component parts for engines.*

evident

Explain

1. *adjective*

If something is **evident** , you notice it easily and clearly .

- *His footprints were clearly evident in the heavy dust.*

- *The threat of inflation is already evident in bond prices.*

- *...the best-publicised cases of evident injustice.*

2. *adjective*

You use **evident** to show that you are certain about a situation or fact and your interpretation of it.

- *It was evident that she had once been a beauty.*

- *The cities are bombarded day after day in an evident effort to force their surrender.*

detail

details detailing detailed

Explain

1. *countable noun*

The **details** of something are its individual features or elements.

- *The details of the plan are still being worked out.*
- *No details of the discussions have been given.*
- *I recall every detail of the party.*

2. *plural noun*

Details about someone or something are facts or pieces of information about them.

- *See the bottom of this page for details of how to apply for this exciting offer.*
- *Full details will be announced soon.*

3. countable noun

A **detail** is a minor point or aspect of something, as opposed to the central ones.

- Only minor details now remain to be settled.

4. uncountable noun

You can refer to the small features of something which are often not noticed as **detail**.

- We like his attention to detail and his enthusiasm.

5. countable noun

A **detail** of a picture is a part of it that is printed separately and perhaps made bigger, so that smaller features can be clearly seen.

6. verb

If you **detail** things, you list them or give information about them.

- The report detailed the human rights abuses committed during the war.

7. verb

If someone **is detailed to** do a task or job, they are officially ordered to do it.

- He detailed a constable to take it to the Incident Room.

8. go into details

9. in detail

excellent

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **excellent** is very good indeed.

- The recording quality is excellent.
- Luckily, Sue is very efficient and does an excellent job as Fred's personal assistant.

2. exclamation

Some people say '**Excellent!**' to show that they approve of something.

duration

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **duration of** an event or state is the time during which it happens or exists.

- He was given the task of protecting her for the duration of the trial.
- Courses are of two years' duration.

2. for the duration

exotic

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **exotic** is unusual and interesting, usually because it comes from or is related to a distant country.

- ...brilliantly coloured, exotic flowers.
- She flits from one exotic location to another.

economics

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Economics is the study of the way in which money, industry, and trade are organized in a society.

- He gained a first class Honours degree in economics.

2. uncountable noun

The **economics** of a society or industry is the system of organizing money and trade in it.

- He is regarded as a committed supporter of a radical free-market economics policy.
- ...the economics of the third world.

exercise

exercises exercising exercised

Explain

1. verb

If you **exercise** something such as your authority, your rights, or a good quality, you use it or put it into effect. **Exercise** is also a noun .

- They are merely exercising their right to free speech.
- He insisted that he would exercise presidential powers to the full.
- Britain has warned travellers to exercise prudence and care.
- ...the exercise of political and economic power.
- Leadership does not rest on the exercise of force alone.

2. verb

When you **exercise** , you move your body energetically in order to get fit and to remain healthy . **Exercise** is also a noun.

- She exercises two or three times a week.
- Never keep on exercising if you have even the slightest chest pain.
- Exercising the body does a great deal to improve one's health.
- Lack of exercise can lead to feelings of depression and exhaustion.
- Aerobic exercise moves our entire body and uses most major muscles.

3. verb

If a movement or activity **exercises** a part of your body, it keeps it strong , healthy, or in good condition.

- They call rowing the perfect sport. It exercises every major muscle group.

4. countable noun

Exercises are a series of movements or actions which you do in order to get fit, remain healthy, or practise for a particular physical activity.

- These stomach exercises will tighten abdominal muscles.
- I do special neck and shoulder exercises.
- That's when I try to meditate or do some deep-breathing exercises.

5. countable noun

Exercises are military activities and operations which are not part of a real war, but which allow the armed forces to practise for a real war.

- General Powell predicted that in the future it might even be possible to stage joint military exercises.
- The military truck was taking 14 men on exercise in a remote area of Norway.

6. countable noun

An **exercise** is a short activity or piece of work that you do, for example in school, which is designed to help you learn a particular skill.

- Try working through the opening exercises in this chapter.
- He took up piano lessons, combining standard classical exercises with his own attempts at Gershwin.

7. plural noun

Exercises is an official ceremony, in which people make speeches and present awards .

- Vicky and Gary attended the graduation exercises at Columbia.

8. countable noun

If you describe an activity as an **exercise** in a particular quality or result, you mean that it has that quality or result, especially when it was not intended to have it.

- Her morning was an exercise in indecision. She tried on everything in her closet but couldn't decide what to wear.
- As an exercise in stating the obvious, this could scarcely be faulted.
- Think what a waste of taxpayers' money the whole exercise was.

9. verb

If something **exercises** you or your mind, you think or talk about it a great deal, especially because you are worried or concerned about it.

- This has been a major problem exercising the minds of scientists around the world.
- The proper role of appeal judges is an issue that has long exercised the finest legal minds.

fortunate

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone or something is **fortunate**, you mean that they are lucky.

- He was extremely fortunate to survive.
- Central London is fortunate in having so many large parks and open spaces.
- It was fortunate that the water was shallow.
- She is in the fortunate position of having plenty of choice.

fabric

fabrics

Explain

1. variable noun

Fabric is cloth or other material produced by weaving together cotton, nylon, wool, silk, or other threads. Fabrics are used for making things such as clothes, curtains, and sheets.

- ...small squares of red cotton fabric.
- Whatever your colour scheme, there's a fabric to match.

2. singular noun

The **fabric** of a society or system is its basic structure, with all the customs and beliefs that make it work successfully.

- The fabric of society has been deeply damaged by the previous regime.
- Years of civil war have wrecked the country's infrastructure and destroyed its social fabric.

3. singular noun

The **fabric** of a building is its walls, roof, and the materials with which it is built.

- Condensation will eventually cause the fabric of the building to rot away.

fragile

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe a situation as **fragile**, you mean that it is weak or uncertain, and unlikely to be able to resist strong pressure or attack.

- ...moves that will place added strain on an already fragile economy.

- The Prime Minister's fragile government was on the brink of collapse.
- His overall condition remained fragile.

2. adjective

Something that is **fragile** is easily broken or damaged .

- He leaned back in his fragile chair.

3. graded adjective

Something that is **fragile** is very delicate or fine in appearance .

4. graded adjective

If someone feels **fragile** , they feel weak, for example because they are ill or have drunk too much alcohol .

- He felt irritated and strangely fragile, as if he were recovering from a severe bout of flu.

gentleman

gentlemen

Explain

1. countable noun

A **gentleman** is a man who comes from a family of high social standing .

- ...this wonderful portrait of English gentleman Joseph Greenway.

2. countable noun

If you say that a man is a **gentleman** , you mean he is polite and educated , and can be trusted .

- He was always such a gentleman.

3. countable noun

You can address men as **gentlemen** , or refer politely to them as **gentlemen** .

- This way, please, ladies and gentlemen.
- It seems this gentleman was waiting for the doctor.

4. a gentleman's agreement

heroic

heroics

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe a person or their actions as **heroic** , you admire them because they show extreme bravery.

- His heroic deeds were celebrated in every corner of India.

2. adjective

If you describe an action or event as **heroic** , you admire it because it involves great effort or determination to succeed .

- The company has made heroic efforts at cost reduction.
- He finally faltered in the last game of a heroic match.
- Their dogged single-mindedness is almost heroic.

3. adjective

Heroic means being or relating to the hero of a story .

- ...the book's central, heroic figure.

4. plural noun

Heroics are actions involving bravery, courage , or determination.

- ...the man whose aerial heroics helped save the helicopter pilot.

- *England need heroics from the captain now.*

5. plural noun

*If you describe someone's actions or plans as **heroics** , you think that they are foolish or dangerous because they are too difficult or brave for the situation in which they occur.*

- *He said his advice was: 'No heroics, stay within the law'.*
- *Cut it out, Perry. You've performed your heroics. It's all over now.*

glass

glasses

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Glass is a hard transparent substance that is used to make things such as windows and bottles.

- *...a pane of glass.*
- *...a sliding glass door.*

2. countable noun

A **glass** is a container made from glass, which you can drink from and which does not have a handle . The contents of a glass can be referred to as a **glass of** something.

- *Grossman raised the glass to his lips.*
- *...a glass of milk.*

3. uncountable noun

Glass is used to mean objects made of glass, for example drinking containers and bowls .

- *There's a glittering array of glass to choose from at markets.*

4. plural noun

Glasses are two lenses in a frame that some people wear in front of their eyes in order to help them see better .

- *He took off his glasses.*

inherent

Explain

1. adjective

The **inherent** qualities of something are the necessary and natural parts of it.

- *Stress is an inherent part of dieting.*
- *...the dangers inherent in an outbreak of war.*

government

governments

Explain

1. countable noun

The **government** of a country is the group of people who are responsible for governing it.

- *The Government has insisted that confidence is needed before the economy can improve.*
- *...democratic governments in countries like Britain and the U.S..*
- *...fighting between government forces and left-wing rebels.*

2. uncountable noun

Government consists of the activities, methods , and principles involved in governing a country or other political unit.

- *The first four years of government were completely disastrous.*
- *...our system of government.*

integral

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is an **integral** part of something is an essential part of that thing.

- Rituals and festivals form an integral part of every human society.
- Anxiety is integral to the human condition.

holder

holders

Explain

1. countable noun

A **holder** is someone who owns or has something.

- This season the club has had 73,500 season-ticket holders.
- ...the record holder in the 3, 000 metres steeplechase.
- ...the holders of the European Football Championship.

2. countable noun

A **holder** is a container in which you put an object, usually in order to protect it or to keep it in place.

- ...a toothbrush holder.
- ...a cigarette holder.

international

internationals

Explain

1. adjective

International means between or involving different countries.

- ...an international agreement against exporting arms to that country.
- ...Kuwait International Airport.
- ...emergency aid from the international community.

2. countable noun

In sport, an **international** is a game that is played between teams representing two different countries.

- ...the midweek international against England.

3. countable noun

An **international** is a member of a country's sports team.

- ...a former England international.

longitude

longitudes

Explain

1. variable noun

The **longitude** of a place is its distance to the west or east of a line passing through Greenwich. Compare latitude. **Longitude** is also an adjective.

- He noted the latitude and longitude, then made a mark on the admiralty chart.
- A similar feature is found at 13 degrees North between 230 degrees and 250 degrees longitude.

invaluable

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **invaluable** , you mean that it is extremely useful .

- I was able to gain invaluable experience over that year.
- The research should prove invaluable in the study of linguistics.
- Their advice was invaluable to me at that stage of my work.

loom

looms looming loomed

Explain

1. verb

If something **looms over** you, it appears as a large or unclear shape, often in a frightening way.

- Vincent loomed over me, as pale and grey as a tombstone.
- ...the bleak mountains that loomed out of the blackness and towered around us.

2. verb

If a worrying or threatening situation or event **is looming** , it seems likely to happen soon .

- Another government spending crisis is looming in the United States.
- The threat of renewed civil war looms ahead.
- ...the looming threat of recession.

3. to loom large

4. countable noun

A **loom** is a machine that is used for weaving thread into cloth.

lucky

luckier luckiest

Explain

1. adjective

You say that someone is **lucky** when they have something that is very desirable or when they are in a very desirable situation .

- I am luckier than most. I have a job.
- I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the Earth.
- He is incredibly lucky to be alive.
- Those who are lucky enough to be wealthy have a duty to give to the hungry.

2. adjective

Someone who is **lucky** seems to always have good luck .

- Some people are born lucky aren't they?
- He had always been lucky at cards.

3. adjective

If you describe an action or experience as **lucky** , you mean that it was good or successful , and that it happened by chance and not as a result of planning or preparation .

- They admit they are now desperate for a lucky break.
- The man is very lucky that he had help so quickly.

4. adjective

A **lucky** object is something that people believe helps them to be successful.

- He did not have on his other lucky charm, a pair of green socks.

5. *sb will be lucky*
6. *count oneself lucky*
7. *lucky sb*
8. *strike lucky*
9. *third time lucky (and other numbers)*

obvious

Explain

1. *adjective*
If something is **obvious** , it is easy to see or understand.
 - ...the need to rectify what is an obvious injustice.
 - Determining how he will conduct his presidency isn't quite so obvious.
2. *adjective*
If you describe something that someone says as **obvious** , you are being critical of it because you think it is unnecessary or shows lack of imagination .
 - There are some very obvious phrases that we should know better than to use.

manager

managers

Explain

1. *countable noun*
A **manager** is a person who is responsible for running part of or the whole of a business organization.
 - The chef, staff and managers are all Chinese.

- ...Linda Emery, marketing manager for Wall's sausages.
- ...a retired bank manager.

2. *countable noun*
The **manager** of a pop star or other entertainer is the person who looks after their business interests .
3. *countable noun*
The **manager** of a sports team is the person responsible for training the players and organizing the way they play. In American English, **manager** is only used for baseball ; in other sports, coach is used instead .

odd

odder oddest

Explain

1. *adjective*
If you describe someone or something as **odd** , you think that they are strange or unusual.
 - He'd always been odd, but not to this extent.
 - What an odd coincidence that he should have known your family.
 - Something odd began to happen.
2. *See also odd-looking*
3. *adjective*
You use **odd** before a noun to indicate that you are not mentioning the type, size , or quality of something because it is not important .
 - ...moving from place to place where she could find the odd bit of work.
 - He had various odd cleaning jobs around the place.

- *I knew that Alan liked the odd drink.*

4. *adverb*

You use **odd** after a number to indicate that it is only approximate .

- *How many pages was it, 500 odd?*
- *He has now appeared in sixty odd films.*
- *'How long have you lived here?'—'Twenty odd years.'*

5. *adjective*

Odd numbers, such as 3 and 17, are those which cannot be divided exactly by the number two.

- *The odd numbers are on the left as you walk up the street.*
- *There's an odd number of candidates.*

6. *adjective*

You say that two things are **odd** when they do not belong to the same set or pair.

- *I'm wearing odd socks today by the way.*

7. *the odd man out/the odd woman out/the odd one out*

module

modules

Explain

1. *countable noun*

A **module** is one of the separate parts of a course taught at a college or university .

- *These courses cover a twelve-week period and are organised into three four-week modules.*

2. *countable noun*

A **module** is a part of a spacecraft which can operate by itself, often away from the rest of the spacecraft.

- *A rescue plan could be achieved by sending an unmanned module to the space station.*

3. *countable noun*

A **module** is one of a set of parts from which some buildings are made. Each module is made separately, and the completed modules are then joined together to form the building.

4. *countable noun*

A **module** is a part of a machine , especially a computer, which performs a particular function .

plain

plainer plainest plains

Explain

1. *adjective*

A **plain** object, surface, or fabric is entirely in one colour and has no pattern, design, or writing on it.

- *In general, a plain carpet makes a room look bigger.*
- *He placed the paper in a plain envelope.*
- *He wore a plain blue shirt, open at the collar.*

2. *adjective*

Something that is **plain** is very simple in style.

- *Bronwen's dress was plain but it hung well on her.*
- *It was a plain, grey stone house, distinguished mainly by its largely unspoilt simplicity.*

3. adjective

If a fact, situation, or statement is **plain** , it is easy to recognize or understand .

- It was plain to him that I was having a nervous breakdown.
- He's made it plain that he loves the game and wants to be involved still.

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **plain** , you think they look ordinary and not at all beautiful .

- ...a shy, rather plain girl with a pale complexion.

5. countable noun

A **plain** is a large flat area of land with very few trees on it.

- Once there were 70 million buffalo on the plains.

6. adverb

You can use **plain** before an adjective in order to emphasize it. **Plain** is also used before a noun .

- The food was just plain terrible.
- Is it love of publicity or plain stupidity on her part?

7. adjective

You can use **plain** before a name to emphasize how simple and ordinary it is, especially when you are comparing it with another more unusual or impressive name.

- Why couldn't they call you plain Ann or Alice like the rest?

8. in plain clothes

nail

nails nailing nailed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **nail** is a thin piece of metal with one pointed end and one flat end. You hit the flat end with a hammer in order to push the nail into something such as a wall .

- A mirror hung on a nail above the washstand.
- He hammered the nail into the branch.

2. verb

If you **nail** something somewhere , you fix it there using one or more nails.

- Frank put the first plank down and nailed it in place.
- They nail shut the front door.
- The windows were all nailed shut.

3. countable noun

Your **nails** are the thin hard parts that grow at the ends of your fingers and toes.

- Keep your nails short and your hands clean.

4. verb

To **nail** someone means to catch them and prove that they have been breaking the law .

- The prosecution still managed to nail him for robberies at the homes of leading industrialists.

5. verb

If you **nail** something, you do it extremely well or successfully.

- She had nailed the art of making us laugh.
- He tried, but I'm not sure he totally nailed it.

6. as hard as nails/hard as nails

7. to hit the nail on the head

positive

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **positive about** things, you are hopeful and confident, and think of the good aspects of a situation rather than the bad ones.

- Be positive about your future and get on with living a normal life.
- He became much more positive and was soon back in full-time employment.
- ...a positive frame of mind.

2. adjective

A **positive** fact, situation, or experience is pleasant and helpful to you in some way. **The positive** in a situation is the good and pleasant aspects of it.

- The parting from his sister had a positive effect on John.
- Working abroad should be an exciting and positive experience for all concerned.
- Work on the positive, creating beautiful, loving and fulfilling relationships.

3. adjective

If you make a **positive** decision or take **positive** action, you do something definite in order to deal with a task or problem.

- There are positive changes that should be implemented in the rearing of animals.
- Having a good diet gives me a sense that I'm doing something positive and that I'm in control.

4. adjective

A **positive** response to something indicates agreement, approval, or encouragement.

- Police have had a positive response to appeals for information from motorists traveling on the M40.

5. adjective

If you are **positive** about something, you are completely sure about it.

- I'm as positive as I can be about it.
- 'She's never late. You sure she said eight?'—'Positive.'

6. adjective

Positive evidence gives definite proof of the truth or identity of something.

- There was no positive evidence that any birth defects had arisen as a result of Vitamin A intake.

7. adjective

If a medical or scientific test is **positive**, it shows that something has happened or is present.

- If the test is positive, a course of antibiotics may be prescribed.
- He was stripped of his gold medal after testing positive for steroids.

8. adjective

You can use **positive** to emphasize a noun.

- Good day to you, Bernard! It's a positive delight to see you.
- He was in a positive fury.
- The man was being a positive embarrassment.

9. adjective

A **positive** number is greater than zero.

- It's really a simple numbers game with negative and positive numbers.

10. adjective

If something has a **positive** electrical charge, it has the same charge as a proton and the opposite charge to an electron.

necklace

necklaces necklacing necklaced

Explain

1. countable noun

A **necklace** is a piece of jewellery such as a chain or a string of beads which someone, usually a woman, wears round their neck.

- ...a diamond necklace and matching earrings.

2. verb

To **necklace** someone means to kill them by putting a tyre soaked in petrol around their neck and then setting fire to it.

- Alleged strike breakers had their houses petrol-bombed or were hacked to death or necklaced.

queer

queerer queerest queers

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **queer** is strange.

- If you ask me, there's something a bit queer going on.

2. countable noun

People sometimes call homosexual men **queers**. **Queer** is also an adjective.

- ...queer men.

3. adjective

Queer means relating to homosexual people, and is used by some homosexuals.

- ...contemporary queer culture.
- ...queer activism.

pearl

pearls

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pearl** is a hard round object which is shiny and usually creamy-white in colour. Pearls grow inside the shell of an oyster and are used for making expensive jewellery.

- She wore a string of pearls at her throat.
- I put on the pearl earrings Daddy had bought me.

2. adjective

Pearl is used to describe something which looks like a pearl.

- ...tiny pearl buttons.

3. to cast pearls before swine

4. pearls of wisdom

sensible

Explain

1. adjective

Sensible actions or decisions are good because they are based on reasons rather than emotions.

- It might be sensible to get a solicitor.
- The sensible thing is to leave them alone.
- ...sensible advice.

2. adjective

Sensible people behave in a sensible way.

- She was a sensible girl and did not panic.
- Oh come on, let's be sensible about this.

- *I'm trying to persuade you to be more sensible.*

3. adjective

Sensible shoes or clothes are practical and strong rather than fashionable and attractive .

- *Wear loose clothing and sensible footwear.*

pickup

Explain

1. noun

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

2. adjective

10. 11. 12.

- *a pickup jazz band or baseball team*

singular

Explain

1. adjective

The **singular** form of a word is the form that is used when referring to one person or thing.

- *...the fifteen case endings of the singular form of the Finnish noun.*

- *The word 'you' can be singular or plural.*

2. singular noun

The **singular** of a noun is the form of it that is used to refer to one person or thing.

- *The singular of Inuit is Inuk.*

3. adjective

Singular means very great and remarkable.

- *...a smile of singular sweetness.*

- *Barre was quickly drawn into the electoral arena, although with singular lack of success.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **singular** , you mean that they are strange or unusual.

- *Cardinal Meschia was without doubt a singular character.*

- *Where he got that singular notion I just can't think.*

poison

poisons poisoning poisoned

Explain

1. variable noun

Poison is a substance that harms or kills people or animals if they swallow it or absorb it.

- *Poison from the weaver fish causes paralysis, swelling, and nausea.*

- *Mercury is a known poison.*

2. verb

If someone **poisons** another person, they kill the person or make them ill by giving them poison.

- *The rumours that she had poisoned him could never be proved.*

3. verb

If you **are poisoned by** a substance, it makes you very ill and sometimes kills you.

- *Employees were taken to hospital yesterday after being poisoned by fumes.*

- *Toxic waste could endanger lives and poison fish.*

4. verb

If someone **poisons** a food , drink , or weapon , they add poison to it so that it can be used to kill someone.

- They considered poisoning his food.

5. verb

To **poison** water, air , or land means to damage it with harmful substances such as chemicals.

- ...the textile and fibre industries that poison the water and use vast amounts of natural resources.
- The land has been completely poisoned by chemicals.
- ...dying forests, poisoned rivers and lakes.

6. verb

Something that **poisons** a good situation or relationship spoils it or destroys it.

- The whole atmosphere has really been poisoned.
- ...ill-feeling that will poison further talk of a common foreign policy.

7. poison sb's mind

slim

slimmer slimmest slims slimming slimmed

Explain

1. adjective

A **slim** person has an attractively thin and well-shaped body.

- The young woman was tall and slim.
- He is attractive, of slim build, with blue eyes.

2. verb

If you **are slimming** , you are trying to make yourself thinner and lighter by eating less food. **Slim down** means the same as slim .

- Some people will gain weight, no matter how hard they try to slim.
- It makes sense to eat a reasonably balanced diet when slimming.
- Doctors have told Benny to slim down.
- ...salon treatments that claim to slim down thighs.

3. adjective

A **slim** book, wallet , or other object is thinner than usual .

- The slim booklets describe a range of services and facilities.
- He published only three slim volumes of verse in his short life.

4. adjective

A **slim** chance or possibility is a very small one.

- There's still a slim chance that he may become Prime Minister.

5. verb

If an organization **slims** its products or workers , it reduces the number of them that it has.

- The company recently slimmed its product line.

policy

policies

Explain

1. variable noun

A **policy** is a set of ideas or plans that is used as a basis for making decisions , especially in politics , economics , or business.

- ...plans which include changes in foreign policy and economic reforms.
- ...the U.N.'s policy-making body.

2. countable noun

An official organization's **policy** on a particular issue or towards a country is their attitude and actions regarding that issue or country.

- ...its no-strings aid policy towards Africa.
- ...the government's policy on repatriation.
- ...the corporation's policy of forbidding building on common land.

3. countable noun

An insurance **policy** is a document which shows the agreement that you have made with an insurance company.

- You are advised to read the small print of household and motor insurance policies.

soft

softer softest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **soft** is pleasant to touch, and not rough or hard.

- Regular use of a body lotion will keep the skin soft and supple.
- When it's dry, brush the hair using a soft, nylon baby brush.

- ...warm, soft, white towels.

2. adjective

Something that is **soft** changes shape or bends easily when you press it.

- She lay down on the soft, comfortable bed.
- Add enough milk to form a soft dough.
- ...soft cheese.

3. adjective

Something that has a **soft** appearance has smooth curves rather than sharp or distinct edges.

- This is a smart, yet soft and feminine look.
- ...the soft skin on the baby's face.

4. adjective

Something that is **soft** is very gentle and has no force. For example, a **soft** sound or voice is quiet and not harsh. A **soft** light or colour is pleasant to look at because it is not bright.

- There was a soft tapping on my door.
- When he woke again he could hear soft music.
- ...a soft Irish accent.
- ...soft muted colours.
- A soft spring rain had fallen all day.

5. adjective

If you are **soft on** someone, you do not treat them as strictly or severely as you should do.

- The president says the measure is soft and weak on criminals.
- He had initially thought Byrnes too soft with the Russians.

6. adjective

If you say that someone has a **soft heart** , you mean that they are sensitive and sympathetic towards other people.

- Her rather tough and worldly exterior hides a very soft and sensitive heart.

7. adjective

You use **soft** to describe a way of life that is easy and involves very little work.

- The regime at Latchmere could be seen as a soft option.
- There is no way that 20 years of soft living could be lost in the first 30 minutes' exercise.

8. adjective

Soft drugs are drugs, such as cannabis, which are illegal but which many people do not consider to be strong or harmful .

9. adjective

A **soft** target is a place or person that can easily be attacked.

- People who carry a lot of cash about are a very soft target.

10. adjective

Soft water does not contain much of the mineral calcium and so makes bubbles easily when you use soap.

11. to have a soft spot for someone

politician

politicians

Explain

1. countable noun

A **politician** is a person whose job is in politics, especially a member of parliament or congress .

- They have arrested a number of leading opposition politicians.

solid

solids

Explain

1. adjective

A **solid** substance or object stays the same shape whether it is in a container or not.

- ...the potential of greatly reducing our solid waste problem.
- He did not eat solid food for several weeks.

2. countable noun

A **solid** is a substance that stays the same shape whether it is in a container or not.

- Solids turn to liquids at certain temperatures.
- ...the decomposition of solids.

3. adjective

A substance that is **solid** is very hard or firm.

- The snow had melted, but the lake was still frozen solid.
- The concrete will stay as solid as a rock.

4. adjective

A **solid** object or mass does not have a space inside it, or holes or gaps in it.

- ...a tunnel carved through 50ft of solid rock.

- ...a solid wall of multicoloured trees.
- ...a solid mass of colour.
- The car park was absolutely packed solid with people.

5. adjective

If an object is made of **solid** gold or **solid** wood, for example, it is made of gold or wood all the way through, rather than just on the outside.

- The taps appeared to be made of solid gold.
- ...solid wood doors.
- ...solid pine furniture.

6. adjective

A structure that is **solid** is strong and is not likely to collapse or fall over.

- Banks are built to look solid to reassure their customers.
- The car feels very solid.

7. adjective

If you describe someone as **solid**, you mean that they are very reliable and respectable.

- You want a partner who is solid and stable.
- Mr Zuma had a solid reputation as a grass roots organiser.

8. adjective

Solid evidence or information is reliable because it is based on facts.

- We don't have good solid information on where the people are.
- Some solid evidence was what was required.
- He has a solid alibi.

9. adjective

You use **solid** to describe something such as advice or a piece of work which is useful and reliable.

- The CIU provides churches with solid advice on a wide range of subjects.
- All I am looking for is a good solid performance.
- I've always felt that solid experience would stand me in good stead.

10. adjective

You use **solid** to describe something such as the basis for a policy or support for an organization when it is strong, because it has been developed carefully and slowly.

- I am determined to build on this solid foundation.
- ...a nominee with solid support within the party.
- ...Washington's attempt to build a solid international coalition.

11. adjective

If you do something for a **solid** period of time, you do it without any pause or interruption throughout that time.

- We had worked together for two solid years.

politics

Explain

1. plural noun

Politics are the actions or activities concerned with achieving and using power in a country or society. The verb that follows **politics** may be either singular or plural.

- The key question in British politics was how long the prime minister could survive.
- He quickly involved himself in local politics.
- ...a crucial watershed in the politics of the German right.

- *Politics is by no means the only arena in which women are excelling.*

2. plural noun

Your **politics** are your beliefs about how a country ought to be governed .

- *My politics are well to the left of centre.*

3. uncountable noun

Politics is the study of the ways in which countries are governed.

- *He began studying politics and medieval history.*
- *...young politics graduates.*

4. plural noun

Politics can be used to talk about the ways that power is shared in an organization and the ways it is affected by personal relationships between people who work together. The verb that follows **politics** may be either singular or plural.

- *You need to understand how office politics influence the working environment.*

- *Religious pamphlets were found in their possession.*

2. countable noun

Your **possessions** are the things that you own or have with you at a particular time.

- *People had lost their homes and all their possessions.*
- *She had tidied away her possessions.*

3. countable noun

A country's **possessions** are countries or territories that it controls.

- *All of them were French possessions at one time or another.*
- *...Britain's imperial possessions.*

4. uncountable noun

Possession by an evil spirit is the situation when a person's mind and body is controlled by an evil spirit.

- *They were convinced the girls' behaviour was due to possession by the devil.*

possession

possessions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you are **in possession of** something, you have it, because you have obtained it or because it belongs to you.

- *Those documents are now in the possession of the Guardian.*
- *We should go up and take possession of the land.*
- *He was also charged with illegal possession of firearms.*

straight

straighter straightest straights

Explain

1. adjective

A **straight** line or edge continues in the same direction and does not bend or curve. **Straight** is also an adverb .

- *Keep the boat in a straight line.*
- *Using the straight edge as a guide, trim the cloth to size.*
- *His teeth were perfectly straight.*

- There wasn't a single straight wall in the building.
 - Stand straight and stretch the left hand to the right foot.
 - Turn right and just basically walk straight, right over the river.
2. adjective
Straight hair has no curls or waves in it.
- Grace had long straight dark hair which she wore in a bun.
3. adverb
You use **straight** to indicate that the way from one place to another is very direct, with no changes of direction.
- The ball fell straight to the feet of the striker.
 - He finished his conversation and stood up, looking straight at me.
 - Straight ahead were the low cabins of the motel.
4. adverb
If you go **straight** to a place, you go there immediately.
- As always, we went straight to the experts for advice.
 - We'll go to a meeting in Birmingham and come straight back.
5. adjective
If you give someone a **straight** answer, you answer them clearly and honestly. **Straight** is also an adverb.
- What a shifty arguer he is, refusing ever to give a straight answer.
 - I lost my temper and told him straight that I hadn't been looking for any job.
6. adjective
Straight means following one after the other, with no gaps or intervals. **Straight** is also an adverb.
- They'd won 12 straight games before they lost.
 - He called from Weddington, having been there for 31 hours straight.
7. adjective
A **straight** choice or a **straight** fight involves only two people or things.
- It's a straight choice between low-paid jobs and no jobs.
 - Each has several times beaten the other in a straight fight.
8. adjective
If you describe someone as **straight**, you mean that they are normal and conventional, for example in their opinions and in the way they live.
- Dorothy was described as a very straight woman, a very strict Christian who was married to her job.
9. adjective
If you describe someone as **straight**, you mean that they are heterosexual rather than homosexual. **Straight** is also a noun.
- His sexual orientation was a lot more gay than straight.
 - Marty of New York describes herself as a straight female.
 - ...a standard of sexual conduct that applies equally to gays and straights.
10. adjective
A **straight** drink, especially an alcoholic drink, has not had another liquid such as water added to it.

- ...a large straight whiskey without ice.
- Children should not drink fruit juices straight.

11. countable noun

On a racetrack, a **straight** is a section of the track that is straight, rather than curved.

- Our cars were clearly too slow along the straights.
- I went to overtake him on the back straight on the last lap.

12. get sth straight

13. go straight

14. on the straight and narrow

practice

practices

Explain

1. countable noun

You can refer to something that people do regularly as a **practice**.

- Some firms have cut workers' pay below the level set in their contract, a practice that is illegal in Germany.
- The Prime Minister demanded a public inquiry into bank practices.

2. variable noun

Practice means doing something regularly in order to be able to do it better. A **practice** is one of these periods of doing something.

- She was taking all three of her daughters to basketball practice every day.

- ...the hard practice necessary to develop from a learner to an accomplished musician.
- The defending world racing champion recorded the fastest time in a final practice today.

3. uncountable noun

The work done by doctors and lawyers is referred to as the **practice** of medicine and law. People's religious activities are referred to as the **practice** of a religion.

- ...the practice of internal medicine.
- I eventually realized I had to change my attitude toward medical practice.
- ...a law guaranteeing the people freedom of conscience and religious practice.

4. countable noun

A doctor's or lawyer's **practice** is his or her business, often shared with other doctors or lawyers.

- The new doctor's practice was miles away from where I lived.
- My law practice isn't the most important thing in my life, you know.

5. in practice

6. normal practice/standard practice

7. out of practice

8. practice makes perfect

9. put into practice

strange

stranger strangest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **strange** is unusual or unexpected , and makes you feel slightly nervous or afraid .

- Then a strange thing happened.
- There was something strange about the flickering blue light.
- It's strange how things turn out.

2. adjective

A **strange** place is one that you have never been to before. A **strange** person is someone that you have never met before.

- I ended up alone in a strange city.
- She was faced with a new job, in unfamiliar surroundings with strange people.

3. graded adjective

If you feel **strange** , you have an unpleasant or uncomfortable feeling , either physical or emotional .

- I felt all dizzy and strange.

rack

racks racking racked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rack** is a frame or shelf , usually with bars or hooks , that is used for holding things or for hanging things on.

- My rucksack was too big for the luggage rack.
- You have to fight to reach the racks of clothes but the bargains are amazing.

2. verb

If someone **is racked by** something such as illness or anxiety , it causes them great suffering or pain .

- His already infirm body was racked by high fever.
- The country is now racked by three violent separatist movements.
- ...a teenager racked with guilt and anxiety.

3. rack one's brain

4. on the rack

5. go to rack and ruin

6. off the rack

sure

surer surest

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **sure** that something is true , you are certain that it is true. If you are not **sure** about something, you do not know for certain what the true situation is.

- He'd never been in a class before and he was not even sure that he should have been teaching.
- The president has never been sure which direction he wanted to go in on this issue.
- She was no longer sure how she felt about him.
- It is impossible to be sure about the value of land.

2. adjective

If someone is **sure of** getting something, they will definitely get it or they think they will definitely get it.

- It's better to pay so that you can be sure of getting quality.
- It is the self-assurance of the new generation which makes them sure of their success.

3. phrase

If you say that something **is sure to** happen, you are emphasizing your belief that it will happen.

- With over 80 beaches to choose from, you are sure to find a place to lay your towel.
- Anyone who goes food shopping without a list is sure to forget the things they really need.

4. adjective

Sure is used to emphasize that something such as a sign or ability is reliable or accurate.

- Sharpe's leg and shoulder began to ache, a sure sign of rain.
- She has a sure grasp of social issues such as literacy, poverty and child care.

5. adjective

If you tell someone to **be sure to** do something, you mean that they must not forget to do it.

- Be sure to read about how mozzarella is made, on page 65.
- Be sure you get your daily quota of calcium.

6. convention

Sure is an informal way of saying 'yes' or 'all right'.

- 'He rang you?'—'Sure. Last night.'

- 'I'd like to be alone, O.K?'—'Sure. O.K.'

- 'We'll phone and you can make an appointment'—'Sure. What time do you want to go?'

7. adverb

You can use **sure** in order to emphasize what you are saying.

- 'Has the whole world just gone crazy?'—'Sure looks that way, doesn't it.'
- It sure is hot, he thought.

8. sure enough

9. for sure

10. make sure

11. make sure

12. sure thing

13. sure thing

14. to be sure

15. be sure of oneself

regime

regimes

Explain

1. countable noun

If you refer to a government or system of running a country as a **regime**, you are critical of it because you think it is not democratic and uses unacceptable methods.

- ...the collapse of the Fascist regime at the end of the war.

- The emerging capitalist order was giving rise to harsh regimes.

2. countable noun

A **regime** is the way that something such as an institution , company , or economy is run , especially when it involves tough or severe action.

- The authorities moved him to the less rigid regime of an open prison.
- ...a drastic regime of economic reform and financial discipline.

3. countable noun

A **regime** is a set of rules about food, exercise , or beauty that some people follow in order to stay healthy or attractive .

- He has a new fitness regime to strengthen his back.

susceptible

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **susceptible to** something or someone, you are very likely to be influenced by them.

- Young people are the most susceptible to advertisements.
- James was extremely susceptible to flattery.
- He was, she believes, unusually susceptible to women.

2. adjective

If you are **susceptible to** a disease or injury , you are very likely to be affected by it.

- Walking with weights makes the shoulders very susceptible to injury.
- Diesel exhaust is particularly aggravating to many susceptible individuals.

3. graded adjective

A **susceptible** person is very easily influenced emotionally.

- Hers was a susceptible nature.

seal

seals sealing sealed

Explain

1. verb

When you **seal** an envelope, you close it by folding part of it over and sticking it down, so that it cannot be opened without being torn .

- He sealed the envelope and put on a stamp.
- Write your letter and seal it in a blank envelope.
- A courier was despatched with two sealed envelopes.

2. verb

If you **seal** a container or an opening, you cover it with something in order to prevent air, liquid, or other material getting in or out. If you **seal** something **in** a container, you put it inside and then close the container tightly.

- She merely filled the containers, sealed them with a cork, and pasted on labels.
- A woman picks them up and seals them in plastic bags.
- ...a lid to seal in heat and keep food moist.
- ...a hermetically sealed, leak-proof packet.

3. countable noun

The **seal** on a container or opening is the part where it has been sealed.

- When assembling the pie, wet the edges where the two crusts join, to form a seal.

4. countable noun

A **seal** is a device or a piece of material, for example in a machine, which closes an opening tightly so that air, liquid, or other substances cannot get in or out.

- Check seals on fridges and freezers regularly.

5. countable noun

A **seal** is something such as a piece of sticky paper or wax that is fixed to a container or door and must be broken before the container or door can be opened.

- The seal on the box broke when it fell from its hiding-place.
- Protestors banged on the sides of the lorry and broke customs seals on the doors.

6. countable noun

A **seal** is a special mark or design, for example on a document, representing someone or something. It may be used to show that something is genuine or officially approved.

- ...a supply of note paper bearing the Presidential seal.
- The best wines are entitled to a numbered seal of quality.

7. verb

If someone in authority **seals** an area, they stop people entering or passing through it, for example by placing barriers in the way. **Seal off** means the same as seal1 .

- The soldiers were deployed to help police seal the border.
- A wide area round the building is sealed to all traffic except the emergency services.
- Police and troops sealed off the area after the attack.
- Soldiers there are going to seal the airport off.

8. verb

To **seal** something means to make it definite or confirm how it is going to be.

- McLaren are close to sealing a deal with Renault.
- The election will seal his destiny one way or the other.
- His artistic character was sealed by his experiences of the First World War.

9. set/put the seal on

10. under seal

upright

uprights

Explain

1. adjective

If you are sitting or standing **upright** , you are sitting or standing with your back straight , rather than bending or lying down.

- Helen sat upright in her chair.
- ...those who had managed to remain upright.
- Jerrold pulled himself upright on the bed.
- He moved into an upright position.

2. adjective

An **upright** vacuum cleaner or freezer is tall rather than wide .

- ...the latest state-of-the-art upright vacuum cleaners.

3. adjective

An **upright** chair has a straight back and no arms .

- *He was sitting on an upright chair beside his bed, reading.*
4. countable noun
You can refer to vertical posts or the vertical parts of an object as **uprights** .
- *...the uprights of a four-poster bed.*
5. adjective
You can describe people as **upright** when they are careful to follow acceptable rules of behaviour and behave in a moral way .
- *...a very upright, trustworthy man.*

spring

springs springing sprang sprung

Explain

- variable noun
Spring is the season between winter and summer when the weather becomes warmer and plants start to grow again.
 - countable noun
A **spring** is a spiral of wire which returns to its original shape after it is pressed or pulled .
 - countable noun
A **spring** is a place where water comes up through the ground. It is also the water that comes from that place.
 - verb
When a person or animal **springs** , they jump upwards or forwards suddenly or quickly.
- *He sprang to his feet, grabbing his keys off the coffee table.*
 - *Outside each door a guard sprang to attention as they approached.*
 - *Throwing back the sheet, he sprang from the bed.*
 - *The lion roared once and sprang.*
- verb
If something **springs** in a particular direction, it moves suddenly and quickly.
 - verb
If things or people **spring into action** or **spring to life** , they suddenly start being active or suddenly come into existence.
 - verb
If one thing **springs from** another thing, it is the result of it.
- *Sadly when the lid of the boot sprang open, it was empty.*
 - *When she contacted me at the beginning of August to enlist support, Sharon and I sprang into action.*
 - *...new industries which had sprung into life during the 1920s.*
 - *Ethiopia's art springs from her early Christian as well as her Muslim heritage.*
- *We planted bulbs to flower in spring.*
 - *The Labor government of Western Australia has an election due next spring.*
 - *We met again in the spring of 1977.*
 - *The apricot plant provides delicate, white spring flowers.*
 - *As the mattress wears, the springs soften and do not support your spine.*
 - *Both springs in the fuel pump were broken.*

- *His anger sprang from his suffering.*

8. verb

If a boat or container **springs a leak** , water or some other liquid starts coming in or out through a crack .

- *The yacht has sprung a leak in the hull.*

9. verb

If you **spring** some news or a surprise **on** someone, you tell them something that they did not expect to hear , without warning them.

- *The two superpower leaders sprang a surprise at a ceremony in the White House yesterday by signing a trade deal.*
- *McLaren sprang a new idea on him.*

variable

variables

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **variable** changes quite often, and there usually seems to be no fixed pattern to these changes.

- *The potassium content of foodstuffs is very variable.*
- *There was a bit of a wind and it was blowing onshore, variable, but quite strong.*
- *...a variable rate of interest.*

2. countable noun

A **variable** is a factor that can change in quality, quantity, or size , which you have to take into account in a situation .

- *Decisions could be made on the basis of price, delivery dates, or any other variable.*

- *Other variables in making forecasts include the weather and the economic climate.*

3. countable noun

A **variable** is a quantity that can have any one of a set of values.

- *It is conventional to place the independent variable on the right-hand side of an equation.*

statesman

statesmen

Explain

1. countable noun

A **statesman** is an important and experienced politician, especially one who is widely known and respected.

- *Hamilton is a great statesman and political thinker.*

vertical

verticals

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **vertical** stands or points straight up.

- *The climber inched up a vertical wall of rock.*
- *The gadget can be attached to any vertical or near vertical surface.*

2. singular noun

The vertical is the direction that points straight up, at an angle of 90 degrees to a flat surface.

- *Pluto seems to have suffered a major collision that tipped it 122 degrees from the vertical.*

3. countable noun

A **vertical** is a line or structure that is vertical.

- *As long as the verticals align, the design will look regular.*

tissue

tissues

Explain

1. uncountable noun

In animals and plants, **tissue** consists of cells that are similar to each other in appearance and that have the same function.

- *As we age we lose muscle tissue.*
- *Athletes have hardly any fatty tissue.*
- *All the cells and tissues in the body benefit from the increased intake of oxygen.*

2. uncountable noun

Tissue or **tissue paper** is thin paper that is used for wrapping things that are easily damaged , such as objects made of glass or china .

3. countable noun

A **tissue** is a piece of thin soft paper that you use to blow your nose .

- *...a box of tissues.*

vulnerable

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **vulnerable** is weak and without protection , with the result that they are easily hurt physically or emotionally.

- *Old people are particularly vulnerable members of our society.*

2. adjective

If a person, animal, or plant is **vulnerable to** a disease, they are more likely to get it than other people, animals, or plants.

- *People with high blood pressure are especially vulnerable to diabetes.*
- *Plants that are growing vigorously are less likely to be vulnerable to disease.*

3. adjective

Something that is **vulnerable** can be easily harmed or affected by something bad .

- *Their tanks would be vulnerable to attack from the air.*
- *...a table showing which cars are most vulnerable to theft.*
- *Goodyear could be vulnerable in a prolonged economic slump.*

academic

academics

Explain

1. adjective

Academic is used to describe things that relate to the work done in schools , colleges, and universities, especially work which involves studying and reasoning rather than practical or technical skills .

- *Their academic standards are high.*
- *I was terrible at school and left with few academic qualifications.*

2. adjective

Academic is used to describe things that relate to schools, colleges, and universities.

- ...the start of the last academic year.
- I'd had enough of academic life.

3. adjective

Academic is used to describe work, or a school, college, or university, that places emphasis on studying and reasoning rather than on practical or technical skills.

- The author has settled for a more academic approach.
- I went to a school that was very academic.

4. adjective

Someone who is **academic** is good at studying.

- The system is failing most disastrously among less academic children.

5. countable noun

An **academic** is a member of a university or college who teaches or does research .

6. adjective

You can say that a discussion or situation is **academic** if you think it is not important because it has no real effect or cannot happen .

- This was not an academic exercise—soldiers' lives were at risk.
- Such is the size of the problem that these arguments are purely academic.

beard

beards

Explain

1. countable noun

A man's **beard** is the hair that grows on his chin and cheeks .

- He's decided to grow a beard.
- ...Charlie's bushy black beard.

alone

Explain

1. adjective

When you are **alone** , you are not with any other people. **Alone** is also an adverb .

- There is nothing so frightening as to be alone in a combat situation.
- He was all alone in the middle of the hall.
- She has lived alone in this house for almost five years now.
- He was sitting alone at a table reading a newspaper.

2. adjective

If one person is **alone with** another person, or if two or more people are **alone** , they are together , without anyone else present .

- I couldn't imagine why he would want to be alone with me.
- My brother and I were alone with Vincent.

3. adjective

If you say that you are **alone** or feel **alone** , you mean that nobody who is with you, or nobody at all, cares about you.

- Never in her life had she felt so alone, so abandoned.
- He found himself alone in a hostile world.

4. adverb

You say that one person or thing **alone** does something when you are emphasizing that only one person or thing is involved .

- You alone should determine what is right for you.
- They were convicted on forensic evidence alone.

5. adverb

If you say that one person or thing **alone** is responsible for part of an amount , you are emphasizing the size of that part and the size of the total amount.

- The BBC alone is sending 300 technicians, directors and commentators.
- Megastars like Jack Nicholson, who made £50 million from Batman alone, are unlikely to be affected.

6. adjective

If someone is **alone in** doing something, they are the only person doing it, and so are different from other people. **Alone** is also an adverb.

- If you sometimes feel pain at the front of your shins after running, you are far from alone.
- Am I alone in thinking that this scandal should finish his career?
- Alone among the great Victorian novelists, Hardy lived long enough to see his work adapted for the screen.
- I alone was sane, I thought, in a world of crazy people.

7. adverb

When someone does something **alone** , they do it without help from other people.

- Bringing up a child alone should give you a sense of achievement.
- He was working alone and did not have an accomplice.

8. go it alone

carrot

carrots

Explain

1. variable noun

Carrots are long, thin , orange-coloured vegetables. They grow under the ground , and have green shoots above the ground.

2. countable noun

Something that is offered to people in order to persuade them to do something can be referred to as a **carrot** . Something that is meant to persuade people not to do something can be referred to in the same sentence as a ' stick '.

- They will be set targets, with a carrot of extra cash and pay if they achieve them.
- Why the new emphasis on sticks instead of diplomatic carrots?

amiable

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **amiable** is friendly and pleasant to be with.

- She had been surprised at how amiable and polite he had seemed.

cushion

cushions cushioning cushioned

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cushion** is a fabric case filled with soft material , which you put on a seat to make it more comfortable .

- ...a velvet cushion.

2. countable noun

A **cushion** is a soft pad or barrier , especially one that protects something.

- The company provides a styrofoam cushion to protect the tablets during shipping.

3. verb

Something that **cushions** an object when it hits something protects it by reducing the force of the impact .

- ...a giant airbag to cushion your landing.
- The suspension is designed to cushion passengers from the effects of rough roads.

4. verb

To **cushion** the effect of something unpleasant means to reduce it.

- He was trying to cushion the blow of this terrible news.
- The price rises will be cushioned by welfare benefits.
- The subsidies are designed to cushion farmers against unpredictable weather.

5. countable noun

Something that is a **cushion against** something unpleasant reduces its effect.

- Housing benefit provides a cushion against hardship.

barren

Explain

1. adjective

A **barren** landscape is dry and bare, and has very few plants and no trees.

- ...the country's landscape of high barren mountains.

2. adjective

Barren land consists of soil that is so poor that plants cannot grow in it.

- He also wants to use the water to irrigate barren desert land.

3. adjective

If you describe something such as an activity or a period of your life as **barren** , you mean that you achieve no success during it or that it has no useful results.

- ...politics that are banal and barren of purpose.
- ...the player, who ended a 14-month barren spell by winning the Tokyo event in October.
- As the leaves of autumn wither and fall, so has my own life become barren.

4. adjective

If you describe a room or a place as **barren** , you do not like it because it has almost no furniture or other objects in it.

- The room was austere, nearly barren of furniture or decoration.
- Six stale loaves of brown bread formed a dark blot on the otherwise barren shelves.

5. adjective

A **barren** woman or female animal is unable to have babies .

- He prayed that his barren wife would one day have a child.
- ...a three-year-old barren mare.

director

directors

Explain

1. countable noun

The **director** of a play, film, or television programme is the person who decides how it will appear on stage or screen , and who tells the actors and technical staff what to do.

2. countable noun

In some organizations and public authorities , the person in charge is referred to as **the director** .

- ...the director of the intensive care unit at Guy's Hospital.
- ...the Director of Public Prosecutions.
- She has just been appointed artistic director of Queensland Theatre Company.

3. countable noun

The **directors** of a company are its most senior managers , who meet regularly to make important decisions about how it will be run .

- He served on the board of directors of a local bank.

4. countable noun

The **director** of an orchestra or choir is the person who is conducting it.

3. adjective

If you look **blank** , your face shows no feeling, understanding, or interest.

- Abbot looked blank. 'I don't quite follow, sir.'
- His daughter gave him a blank look.

4. singular noun

If your mind or memory is **a blank** , you cannot think of anything or remember anything.

- I'm sorry, but my mind is a blank.
- I came round in hospital and did not know where I was. Everything was a complete blank.

5. countable noun

Blanks are gun cartridges which contain explosive but do not contain a bullet , so that they cause no harm when the gun is fired.

- ...a starter pistol which only fires blanks.

6. to draw a blank

7. go blank

blank

blanks blanking blanked

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **blank** has nothing on it.

- We could put some of the pictures over on that blank wall over there.
- He tore a blank page from his notebook.
- ... a blank screen.

2. countable noun

A **blank** is a space which is left in a piece of writing or on a printed form for you to fill in particular information.

- Put a word in each blank to complete the sentence.

draft

drafts drafting drafted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **draft** is an early version of a letter, book, or speech.

- I rewrote his rough draft, which was published under my name.
- I emailed a first draft of this article to him.
- ...a draft report from a major U.S. university.

- ...a draft law.

2. verb

When you **draft** a letter, book, or speech, you write the first version of it.

- He drafted a standard letter to the editors.
- The legislation was drafted by House Democrats.

3. verb

If you **are drafted**, you are ordered to serve in the armed forces, usually for a limited period of time.

- During the Second World War, he was drafted into the U.S. Army.
- He wasn't drafted for the war; he volunteered for the Navy.

4. verb

If people **are drafted into** a place, they are moved there to do a particular job.

- Extra police have been drafted into the town after the violence.
- The manager will make a special plea to draft the player into his squad as a replacement.

5. singular noun

The draft is the practice of ordering people to serve in the armed forces, usually for a limited period of time.

- ...his effort to avoid the draft.

6. countable noun

A **draft** is a written order for payment of money by a bank, especially from one bank to another.

- The money was payable by a draft drawn by the home.
- Ten days later Carmen received a bank draft for a plane ticket.

blind

blinds blinding blinded

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **blind** is unable to see because their eyes are damaged. **The blind** are people who are blind. This use could cause offence.

- I started helping him run the business when he went blind.
- How would you explain colour to a blind person?
- He was a teacher of the blind.

2. verb

If something **blinds** you, it makes you unable to see, either for a short time or permanently.

- The sun hit the windscreen, momentarily blinding him.

3. adjective

If you are **blind with** something such as tears or a bright light, you are unable to see for a short time because of the tears or light.

- Her mother groped for the back of the chair, her eyes blind with tears.

4. adjective

If you say that someone is **blind to** a fact or a situation, you mean that they ignore it or are unaware of it, although you think that they should take notice of it or be aware of it.

- David's good looks and impeccable manners had always made her blind to his faults.
- All the time I was blind to your suffering.

5. verb

If something **blinds** you **to** the real situation, it prevents you from realizing that it exists or from understanding it properly.

- *He never allowed his love of Australia to blind him to his countrymen's faults.*

6. adjective

You can describe someone's beliefs or actions as **blind** when you think that they seem to take no notice of important facts or behave in an unreasonable way.

- *...her blind faith in the wisdom of the Church.*
- *Lesley yelled at him with blind, hating rage.*

7. adjective

A **blind** corner is one that you cannot see round because something is blocking your view.

- *He tried to overtake three cars on a blind corner and crashed head-on into a lorry.*

8. adjective

A **blind** wall or building is one which has no windows or doors .

- *I remembered a huddle of stone buildings with blind walls.*

9. countable noun

A **blind** is a roll of cloth or paper which you can pull down over a window as a covering.

10. to turn a blind eye

drug

drugs drugging drugged

Explain

1. countable noun

A **drug** is a chemical which is given to people in order to treat or prevent an illness or disease.

- *The drug will be useful to hundreds of thousands of infected people.*

- *...the drug companies.*

2. countable noun

Drugs are substances that some people take because of their pleasant effects, but which are usually illegal .

- *His mother was on drugs, on cocaine.*
- *She was sure Leo was taking drugs.*
- *...the problem of drug abuse.*

3. verb

If you **drug** a person or animal, you give them a chemical substance in order to make them sleepy or unconscious .

- *They drugged the guard dog with doped meatballs.*
- *She was drugged and robbed.*
- *He grew tired, and drifted off into a drugged sleep.*

4. verb

If food or drink **is drugged** , a chemical substance is added to it in order to make someone sleepy or unconscious when they eat or drink it.

- *I wonder now if that drink had been drugged.*
- *Anyone could have drugged that wine.*
- *A tourist was robbed after being given a drugged orange.*

gauge

gauges gauging gauged

Explain

1. verb

If you **gauge** the speed or strength of something, or if you gauge an amount, you measure or calculate it, often by using a device of some kind.

- *He gauged the wind at over thirty knots.*
- *Distance is gauged by journey time rather than miles.*

2. countable noun

A **gauge** is a device that measures the amount or quantity of something and shows the amount measured.

- *...temperature gauges.*
- *...pressure gauges.*

3. verb

If you **gauge** people's actions, feelings, or intentions in a particular situation, you carefully consider and judge them.

- *...as he gauged possible enemy moves and his own responses.*
- *His mood can be gauged by his reaction to the most trivial of incidents.*

4. singular noun

A **gauge** of someone's feelings or a situation is a fact or event that can be used to judge them.

- *The index is the government's chief gauge of future economic activity.*

5. countable noun

A **gauge** is the distance between the two rails on a railway line.

- *...a narrow gauge railway.*

6. countable noun

A **gauge** is the thickness of something, especially metal or wire.

dependent

Explain

1. adjective

To be **dependent on** something or someone means to need them in order to succeed or be able to survive .

- *The local economy is overwhelmingly dependent on oil and gas extraction.*
- *Up to two million people there are dependent on food aid.*
- *Britain became increasingly dependent upon American technology.*
- *In his own way, he was dependent on her.*
- *Just 26 per cent of households are married couples with dependent children.*

2. adjective

If one thing is **dependent on** another, the first thing will be affected or determined by the second .

- *How we cope with new roles is largely dependent on previous experience.*
- *The treatment of infertility is largely dependent on the ability of couples to pay.*

grass

grasses grassing grassed

Explain

1. variable noun

Grass is a very common plant consisting of large numbers of thin, spiky , green leaves that cover the surface of the ground.

- *Small things stirred in the grass around the tent.*
- *The lawn contained a mixture of grasses.*

2. singular noun

If you talk about **the grass** , you are referring to an area of ground that is covered with grass, for example in your garden .

- *In the old days, there were strict fines for walking on the grass or missing a study period.*

- *I'm going to cut the grass.*

3. uncountable noun

Grass is the same as marijuana .

- *I started smoking grass when I was about sixteen.*

4. verb

If you say that one person **grasses on** another, the first person tells the police or other authorities about something criminal or wrong which the second person has done. **Grass up** means the same as grass .

- *His sister wants him to grass on the members of his own gang.*
- *He was repeatedly attacked by other inmates, who accused him of grassing.*
- *How many of them are going to grass up their own kids to the police?*

5. countable noun

A **grass** is someone who tells the police or other authorities about criminal activities that they know about.

6. the grass is greener

7. put out to grass

dull

duller dullest dulls dulling dulled

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **dull** , you mean they are not interesting or exciting .

- *They are both nice people but can be rather dull.*
- *I felt she found me boring and dull.*

- *The documentary lasts for more than two-and-a-half hours, and there is scarcely a dull minute.*

2. adjective

Someone or something that is **dull** is not very lively or energetic .

- *The body's natural rhythms mean we all feel dull and sleepy between 1 and 3pm.*

3. adjective

A **dull** colour or light is not bright.

- *The stamp was a dull blue colour.*

4. adjective

You say the weather is **dull** when it is very cloudy.

- *It's always dull and raining.*

5. adjective

Dull sounds are not very clear or loud.

- *The long whining whistle of a shell was followed by the dull boom of the explosion.*
- *The coffin closed with a dull thud.*

6. adjective

Dull feelings are weak and not intense.

- *The pain, usually a dull ache, gets worse with exercise.*
- *I realized with a kind of dull shock that I didn't recognize a single name.*

7. adjective

If a knife or blade is **dull** , it is not sharp .

8. verb

If something **dulls** or if it **is dulled** , it becomes less intense, bright, or lively.

- *Her eyes dulled and she gazed blankly.*
- *He can dull your senses with facts and figures.*
- *Share prices and trading have been dulled by worries over the war.*

guideline

guidelines

Explain

1. countable noun

If an organization issues **guidelines on** something, it issues official advice about how to do it.

- The government should issue clear guidelines on the content of religious education.
- The Internet Advertising Bureau has guidelines for advertising companies to follow.

2. countable noun

A **guideline** is something that can be used to help you plan your actions or to form an opinion about something.

- The effects of the sun can be significantly reduced if we follow certain guidelines.
- A written IQ test is merely a guideline.

empirical

Explain

1. adjective

Empirical evidence or study relies on practical experience rather than theories.

- There is no empirical evidence to support his thesis.

heading

headings

Explain

1. countable noun

A **heading** is the title of a piece of writing , which is written or printed at the top of the page.

- ...helpful chapter headings.

empty

emptier emptiest empties emptying emptied

Explain

1. adjective

An **empty** place, vehicle , or container is one that has no people or things in it.

- The room was bare and empty.
- ...empty cans of lager.
- The roads were nearly empty of traffic.

2. adjective

An **empty** gesture , threat , or relationship has no real value or meaning .

- His father threatened to throw him out, but he knew it was an empty threat.
- ...to ensure the event is not perceived as an empty gesture.

3. adjective

If you describe a person's life or a period of time as **empty** , you mean that nothing interesting or valuable happens in it.

- My life was very hectic but empty before I met him.

4. adjective

If you **feel empty** , you feel unhappy and have no energy, usually because you are very tired or have just experienced something upsetting .

- *I felt empty and hollow; defeated.*
- *I feel so empty, my life just doesn't seem worth living any more.*

5. verb

If you **empty** a container, or **empty** something out of it, you remove its contents, especially by tipping it up.

- *I emptied the wastepaper basket.*
- *Empty the noodles and liquid into a serving bowl.*
- *He emptied the contents out into the palm of his hand.*

6. verb

If someone **empties** a room or place, or if it **empties**, everyone that is in it goes away.

- *The stadium emptied at the end of the first day of athletics.*
- *...a woman who could empty a pub full of drunks just by lifting one fist.*

7. verb

A river or canal that **empties into** a lake, river, or sea flows into it.

- *The Washougal empties into the Columbia River near Portland.*

8. countable noun

Empties are bottles or containers which no longer have anything in them.

herb

herbs

Explain

1. countable noun

A **herb** is a plant whose leaves are used in cooking to add flavour to food, or as a medicine.

exceptional

Explain

1. adjective

You use **exceptional** to describe someone or something that has a particular quality, usually a good quality, to an unusually high degree.

- *...children with exceptional ability.*
- *His translation is exceptional in its poetic quality.*

2. adjective

Exceptional situations and incidents are unusual and only likely to happen very infrequently.

- *...if the courts hold that this case is exceptional.*
- *Magistrates would have the discretion to impose a community order.*

indication

indications

Explain

1. variable noun

An **indication** is a sign which suggests, for example, what people are thinking or feeling.

- *All the indications are that we are going to receive reasonable support from abroad.*
- *He gave no indication that he was ready to compromise.*

fertile

Explain

1. adjective

Land or soil that is **fertile** is able to support the growth of a large number of strong healthy plants.

- ...fertile soil.
- ...the rolling fertile countryside of East Cork.

2. adjective

A **fertile** mind or imagination is able to produce a lot of good, original ideas .

- ...a product of Flynn's fertile imagination.
- A chess player must have a fertile imagination and rich sense of fantasy.

3. adjective

A situation or environment that is **fertile** in relation to a particular activity or feeling encourages the activity or feeling.

- ...a fertile breeding ground for this kind of violent racism.

4. adjective

A person or animal that is **fertile** is able to reproduce and have babies or young .

- The operation cannot be reversed to make her fertile again.

label

labels labelling labelled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **label** is a piece of paper or plastic that is attached to an object in order to give information about it.

- He peered at the label on the bottle.

2. verb

If something **is labelled** , a label is attached to it giving information about it.

- The stuff has never been properly logged and labelled.

- Meat labelled 'Scotch Beef' sells for a premium in supermarkets.

- All the products are labelled with comprehensive instructions.

3. verb

If you say that someone or something **is labelled as** a particular thing, you mean that people generally describe them that way and you think that this is unfair .

- Too often the press are labelled as bad boys.

- Certain estates are labelled as undesirable.

- They are afraid to contact the social services in case they are labelled a problem family.

- If you venture from 'feminine' standards, you are labelled aggressive and hostile.

4. countable noun

If you say that someone gets a particular **label** , you mean that people show disapproval of them by describing them with a critical word or phrase.

- They remain on course for the label of worst Super League side.

5. countable noun

You can refer to a company that produces and sells CDs as a particular **label** .

- It was on the Virgin label.

gentle

gentler gentlest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **gentle** is kind , mild, and calm .

- My son was a quiet and gentle man.
- Michael's voice was gentle and consoling.

2. adjective

Gentle actions or movements are performed in a calm and controlled manner, with little force.

- ...a gentle game of tennis.
- His movements were gentle and deliberate.

3. adjective

If you describe the weather , especially the wind , as **gentle** , you mean it is pleasant and calm and not harsh or violent .

- The blustery winds of spring had dropped to a gentle breeze.

4. adjective

A **gentle** slope or curve is not steep or severe .

- ...gentle, rolling meadows.
- There were two passes over 13,000 feet but the slopes were gentle.

5. adjective

A **gentle** heat is a fairly low heat.

- Cook for 30 minutes over a gentle heat.

lawn

lawns

Explain

1. variable noun

A **lawn** is an area of grass that is kept cut short and is usually part of someone's garden or back-yard, or part of a park .

- They were sitting on the lawn under a large beech tree.

golden

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **golden** is bright yellow in colour.

- She combed and arranged her golden hair.
- ...an endless golden beach.

2. adjective

Golden things are made of gold.

- ...a golden chain with a golden locket.

3. adjective

If you describe something as **golden** , you mean it is wonderful because it is likely to be successful and rewarding , or because it is the best of its kind .

- He says there's a golden opportunity for peace which must be seized.

4. golden boy/girl

meadow

meadows

Explain

1. countable noun

A **meadow** is a field which has grass and flowers growing in it.

greedy

greedier greediest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **greedy**, you mean that they want to have more of something such as food or money than is necessary or fair.

- He attacked greedy bosses for awarding themselves big rises.
- She is greedy and selfish.

nonsense

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you say that something spoken or written is **nonsense**, you mean that you consider it to be untrue or silly.

- Most orthodox doctors however dismiss this as complete nonsense.
- ...all that poetic nonsense about love.
- 'I'm putting on weight.'—'Nonsense my dear.'

2. variable noun

You can use **nonsense** to refer to something that you think is foolish or that you disapprove of.

- Surely it is an economic nonsense to deplete the world of natural resources.
- I think there is a limit to how much of this nonsense people are going to put up with.

3. uncountable noun

You can refer to spoken or written words that do not mean anything because they do not make sense as **nonsense**.

- ...a children's nonsense poem by Charles E Carryl.

4. make a nonsense of sth

hollow

hollows hollowing hollowed

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **hollow** has a space inside it, as opposed to being solid all the way through.

- ...a hollow tree.
- ...a hollow cylinder.

2. adjective

A surface that is **hollow** curves inwards.

- He looked young, dark and sharp-featured, with hollow cheeks.

3. countable noun

A **hollow** is a hole inside a tree.

- I made my home there, in the hollow of a dying elm.

4. countable noun

A **hollow** is an area that is lower than the surrounding surface.

- Below him the town lay warm in the hollow of the hill.
- ...where water gathers in a hollow and forms a pond.

5. adjective

If you describe a statement, situation, or person as **hollow**, you mean they have no real value, worth, or effectiveness.

- Any threat to bring in the police is a hollow one.
- ...a hollow man who's coasted on charm for far too long.

6. adjective

If someone gives a **hollow** laugh, they laugh in a way that shows that they do not really find something amusing.

- Murray Pick's hollow laugh had no mirth in it.

7. adjective

A **hollow** sound is dull and echoing.

- ...the hollow sound of a gunshot.

8. verb

If something **is hollowed**, its surface is made to curve inwards or downwards.

- The mule's back was hollowed by the weight of its burden.
- ...her high, elegantly hollowed cheekbones.

pad

pads padding padded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pad** is a fairly thick, flat piece of a material such as cloth or rubber. Pads are used, for example, to clean things, to protect things, or to change their shape.

- He withdrew the needle and placed a pad of cotton-wool over the spot.
- ...a scouring pad.
- ...a flowered dress with shoulder pads.

2. countable noun

A **pad of** paper is a number of pieces of paper which are fixed together along the top or the side, so that each piece can be torn off when it has been used.

- She wrote on a pad of paper.
- Have a pad and pencil ready and jot down some of your thoughts.
- 'Here's your ticket,' he said, and he tore it off the pad.

3. verb

When someone **pads** somewhere, they walk there with steps that are fairly quick, light, and quiet.

- Freddy speaks very quietly and pads around in soft velvet slippers.
- ...a dog padding through the streets.
- I often bumped into him as he padded the corridors.

4. countable noun

A **pad** is a platform or an area of flat, hard ground where helicopters take off and land or rockets are launched.

- ...a little round helicopter pad.
- ...a landing pad on the back of the ship.
- Journalists report seeing a fire on the pad after the launch.

5. countable noun

People can refer to the place where they live as their **pad**, especially if it is a flat.

- I moved on round the big house to reach my pad.
- It wouldn't have occurred to me to get myself a bachelor pad.

6. countable noun

The **pads of** a person's fingers and toes or of an animal's feet are the soft, fleshy parts of them.

- Tap your cheeks all over with the pads of your fingers.

7. verb

If you **pad** something, you put something soft in it or over it in order to make it less hard, to protect it, or to give it a different shape.

- Pad the back of a car seat with a pillow.
- I can tell you I always padded my bras.

idle

idles idling idled

Explain

1. adjective

If people who were working are **idle**, they have no jobs or work.

- Employees have been idle almost a month because of shortages.

2. adjective

If machines or factories are **idle**, they are not working or being used.

- Now the machine is lying idle.
- ...factories that had been idle for years.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **idle**, you disapprove of them because they are not doing anything and you think they should be.

- ...idle bureaucrats who spent the day reading newspapers.
- I never met such an idle bunch of workers in all my life!

4. adjective

Idle is used to describe something that you do for no particular reason, often because you have nothing better to do.

- Brian kept up the idle chatter for another five minutes.
- ...idle curiosity.

5. adjective

If you say that **it is idle to** do something, you mean that it is not worth doing it, because it will not achieve anything.

- It would be idle to pretend the system is perfect.

6. adjective

You refer to an **idle** threat or boast when you do not think the person making it will or can do what they say.

- It was more of an idle threat than anything.
- His statement isn't merely an idle boast.

7. verb

If you **idle**, you spend time in a lazy way, doing nothing in particular.

- When they reached his house, Scobie idled a bit, finishing his cigarette.
- We spent many hours idling in one of the cafes that line three sides of the tiny piazza.
- He idled around afterwards, window shopping until about 5pm.

8. verb

To **idle** a factory or other place of work means to close it down because there is no work to do or because the workers are on strike.

- ...idled assembly plants.

9. verb

To **idle** workers means to stop them working.

- The strike has **idled** about 55,000 machinists.

10. verb

If an engine or vehicle **is idling**, the engine is running slowly and quietly because it is not in gear, and the vehicle is not moving.

- Beyond a stand of trees a small plane **idled**.
- Her Daimler limo waits with its engine **idling**.

pepper

peppers peppering peppered

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Pepper is a hot-tasting spice which is used to flavour food.

- Season with salt and pepper.
- ...freshly ground black pepper.

2. countable noun

A **pepper**, or in American English a **bell pepper**, is a hollow green, red, or yellow vegetable with seeds inside it.

3. verb

If something **is peppered with** small objects, a lot of those objects hit it.

- He was wounded in both legs and severely peppered with shrapnel.
- Suddenly the garden was peppered with pellets.

4. verb

If something **is peppered with** things, it has a lot of those things in it or on it.

- While her English was correct, it was peppered with French phrases.
- Outside, the road was peppered with glass.
- Yachts peppered the tranquil waters of Botafogo Bay.

legal

Explain

1. adjective

Legal is used to describe things that relate to the law.

- He vowed to take legal action.
- ...the British legal system.
- I sought legal advice on this.
- ...the legal profession.

2. adjective

An action or situation that is **legal** is allowed or required by law.

- What I did was perfectly legal.
- ...drivers who have more than the legal limit of alcohol.

pharmacy

pharmacies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pharmacy** is a shop or a department in a shop where medicines are sold or given out.

- Make sure you understand exactly how to take your medicines before you leave the pharmacy.
- ...the pharmacy section of the drugstore.

2. uncountable noun

Pharmacy is the job or the science of preparing medicines.

- He spent four years studying pharmacy.

monetary

Explain

1. adjective

Monetary means relating to money, especially the total amount of money in a country.

- Some countries tighten monetary policy to avoid inflation.
- The courts will be asked to place a monetary value on his unfinished career.

pill

pills

Explain

1. countable noun

Pills are small solid round masses of medicine or vitamins that you swallow without chewing .

- Why do I have to take all these pills?
- ...sleeping pills.

2. singular noun

If a woman is **on the pill** , she takes a special pill that prevents her from becoming pregnant .

- She had been on the pill for three years.
- ...the contraceptive pill.

3. a bitter pill

4. sweeten the pill

monotonous

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **monotonous** is very boring because it has a regular , repeated pattern which never changes.

- It's monotonous work, like most factory jobs.
- The food may get a bit monotonous, but there'll be enough of it.

prescription

prescriptions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **prescription** is the piece of paper on which your doctor writes an order for medicine and which you give to a chemist or pharmacist to get the medicine.

- You will have to take your prescription to a chemist.

2. countable noun

A **prescription** is a medicine which a doctor has told you to take.

- The prescription Ackerman gave me isn't doing any good.

3. countable noun

A **prescription** is a proposal or a plan which gives ideas about how to solve a problem or improve a situation .

- ...the economic prescriptions of Ireland's main political parties.

remedy

remedies remedying remedied

Explain

1. countable noun

A **remedy** is a successful way of dealing with a problem .

- The remedy lies in the hands of the government.
- ...a remedy for economic ills.

2. countable noun

A **remedy** is something that is intended to cure you when you are ill or in pain .

- ...natural remedies to help overcome winter infections.

3. verb

If you **remedy** something that is wrong or harmful , you correct it or improve it.

- A great deal has been done internally to remedy the situation.

obedient

Explain

1. adjective

A person or animal who is **obedient** does what they are told to do.

- He was very respectful at home and obedient to his parents.
- What a sweet, obedient little girl she was in the sixth grade.

revolution

revolutions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **revolution** is a successful attempt by a large group of people to change the political system of their country by force.

- The period since the revolution has been one of political turmoil.
- ...after the French Revolution.
- ...before the 1917 Revolution.

2. countable noun

A **revolution** in a particular area of human activity is an important change in that area.

- The nineteenth century witnessed a revolution in ship design and propulsion.
- ...the industrial revolution.

peaceful

Explain

1. adjective

Peaceful activities and situations do not involve war.

- He has attempted to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.
- They emphasised that their equipment was for peaceful and not military purposes.

2. adjective

Peaceful occasions happen without violence or serious disorder .

- The farmers staged a noisy but peaceful protest outside the headquarters of the organization.
- Reports say that polling was orderly and peaceful.

3. adjective

Peaceful people are not violent and try to avoid quarrelling or fighting with other people.

- ...warriors who killed or enslaved the peaceful farmers.

4. adjective

A **peaceful** place or time is quiet , calm, and free from disturbance .

- ...a peaceful Georgian house in the heart of Dorset.
- Mornings are usually quiet and peaceful in Hueytown.

5. graded adjective

Someone who **feels** or **looks peaceful** feels or looks calm and free from worry .

- I feel relaxed and peaceful.
- The animals look peaceful and happy.

salvation

Explain

1. uncountable noun

In Christianity , **salvation** is the fact that Christ has saved a person from evil .

- The church's message of salvation has changed the lives of many.

2. uncountable noun

The **salvation** of someone or something is the act of saving them from harm, destruction , or an unpleasant situation .

- It became clear that the situation was beyond salvation.

3. singular noun

If someone or something is your **salvation** , they are responsible for saving you from harm, destruction, or an unpleasant situation.

- The country's salvation lies in forcing through democratic reforms.

- I consider books my salvation.

physical

physicals

Explain

1. adjective

Physical qualities, actions, or things are connected with a person's body, rather than with their mind.

- ...the physical and mental problems caused by the illness.
- Physical activity promotes good health.
- The attraction between them is physical.

2. adjective

Physical things are real things that can be touched and seen , rather than ideas or spoken words.

- All he needed was a little room, a physical and spiritual place to call home.
- ...physical evidence to support the story.
- ...the physical similarities among the towns.

3. adjective

Physical means relating to the structure, size , or shape of something that can be touched and seen.

- ...the physical characteristics of the terrain.
- ...the physical properties (weight, volume, hardness, etc.) of a substance.

4. adjective

Physical means connected with physics or the laws of physics.

- ...the physical laws of combustion and thermodynamics.

5. adjective

Someone who is **physical** touches people a lot , either in an affectionate way or in a rough way.

- We decided that in the game we would be physical and aggressive.

6. adjective

Physical is used in expressions such as **physical love** and **physical relationships** to refer to sexual relationships between people.

- the book celebrated the sublime joys of physical love.
- It had been years since they had shared any meaningful form of physical relationship.

7. countable noun

A **physical** is a medical examination , done in order to see if someone is fit and well enough to do a particular job or to join the army .

- Bob failed his physical.
- Routine physicals are done by a nurse.

saucer

saucers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **saucer** is a small curved plate on which you stand a cup.

practical

practicals

Explain

1. adjective

The **practical** aspects of something involve real situations and events, rather than just ideas and theories .

- We can offer you practical suggestions on how to increase the fibre in your daily diet.
- This practical guidebook teaches you about relaxation, coping skills, and time management.

2. adjective

You describe people as **practical** when they make sensible decisions and deal effectively with problems .

- You were always so practical, Maria.
- How could she be so practical when he'd just told her something so shattering?
- He lacked any of the practical common sense essential in management.

3. adjective

Practical ideas and methods are likely to be effective or successful in a real situation.

- Although the causes of cancer are being uncovered, we do not yet have any practical way to prevent it.
- It is not easy to make practical suggestions for helping her.

4. adjective

You can describe clothes and things in your house as **practical** when they are suitable for a particular purpose rather than just being fashionable or attractive .

- Our clothes are lightweight, fashionable, practical for holidays.

5. countable noun

A **practical** is an examination or a lesson in which you make things or do experiments rather than simply writing answers to questions .

sign

signs signing signed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **sign** is a mark or shape that always has a particular meaning , for example in mathematics or music.

- Equations are generally written with a two-bar equals sign.

2. countable noun

A **sign** is a movement of your arms, hands , or head which is intended to have a particular meaning.

- They gave Lavalley the thumbs-up sign.
- He made a sign of assent.

3. verb

If you **sign** , you communicate with someone using sign language. If a programme or performance **is signed** , someone uses sign language so that deaf people can understand it.

- All programmes will be either 'signed' or subtitled.

4. countable noun

A **sign** is a piece of wood, metal, or plastic with words or pictures on it. Signs give you information about something, or give you a warning or an instruction .

- ...a sign saying that the highway was closed because of snow.
- Over his head, he held a cardboard sign saying 'Free Hugs' in big, black letters.
- As soon as the seat belt sign had been switched off, we rushed out.

5. variable noun

If there is a **sign of** something, there is something which shows that it exists or is happening .

- They are prepared to hand back a hundred prisoners of war a day as a sign of good will.
- His face and movements rarely betrayed a sign of nerves.
- Your blood would have been checked for any sign of kidney failure.

6. verb

When you **sign** a document, you write your name on it, usually at the end or in a special space. You do this to indicate that you have written the document, that you agree with what is written, or that you were present as a witness .

- World leaders are expected to sign a treaty pledging to increase environmental protection.
- Before an operation the patient will be asked to sign a consent form.

7. verb

If an organization **signs** someone or if someone **signs** for an organization, they sign a contract agreeing to work for that organization for a specified period of time.

- The Blues' boss planned to sign a big-name striker in January.
- The band then signed to Slash Records.

8. countable noun

In astrology , a **sign** or a **sign of the zodiac** is one of the twelve areas into which the heavens are divided.

- The New Moon takes place in your opposite sign of Libra on the 15th.

9. no sign of someone

10. signed and sealed

qualitative

Explain

1. adjective

Qualitative means relating to the nature or standard of something, rather than to its quantity.

- There are qualitative differences in the way children and adults think.
- That's the whole difference between quantitative and qualitative research.

slogan

slogans

Explain

1. countable noun

A **slogan** is a short phrase that is easy to remember . Slogans are used in advertisements and by political parties and other organizations who want people to remember what they are saying or selling .

- They could campaign on the slogan 'We'll take less of your money'.
- ...a group of angry demonstrators shouting slogans.

radioactive

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **radioactive** contains a substance that produces energy in the form of powerful and harmful rays .

- The government has been storing radioactive waste at Fernald for 50 years.

south

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The south is the direction which is on your right when you are looking towards the direction where the sun rises .

- The town lies ten miles to the south of here.
- All around him, from east to west, north to south, the stars glittered in the heavens.

2. singular noun

The south of a place, country, or region is the part which is in the south.

- ...holidays in the south of France.

3. adverb

If you go **south** , you travel towards the south.

- We did an extremely fast U-turn and shot south up the Boulevard St. Michel.
- He went south to climb Taishan, a mountain sacred to the Chinese.

4. adverb

Something that is **south of** a place is positioned to the south of it.

- They now own and operate a farm 50 miles south of Rochester.
- I was living in a house just south of Market Street.

5. adjective

The **south** edge , corner , or part of a place or country is the part which is towards the south.

- ...the south coast of Alderney.

6. adjective

' **South** ' is used in the names of some countries, states, and regions in the south of a larger area.

- *Next week the President will visit five South American countries in six days.*

- *...the states of Mississippi and South Carolina.*

7. adjective

A **south** wind is a wind that blows from the south.

8. singular noun

The South is used to refer to the poorer, less developed countries of the world.

- *The South is poorer than the North, and the divide is growing.*

religious

Explain

1. adjective

You use **religious** to describe things that are connected with religion or with one particular religion.

- *...religious groups.*
- *...different religious beliefs.*

2. adjective

Someone who is **religious** has a strong belief in a god or gods.

- *They are both very religious and felt it was a gift from God.*

specimen

specimens

Explain

1. countable noun

A **specimen** is a single plant or animal which is an example of a particular species or type and is examined by scientists.

- *200,000 specimens of fungus are kept at the Komarov Botanical Institute.*
- *...North American fossil specimens.*
- *Collectors will pay 50,000 to 1 million for a rare specimen.*

2. countable noun

A **specimen of** something is an example of it which gives an idea of what the whole of it is like.

- *Job applicants have to submit a specimen of handwriting.*
- *...a specimen bank note.*

3. countable noun

A **specimen** is a small quantity of someone's urine, blood, or other body fluid which is examined in a medical laboratory, in order to find out if they are ill or if they have been drinking alcohol or taking drugs.

- *He refused to provide a specimen.*
- *If your urine specimen shows the presence of bacteria, you'll be prescribed antibiotics.*

4. countable noun

You can use **specimen** to refer to someone who has a quality of a particular kind.

- *He is a fine specimen of his class.*

ritual

rituals

Explain

1. variable noun

A **ritual** is a religious service or other ceremony which involves a series of actions performed in a fixed order.

- This is the most ancient, and holiest of the Shinto rituals.
- These ceremonies were already part of pre-Christian ritual in Mexico.

2. adjective

Ritual activities happen as part of a ritual or tradition .

- ...fastings and ritual dancing.
- ...an act of ritual suicide.

3. variable noun

A **ritual** is a way of behaving or a series of actions which people regularly carry out in a particular situation , because it is their custom to do so.

- The whole Italian culture revolves around the ritual of eating.
- Cocktails at the Plaza was a nightly ritual of their sophisticated world.

4. adjective

You can describe something as a **ritual** action when it is done in exactly the same way whenever a particular situation occurs.

- I realized that here the conventions required me to make the ritual noises.

spelling

spellings

Explain

1. countable noun

A **spelling** is the correct order of the letters in a word.

- In most languages adjectives have slightly different spellings for masculine and feminine.
- If we got a spelling wrong we were forced to get a dictionary out.

2. uncountable noun

Spelling is the ability to spell words in the correct way. It is also an attempt to spell a word in the correct way.

- His spelling is very bad.
- ...basic skills in reading, writing, grammar and spelling.
- Spelling mistakes are often just the result of haste.

shallow

shallower shallowest

Explain

1. adjective

A **shallow** container , hole , or area of water measures only a short distance from the top to the bottom .

- Put the milk in a shallow dish.
- The water is quite shallow for some distance.

2. adjective

If you describe a person, piece of work, or idea as **shallow** , you disapprove of them because they do not show or involve any serious or careful thought .

- *I think he is shallow, vain and untrustworthy.*
- *The evening news is often criticized for being shallow.*

3. adjective

If your breathing is **shallow** , you take only a very small amount of air into your lungs at each breath .

- *She began to hear her own taut, shallow breathing.*

standard

standards

Explain

1. countable noun

A **standard** is a level of quality or achievement , especially a level that is thought to be acceptable.

- *The standard of professional cricket has never been lower.*
- *There will be new national standards for hospital cleanliness.*

2. countable noun

A **standard** is something that you use in order to judge the quality of something else.

- *...systems that were by later standards absurdly primitive.*

3. plural noun

Standards are moral principles which affect people's attitudes and behaviour.

- *My father has always had high moral standards.*

4. adjective

You use **standard** to describe things which are usual and normal.

- *It was standard practice for untrained clerks to advise in serious cases such as murder.*

- *No other executive car can offer you the same level of standard equipment at this price.*

5. adjective

A **standard** work or text on a particular subject is one that is widely read and often recommended

strawberry

strawberries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **strawberry** is a small red fruit which is soft and juicy and has tiny yellow seeds on its skin.

- *...strawberries and cream.*
- *...homemade strawberry jam.*

sole

soles

Explain

1. adjective

The **sole** thing or person of a particular type is the only one of that type.

- *Their sole aim is to destabilize the Indian government.*

2. adjective

If you have **sole** charge or ownership of something, you are the only person in charge of it or who owns it.

- *Many women are left as the sole providers in families after their husband has died.*

- Chief Hart had sole control over that fund.

3. countable noun

The **sole** of your foot or of a shoe or sock is the underneath surface of it.

- ...shoes with rubber soles.
- He had burned the sole of his foot.

4. countable noun

A **sole** is a kind of flat fish that you can eat .
Sole is this fish eaten as food.

tablet

tablets

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tablet** is a small solid round mass of medicine which you swallow .

- It's time for your tablets, dear.
- It is never a good idea to take sleeping tablets regularly.

2. countable noun

A **tablet** is a small flat computer that you operate by touching the screen.

- ...a free guide to the best tablets on the market.

3. countable noun

Clay **tablets** or stone **tablets** are the flat pieces of clay or stone which people used to write on before paper was invented .

- He also studied the ancient stone tablets from around the pyramids.

tiresome

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **tiresome** , you mean that you find them irritating or boring.

- ...the tiresome old lady next door.
- It would be too tiresome to wait in the queue.

tag

tags tagging tagged

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tag** is a small piece of card or cloth which is attached to an object or person and has information about that object or person on it.

- Staff wore name tags.
- ...baggage tags.

2. countable noun

An electronic **tag** is a device that is firmly attached to someone or something and sets off an alarm if that person or thing moves away or is removed.

- A hospital is to fit new-born babies with electronic tags to foil kidnappers.
- Sometimes, they've snapped off the security tag and just taken the one shoe.

3. verb

If you **tag** something, you attach something to it or mark it so that it can be identified later.

- Professor Orr has developed interesting ways of tagging chemical molecules using existing laboratory lasers.

- The most important trees were tagged to protect them from being damaged by machinery.

4. countable noun

You can refer to a phrase that is used to describe someone or something as a **tag**.

- Jazz was losing its elitist tag and gaining a much broader audience.

5. verb

If you **tag** someone in a particular way, you keep describing them using a particular phrase or thinking of them as a particular thing.

- ...the pundits were still tagging him with that age-old label, 'best of a bad bunch'.
- She has always lived in John's house and is still tagged 'Dad's girlfriend' by his children.

6. countable noun

A **tag** is a short phrase or saying that you quote from a book, speech, or piece of writing.

7. uncountable noun

Tag is a children's game in which one child chases the others and tries to touch them.

vacant

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **vacant**, it is not being used by anyone.

- Half way down the coach was a vacant seat.
- In every major city there are more vacant buildings than there are homeless people.

2. adjective

If a job or position is **vacant**, no one is doing it or in it at present, and people can apply for it.

- A number of senior people were regarded as likely to occupy the now vacant post.

- The post of chairman has been vacant for some time.

3. adjective

A **vacant** look or expression is one that suggests that someone does not understand something or that they are not thinking about anything in particular.

- She had a kind of vacant look on her face.

tale

tales

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tale** is a story, often involving magic or exciting events.

- ...a collection of stories, poems and folk tales.
- ...the tales of King Arthur and his Round Table.

2. countable noun

You can refer to an interesting, exciting, or dramatic account of a real event as a **tale**.

- The media have been filled with tales of horror and loss resulting from Monday's earthquake.
- He tells me long tales about my mother.

3. live to tell the tale

4. tell tales

virtual

Explain

1. adjective

You can use **virtual** to indicate that something is so nearly true that for most purposes it can be regarded as true.

- Argentina came to a virtual standstill while the game was being played.
- He claimed to be a virtual prisoner in his own home.
- ...conditions of virtual slavery.

2. adjective

Virtual objects and activities are generated by a computer to simulate real objects and activities.

- Up to four players can compete in a virtual world of role playing.
- The site provided a virtual meeting place for activists.

tape

tapes taping taped

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Tape is a narrow plastic strip covered with a magnetic substance. It is used to record sounds, pictures, and computer information.

- Tape is expensive and loses sound quality every time it is copied.
- Many students declined to be interviewed on tape.

2. countable noun

A **tape** is a cassette or spool with magnetic tape wound round it.

- ...a cassette tape.

- Her brother once found an old tape of her music hidden in the back of a drawer.

3. verb

If you **tape** music, sounds, or television pictures, you record them so that you can watch or listen to them later.

- She has just taped an interview.
- He shouldn't be taping without the singer's permission.
- ...taped evidence from prisoners.

4. variable noun

A **tape** is a strip of cloth used to tie things together or to identify who a piece of clothing belongs to.

- The books were all tied up with tape.

5. countable noun

A **tape** is a ribbon that is stretched across the finishing line of a race.

- ...the finishing tape.

6. uncountable noun

Tape is a sticky strip of plastic used for sticking things together.

- ...strong adhesive tape.

7. verb

If you **tape** one thing to another, you attach it using sticky tape.

- I taped the base of the feather onto the velvet.
- There are notes from years ago taped to the walls.
- The envelope has been tampered with and then taped shut again.

void

voids voiding voided

Explain

1. countable noun

If you describe a situation or a feeling as a **void**, you mean that it seems empty because there is nothing interesting or worthwhile about it.

- His death has left a void in the cricketing world which can never be filled.
- ...an aching void of loneliness.

2. countable noun

You can describe a large or frightening space as a **void**.

- He stared into the dark void where the battle had been fought.
- The ship moved silently through the black void.
- Observers have found in the universe giant voids about 500,000,000 light-years across.

3. adjective

Something that is **void** or **null and void** is officially considered to have no value or authority.

- The original elections were declared void by the former military ruler.
- The agreement will be considered null and void.

4. adjective

If you are **void of** something, you do not have any of it.

- He rose, his face void of emotion as he walked towards the door.
- The treaty is now void of absolute commitments.

5. verb

To **void** something means to officially say that it is not valid.

- The Supreme Court threw out the confession and voided his conviction for murder.

tea

teas

Explain

1. variable noun

Tea is a drink made by adding hot water to tea leaves or tea bags. Many people add milk to the drink and some add sugar. A cup of tea can be referred to as a **tea**.

- ...a cup of tea.
- Would you like some tea?
- Four or five men were drinking tea from flasks.
- Would anybody like a tea or coffee?

2. mass noun

Drinks such as mint **tea** or chamomile **tea** are made by pouring hot water on the dried leaves of the particular plant or flower.

3. variable noun

The chopped dried leaves of the plant that tea is made from is referred to as **tea**.

- ...a packet of tea.
- America imports about 190 million pounds of tea a year.
- Earl Grey, Darjeeling and Jasmine are best-selling traditional teas.

4. variable noun

Tea is a meal some people eat in the late afternoon. It consists of food such as sandwiches and cakes, with tea to drink.

- *I'm doing the sandwiches for tea.*
- *I took her to tea at the Ritz.*

5. variable noun

*Some people refer to the main meal that they eat in the early part of the evening as **tea** .*

- *At five o'clock he comes back for his tea.*

6. sb's cup of tea

absurd

Explain

1. adjective

*If you say that something is **absurd** , you are criticizing it because you think that it is ridiculous or that it does not make sense . **The absurd** is something that is absurd.*

- *It is absurd to be discussing compulsory redundancy policies for teachers.*
- *I've known clients of mine go to absurd lengths, just to avoid paying me a few pounds.*
- *That's absurd.*
- *Parkinson had a sharp eye for the absurd.*

anecdote

anecdotes

Explain

1. variable noun

*An **anecdote** is a short, amusing account of something that has happened .*

- *Pete was telling them an anecdote about their mother.*

- *He has a talent for recollection and anecdote.*

2. variable noun

***Anecdotes** are individual accounts of something that are not reliable evidence .*

- *The image of the fox as a pest is grossly exaggerated in anecdote and folklore.*

actual

Explain

1. adjective

*You use **actual** to emphasize that you are referring to something real or genuine.*

- *The segments are filmed using either local actors or the actual people involved.*
- *In this country, the actual number of mis-carriages in humans is never fully recorded.*

2. adjective

*You use **actual** to contrast the important aspect of something with a less important aspect.*

- *She had compiled pages of notes, but she had not yet gotten down to doing the actual writing.*
- *The exercises in this chapter can guide you, but it will be up to you to do the actual work.*

area

areas

Explain

1. countable noun

*An **area** is a particular part of a town, a country, a region, or the world.*

- ...the large number of community groups in the area.
- She works in a rural area off the beaten track.
- ...mountainous areas of Europe, Asia, North and South America.

2. countable noun

Your **area** is the part of a town, country, or region where you live . An organization's **area** is the part of a town, country, or region that it is responsible for.

- Local authorities have been responsible for the running of schools in their areas.
- If there is an election in your area, you should go and vote.

3. countable noun

A particular **area** is a piece of land or part of a building that is used for a particular activity.

- ...a picnic area.
- ...the main check-in area located in Terminal 1.

4. countable noun

An **area** is a particular place on a surface or object, for example on your body.

- You will notice that your baby has two soft areas on the top of his head.

5. variable noun

The **area** of a surface such as a piece of land is the amount of flat space or ground that it covers, measured in square units.

- The islands cover a total area of 625.6 square kilometers.
- Although large in area, the flat did not have many rooms.

6. countable noun

You can use **area** to refer to a particular subject or topic , or to a particular part of a larger, more general situation or activity.

- ...the politically sensitive area of old age pensions.
- ...the internationalization of the economy and all other areas of society.
- She wants to be involved in every area of your life.

7. countable noun

On a football pitch , **the area** is the same as the penalty area .

assistant

assistants

Explain

1. adjective

Assistant is used in front of titles or jobs to indicate a slightly lower rank . For example , an assistant director is one rank lower than a director in an organization.

- ...the Assistant Secretary of Defense.
- ...a young assistant professor at Harvard.

2. countable noun

Someone's **assistant** is a person who helps them in their work.

- Kalan called his assistant, Hashim, to take over while he went out.
- The salesman had been accompanied to the meeting by an assistant.

3. countable noun

An **assistant** is a person who works in a shop selling things to customers .

- The assistant took the book and checked the price on the back cover.
- She got a job as a sales assistant selling handbags.

axis

axes

Explain

1. countable noun
An **axis** is an imaginary line through the middle of something.
2. countable noun
An **axis** of a graph is one of the two lines on which the scales of measurement are marked.

bleak

bleaker bleakest

Explain

1. adjective
If a situation is **bleak** , it is bad , and seems unlikely to improve .
 - The immediate outlook remains bleak.
 - Many predicted a bleak future.
2. adjective
If you describe a place as **bleak** , you mean that it looks cold, empty , and unattractive .
 - The island's pretty bleak.
 - ...bleak inner-city streets.
3. adjective
When the weather is **bleak** , it is cold, dull , and unpleasant .

- The weather can be quite bleak on the coast.

4. adjective

If someone looks or sounds **bleak** , they look or sound depressed , as if they have no hope or energy .

- His face was bleak.
- Alberg gave him a bleak stare.

background

backgrounds

Explain

1. countable noun
Your **background** is the kind of family you come from and the kind of education you have had. It can also refer to such things as your social and racial origins , your financial status , or the type of work experience that you have.
 - She came from a working-class background.
 - His background was in engineering.
2. countable noun
The **background** to an event or situation consists of the facts that explain what caused it.
 - The background to the current troubles is provided by the dire state of the country's economy.
 - The meeting takes place against a background of continuing political violence.
 - ...background information.
3. singular noun
The **background** is sounds, such as music, which you can hear but which you are not listening to with your full attention .
 - I kept hearing the sound of applause in the background.

- ...police sirens wailing in the background.
- The background music was provided by an accordion player.

4. countable noun

You can use **background** to refer to the things in a picture or scene that are less noticeable or important than the main things or people in it.

- ...roses patterned on a blue background.
- Paint the background tones lighter and the colours cooler.

brisk

brisker briskest

Explain

1. adjective

A **brisk** activity or action is done quickly and in an energetic way.

- Taking a brisk walk can often induce a feeling of well-being.
- The horse broke into a brisk trot.

2. adjective

If trade or business is **brisk**, things are being sold very quickly and a lot of money is being made.

- Vendors were doing a brisk trade in souvenirs.
- Its sales had been brisk since July.

3. adjective

If the weather is **brisk**, it is cold and fresh.

- ...a typically brisk winter's day on the South Coast.
- The breeze was cool, brisk and invigorating.

4. adjective

Someone who is **brisk** behaves in a busy, confident way which shows that they want to get things done quickly.

- The Chief summoned me downstairs. He was brisk and businesslike.
- She is noted for her brisk handling of business.

bacon

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Bacon is salted or smoked meat which comes from the back or sides of a pig.

- ...bacon and eggs.
- ...smoked streaky bacon.

2. bring home the bacon

3. bring home the bacon

4. to save someone's bacon

brutal

Explain

1. adjective

A **brutal** act or person is cruel and violent.

- He was the victim of a very brutal murder.
- ...the brutal suppression of anti-government protests.
- Jensen is a dangerous man, and can be very brutal and reckless.

2. adjective

If someone expresses something unpleasant with **brutal** honesty or frankness, they express it in a clear and accurate way, without attempting to disguise its unpleasantness.

- *It was refreshing to talk about themselves and their feelings with brutal honesty.*
- *He took an anguished breath. He had to be brutal and say it.*

3. adjective

Brutal is used to describe things that have an unpleasant effect on people, especially when there is no attempt by anyone to reduce their effect.

- *The dip in prices this summer will be brutal.*
- *The afternoon sun had been brutal.*
- *The 20th century brought brutal change to some countries.*

barrier

barriers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **barrier** is something such as a rule , law , or policy that makes it difficult or impossible for something to happen or be achieved .

- *Duties and taxes are the most obvious barrier to free trade.*

2. countable noun

A **barrier** is a problem that prevents two people or groups from agreeing , communicating , or working with each other.

- *There is no reason why love shouldn't cross the age barrier.*
- *She had been waiting for Simon to break down the barrier between them.*
- *When you get involved in sports and athletics, a lot of the racial barriers are broken down.*

3. countable noun

A **barrier** is something such as a fence or wall that is put in place to prevent people from moving easily from one area to another.

- *The demonstrators broke through heavy police barriers.*
- *As each woman reached the barrier one of the men glanced at her papers.*

4. countable noun

A **barrier** is an object or layer that physically prevents something from moving from one place to another.

- *...a severe storm, which destroyed a natural barrier between the house and the lake.*
- *The packaging must provide an effective barrier to prevent contamination of the product.*

5. singular noun

You can refer to a particular number or amount as a **barrier** when you think it is significant , because it is difficult or unusual to go above it.

- *They are fearful that unemployment will soon break the barrier of three million.*
- *The Popular Front failed, as expected, to pass the 5 per cent barrier.*

certain

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **certain** about something, you firmly believe it is true and have no doubt about it. If you are not **certain** about something, you do not have definite knowledge about it.

- *She's absolutely certain she's going to make it in the world.*

- We are not certain whether the appendix had already burst or not.

- It wasn't a balloon—I'm certain of that.

2. adjective

If you say that something is **certain to** happen, you mean that it will definitely happen.

- However, the scheme is certain to meet opposition from fishermen's leaders.
- It's not certain they'll accept the Front's candidate if he wins.
- Brazil need to beat Uruguay to be certain of a place in the finals.
- The Prime Minister is heading for certain defeat if he forces a vote.
- Victory looked certain.

3. adjective

If you say that something is **certain**, you firmly believe that it is true, or have definite knowledge about it.

- One thing is certain, both have the utmost respect for each other.
- It is certain that Rodney arrived the previous day.

4. graded adjective

If you have **certain** knowledge, you know that a particular thing is true.

- He had been there four times to my certain knowledge.

5. for certain

6. make certain

battle

battles battling battled

Explain

1. variable noun

A **battle** is a violent fight between groups of people, especially one between military forces during a war .

- ...the victory of King William III at the Battle of the Boyne.
- ...after a gun battle between police and drug traffickers.
- ...men who die in battle.

2. countable noun

A **battle** is a conflict in which different people or groups compete in order to achieve success or control .

- The political battle over the pre-budget report promises to be a bitter one.
- ...the eternal battle between good and evil in the world.
- ...a macho battle for supremacy.
- He was appalled to discover members of the board fighting damaging personal battles.

3. countable noun

You can use **battle** to refer to someone's efforts to achieve something in spite of very difficult circumstances .

- ...the battle against crime.
- She has fought a constant battle with her weight.
- Greg lost his brave battle against cancer two years ago.

4. verb

To **battle with** an opposing group means to take part in a fight or contest against them. In American English, you can also say that one group or person **is battling** another.

- Thousands of people battled with police and several were reportedly wounded.
- The sides must battle again for a quarter-final place on December 16.
- They're also battling the government to win compensation.

5. verb

To **battle** means to try hard to do something in spite of very difficult circumstances. In British English, you **battle against** something or **with** something. In American English, you **battle** something.

- Doctors battled throughout the night to save her life.
- ...a lone yachtsman returning from his months of battling with the elements.
- In Wyoming, firefighters are still battling the two blazes.

6. do battle

7. half the battle

8. the battle lines are drawn

9. to fight a losing battle

10. battle it out

11. lose/win the battle, win/lose the war

12. battle of wills

13. battle of wits

classical

Explain

1. adjective

You use **classical** to describe something that is traditional in form, style, or content .

- Fokine did not change the steps of classical ballet; instead he found new ways of using them.
- ...the scientific attitude of Smith and earlier classical economists.

2. adjective

Classical music is music that is considered to be serious and of lasting value.

3. adjective

Classical is used to describe things which relate to the ancient Greek or Roman civilizations.

- ...the healers of ancient Egypt and classical Greece.
- It's a technological achievement that is unrivalled in the classical world.
- ...classical architecture.

4. adjective

A **classical** language is a form of a language that was used in ancient times and is now no longer used, or only used in formal writing .

- ...a line of classical Arabic poetry.

considerable

Explain

1. adjective

Considerable means great in amount or degree .

- To be without Pearce would be a considerable blow.
- Doing it properly makes considerable demands on our time.
- Vets' fees can be considerable, even for routine visits.

bread

bread breads breadings breaded

Explain

1. variable noun

Bread is a very common food made from flour, water, and yeast.

- ...a loaf of bread.
- ...bread and butter.
- There is more fibre in wholemeal bread than in white bread.

2. uncountable noun

If you earn your **bread** doing a particular job or activity, you earn your money doing it.

- There's not a living soul in Colorado who doesn't depend for his bread on silver.

3. verb

If food such as fish or meat **is breaded**, it is covered in tiny pieces of dry bread called bread-crumbs. It can then be fried or grilled.

- It is important that food be breaded just minutes before frying.

cordial

cordials

Explain

1. adjective

Cordial means friendly.

- He had never known him to be so chatty and cordial.
- He said the two countries had close and cordial relations.

2. variable noun

Cordial is a sweet non-alcoholic drink made from fruit juice.

- ...fruit cordials.

3. mass noun

A **cordial** is a strong alcoholic drink with a sweet taste. You drink it after a meal.

brick

bricks bricking bricked

Explain

1. variable noun

Bricks are rectangular blocks of baked clay used for building walls, which are usually red or brown. **Brick** is the material made up of these blocks.

- She built bookshelves out of bricks and planks.
- ...a tiny garden surrounded by high brick walls.

2. singular noun

If you say that someone is **a brick**, you mean that they have helped you or supported you when you were in a difficult situation.

- You were a brick, a real friend in need.

3. be banging one's head against a brick wall

4. hit/come up against a brick wall

5. bricks and mortar

cruel

crueller cruellest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **cruel** deliberately causes pain or distress to people or animals.

- Children can be so cruel.
- Don't you think it's cruel to cage a creature up?

2. adjective

A situation or event that is **cruel** is very harsh and causes people distress.

- ...struggling to survive in a cruel world with which they cannot cope.
- By a cruel irony, his horse came down on a flat part of the course.

cheek

cheeks

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **cheeks** are the sides of your face below your eyes.

- Tears were running down her cheeks.
- She kissed him lightly on both cheeks.

2. singular noun

You say that someone has a **cheek** when you are annoyed or shocked at something unreasonable that they have done.

- I'm amazed they had the cheek to ask in the first place.
- I still think it's a bit of a cheek sending a voucher rather than a refund.
- The cheek of it, lying to me like that!

3. turn the other cheek

desolate

desolates desolating desolated

Explain

1. adjective

A **desolate** place is empty of people and lacking in comfort .

- ...a desolate landscape of flat green fields broken by marsh.
- Half-ruined, hardly a building untouched, it's a desolate place.

2. adjective

If someone is **desolate** , they feel very sad , alone , and without hope.

- He was desolate without her.

3. verb

If something **desolates** you, it upsets you and makes you very unhappy .

- Their inclination to wait and demand more resources desolated President Lincoln.

conflict

conflicts conflicting conflicted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Conflict is serious disagreement and argument about something important . If two people or groups are **in conflict** , they have had a serious disagreement or argument and have not yet reached agreement .

- Try to keep any conflict between you and your ex-partner to a minimum.
- Employees already are in conflict with management over job cuts.

- The two companies came into conflict.

2. uncountable noun

Conflict is a state of mind in which you find it impossible to make a decision .

- ...the anguish of his own inner conflict.

3. variable noun

Conflict is fighting between countries or groups of people.

- ...talks aimed at ending four decades of conflict.
- The National Security Council has met to discuss ways of preventing a military conflict.

4. variable noun

A **conflict** is a serious difference between two or more beliefs , ideas, or interests. If two beliefs, ideas, or interests are **in conflict** , they are very different .

- There is a conflict between what they are doing and what you want.
- Do you feel any conflict of loyalties?
- The two objectives are in conflict.

5. verb

If ideas, beliefs, or accounts **conflict** , they are very different from each other and it seems impossible for them to exist together or to each be true .

- Personal ethics and professional ethics sometimes conflict.
- He held firm opinions which usually conflicted with my own.
- There are conflicting reports about the identity of the hostage.
- ...three powers with conflicting interests.

durable

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **durable** is strong and lasts a long time without breaking or becoming weaker .

- Bone china is strong and durable.

contempt

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you have **contempt for** someone or something, you have no respect for them or think that they are unimportant .

- He has contempt for those beyond his immediate family circle.
- I hope voters will treat his advice with the contempt it deserves.

2. uncountable noun

Contempt means the same as contempt of court .

- Mr. Kelly was sentenced to six months in prison for contempt.

3. hold sb/sth in contempt

economic

Explain

1. adjective

Economic means concerned with the organization of the money, industry , and trade of a country, region, or society .

- ...Poland's radical economic reforms.
- The pace of economic growth is picking up.

2. adjective

If something is **economic** , it produces a profit.

- The new system may be more economic but will lead to a decline in programme quality.

correlate

correlates correlating correlated

Explain

1. verb

If one thing **correlates with** another, there is a close similarity or connection between them, often because one thing causes the other. You can also say that two things **correlate** .

- Obesity correlates with increased risk for hypertension and stroke.
- The political opinions of spouses correlate more closely than their heights.
- The loss of respect for British science is correlated to reduced funding.
- At the highest executive levels, earnings and performance aren't always correlated.

2. verb

If you **correlate** things, you work out the way in which they are connected or the way they influence each other.

3. Lieutenant Ryan closed his eyes, first mentally viewing the different crime scenes, then correlating the data.

- The report correlated the stock market values of the companies with their losses.
- Lieutenant Ryan closed his eyes, first mentally viewing the different crime scenes, then correlating the data.

equal

equals equalling equalled

Explain

1. adjective

If two things are **equal** or if one thing is **equal to** another, they are the same in size, number, standard , or value .

- Investors can borrow an amount equal to the property's purchase price.
- ...in a population having equal numbers of men and women.
- Research and teaching are of equal importance.

2. adjective

If different groups of people have **equal** rights or are given **equal** treatment , they have the same rights or are treated the same as each other, however different they are.

- We will be justly demanding equal rights at work.
- ...the commitment to equal opportunities.
- ...new legislation allowing companies to compete on equal terms.

3. adjective

If you say that people are **equal** , you mean that they have or should have the same rights and opportunities as each other.

- We are equal in every way.
- We teach our children that everyone is equal under the law.

4. countable noun

Someone who is your **equal** has the same ability, status, or rights as you have.

- *She was one of the boys, their equal.*
- *You should have married somebody more your equal.*

5. adjective

If someone is **equal to** a particular job or situation, they have the necessary ability, strength, or courage to deal successfully with it.

- *She was determined that she would be equal to any test the corporation put to them.*
- *The guards were equal to anything.*

6. link verb

If something **equals** a particular number or amount, it is the same as that amount or the equivalent of that amount.

- *9 percent interest less 7 percent inflation equals 2 percent.*
- *The average pay rise equalled 1.41 times inflation.*

7. verb

To **equal** something or someone means to be as good or as great as them.

- *The victory equalled Southend's best in history.*
- *No amount of money can equal memories like that.*

8. has no equal

9. other things being equal

discrepancy

discrepancies

Explain

1. variable noun

If there is a **discrepancy between** two things that ought to be the same, there is a noticeable difference between them.

- *...the discrepancy between press and radio reports.*
- *...major discrepancies in payments made to claimants in similar circumstances.*

flour

flours flouring floured

Explain

1. variable noun

Flour is a white or brown powder that is made by grinding grain. It is used to make bread, cakes, and pastry.

2. verb

If you **flour** cooking equipment or food, you cover it with flour.

- *Lightly flour a rolling pin.*
- *Remove the dough from the bowl and put it on a floured surface.*

explicit

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **explicit** is expressed or shown clearly and openly, without any attempt to hide anything.

- *...sexually explicit scenes in films and books.*
- *...explicit references to age in recruitment advertising.*

2. adjective

If you are **explicit about** something, you speak about it very openly and clearly.

- He was explicit about his intention to overhaul the party's internal voting system.

gum

gums gumming gummed

Explain

1. variable noun

Gum is a substance, usually tasting of mint , which you chew for a long time but do not swallow .

2. countable noun

Your **gums** are the areas of firm , pink flesh inside your mouth , which your teeth grow out of.

- The toothbrush gently removes plaque without damaging the gums.
- ...gum disease.

3. variable noun

Gum is a type of glue that is used to stick two pieces of paper together.

- He was holding up a pound note that had been torn in half and stuck together with gum.

4. adjective

If two things are **gummed together** , they are stuck together.

- It is a mild infection in which a baby's eyelashes can become gummed together.

5. mass noun

Gum is a sticky substance which comes from the eucalyptus tree or from various other trees and shrubs .

feudal

Explain

1. adjective

Feudal means relating to the system or the time of feudalism.

- ...the emperor and his feudal barons.

handle

handles handling handled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **handle** is a small round object or a lever that is attached to a door and is used for opening and closing it.

- I turned the handle and found the door was open.

2. countable noun

A **handle** is the part of an object such as a tool , bag , or cup that you hold in order to be able to pick up and use the object.

- The handle of a cricket bat protruded from under his arm.
- ...a broom handle.

3. verb

If you say that someone can **handle** a problem or situation , you mean that they have the ability to deal with it successfully.

- To tell the truth, I don't know if I can handle the job.
- She cannot handle pressure.
- You must learn how to handle your feelings.

4. verb

If you talk about the way that someone **handles** a problem or situation, you mention whether or not they are successful in achieving the result they want .

- I think I would handle a meeting with Mr. Siegel very badly.
- She admitted to herself she didn't know how to handle the problem.

5. verb

If you **handle** a particular area of work, you have responsibility for it.

- She handled travel arrangements for the press corps during the presidential campaign.
- The investigation is being handled by Scotland Yard's anti terrorist branch.

6. verb

When you **handle** something such as a weapon , vehicle , or animal, you use it or control it, especially by using your hands.

- I had never handled an automatic.

7. verb

If something such as a vehicle **handles** well , it is easy to use or control.

- His ship had handled like a dream!

8. verb

When you **handle** something, you hold it or move it with your hands.

- Wear rubber gloves when handling cat litter.

9. singular noun

If you have **a handle on** a subject or problem, you have a way of approaching it that helps you to understand it or deal with it.

- When you have got a handle on your anxiety you can begin to control it.

10. to fly off the handle

honest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **honest** , you mean that they always tell the truth , and do not try to deceive people or break the law .

- My dad was the most honest man I ever met.
- I know she's honest and reliable.

2. adjective

If you are **honest** in a particular situation , you tell the complete truth or give your sincere opinion , even if this is not very pleasant .

- I was honest about what I was doing.
- He had been honest with her and she had tricked him!
- What do you think of the school, in your honest opinion?

3. adverb

You say ' **honest** ' before or after a statement to emphasize that you are telling the truth and that you want people to believe you.

- I'm not sure, honest.

4. honest to God

5. to be honest

intersection

intersections

Explain

1. countable noun

An **intersection** is a place where roads or other lines meet or cross .

- ...at the intersection of two main canals.
- ...a busy highway intersection.

inverse

Explain

1. adjective

If there is an **inverse** relationship between two things, one of them becomes larger as the other becomes smaller.

- The tension grew in inverse proportion to the distance from their final destination.

2. singular noun

The inverse of something is its exact opposite. **Inverse** is also an adjective .

- There is no sign that you bothered to consider the inverse of your logic.
- The hologram can be flipped to show the inverse image.

lemon

lemons

Explain

1. variable noun

A **lemon** is a bright yellow fruit with very sour juice . Lemons grow on trees in warm countries .

- ...a slice of lemon.
- ...oranges, lemons and other citrus fruits.
- ...lemon juice.

2. uncountable noun

Lemon is a drink that tastes of lemons.

3. colour

Lemon is the same as lemon yellow .

4. countable noun

If you think that something is a failure , or not as good or as useful as it should be, you can say that it is a **lemon** .

- He took a little test drive and agreed the car was a lemon.

5. countable noun

If you think that someone looks foolish because they are shy or slow to take action, you can say that they are **like a lemon** .

- I just stood there like a lemon.

linear

Explain

1. adjective

A **linear** process or development is one in which something changes or progresses straight from one stage to another, and has a starting point and an ending point.

- Her novel subverts the conventions of linear narrative.
- ...the linear view of time.

2. adjective

A **linear** shape or form consists of straight lines.

- ...the sharp, linear designs of the Seventies and Eighties.

3. adjective

Linear movement or force occurs in a straight line rather than in a curve .

mask

masks masking masked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **mask** is a piece of cloth or other material, which you wear over your face so that people cannot see who you are, or so that you look like someone or something else.

- The gunman, whose mask had slipped, fled.
- ...actors wearing masks.

2. countable noun

A **mask** is a piece of cloth or other material that you wear over all or part of your face to protect you from germs or harmful substances.

- You must wear goggles and a mask that will protect you against the fumes.
- She wore a surgical mask and rubber gloves while she worked with the samples.

3. countable noun

If you describe someone's behaviour as a **mask**, you mean that they do not show their real feelings or character.

- His mask of detachment cracked, and she saw for an instant an angry and violent man.

4. countable noun

A **mask** is a thick cream or paste made of various substances, which you spread over your face and leave for some time in order to improve your skin.

- This mask leaves your complexion feeling soft and supple.

5. verb

If you **mask** your feelings, you deliberately do not show them in your behaviour, so that people cannot know what you really feel.

- Mr Straw has, in public at least, masked his disappointment.

6. verb

If one thing **masks** another, it prevents people from noticing or recognizing the other thing.

- A thick grey cloud masked the sun.
- Too much salt masks the true flavour of the food.
- The healthy trade figures mask a much gloomier picture.

lonely

lonelier loneliest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **lonely** is unhappy because they are alone or do not have anyone they can talk to. **The lonely** are people who are lonely.

- ...lonely people who just want to talk.
- I feel lonelier in the middle of London than I do on my boat in the middle of nowhere.
- He looks for the lonely, the lost, the unloved.

2. adjective

A **lonely** situation or period of time is one in which you feel unhappy because you are alone or do not have anyone to talk to.

- I desperately needed something to occupy me during those long, lonely nights.
- ...her lonely childhood.

3. adjective

A **lonely** place is one where very few people come.

- It felt like the loneliest place in the world.
- ...dark, lonely streets.

orange

oranges

Explain

1. colour

Something that is **orange** is of a colour between red and yellow.

- ...men in bright orange uniforms.

2. variable noun

An **orange** is a round juicy fruit with a thick , orange coloured skin.

- An orange a day will give you all the vitamin C you need.
- ...orange trees.
- ...fresh orange juice.

3. uncountable noun

Orange is a drink that is made from or tastes of oranges.

- ...cola or orange.

mutual

Explain

1. adjective

You use **mutual** to describe a situation , feeling , or action that is experienced, felt , or done by both of two people mentioned .

- The East and the West can work together for their mutual benefit and progress.
- It's plain that he adores his daughter, and the feeling is mutual.

2. adjective

You use **mutual** to describe something such as an interest which two or more people share.

- They do, however, share a mutual interest in design.

- We were introduced by a mutual friend.

3. adjective

If a building society or an insurance company has **mutual** status , it is not owned by shareholders but by its customers , who receive a share of the profits.

- Britain's third-largest building society abandoned its mutual status and became a bank.

panel

panels

Explain

1. countable noun

A **panel** is a small group of people who are chosen to do something, for example to discuss something in public or to make a decision .

- He assembled a panel of scholars to advise him.
- All the writers on the panel agreed Quinn's book should be singled out for special praise.
- The advisory panel disagreed with the decision.

2. countable noun

A **panel** is a flat rectangular piece of wood or other material that forms part of a larger object such as a door.

- ...the frosted glass panel set in the centre of the door.

3. countable noun

A control **panel** or instrument **panel** is a board or surface which contains switches and controls to operate a machine or piece of equipment.

- The equipment was extremely sophisticated and was monitored from a central control-panel.
- They had failed to recognise signs on their instrument panel indicating a serious problem.

political

Explain

1. adjective

Political means relating to the way power is achieved and used in a country or society .

- All other political parties there have been completely banned.
- The Canadian government is facing another political crisis.
- ...a democratic political system.
- Abortion is once again a controversial political and moral issue.

2. See also party political

3. adjective

Someone who is **political** is interested or involved in politics and holds strong beliefs about it.

- Oh I'm not political, I take no interest in politics.
- This play is very political.

patience

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you have **patience** , you are able to stay calm and not get annoyed , for example when something takes a long time, or when someone is not doing what you want them to do.

- He doesn't have the patience to wait.
- It was exacting work and required all his patience.

2. uncountable noun

Patience is a card game for only one player.

- He would often sit and play patience.

3. to try someone's patience

portable

portables

Explain

1. adjective

A **portable** machine or device is designed to be easily carried or moved.

- There was a little portable television switched on behind the bar.
- I always carry a portable computer with me.

2. countable noun

A **portable** is something such as a television, radio , or computer which can be easily carried or moved.

- The majority of people listen to music on portables or in cars.

pillar

pillars

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pillar** is a tall solid structure, which is usually used to support part of a building.

- ...the pillars supporting the roof.

2. countable noun

If something is the **pillar of** a system or agreement, it is the most important part of it or what makes it strong and successful.

- The pillar of her economic policy was keeping tight control over money supply.
- ...the last pillar of apartheid.

3. countable noun

If you describe someone as a **pillar of** society or as a **pillar of** the community, you approve of them because they play an important and active part in society or in the community.

- My father had been a pillar of the community.
- ...well-respected pillars of society.

precious

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something such as a resource is **precious**, you mean that it is valuable and should not be wasted or used badly.

- After four months in foreign parts, every hour at home was precious.
- A family break allows you to spend precious time together.
- Water is becoming an increasingly precious resource.

2. adjective

Precious objects and materials are worth a lot of money because they are rare.

- ...jewellery and precious objects belonging to her mother.

3. adjective

If something is **precious** to you, you regard it as important and do not want to lose it.

- Her family's support is particularly precious to Josie.
- Mary left her most precious possession—a small bookcase—to her niece.

4. adjective

People sometimes use **precious** to emphasize their dislike for things which other people think are important.

- You don't care about anything but yourself and your precious face.

5. graded adjective

If you describe someone as **precious**, you mean that they behave in a formal and unnatural way.

6. precious little/precious few

pole

poles

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pole** is a long thin piece of wood or metal, used especially for supporting things.

- The truck crashed into a telegraph pole.
- He reached up with a hooked pole to roll down the metal shutter.

2. countable noun

The earth's **poles** are the two opposite ends of its axis, its most northern and southern points.

- For six months of the year, there is hardly any light at the poles.

3. countable noun

The two **poles** of a range of qualities, opinions, or beliefs are the completely opposite qualities, opinions, or beliefs at either end of the range.

- The two politicians represent opposite poles of the political spectrum.

4. poles apart

rash

rashes

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **rash** or does **rash** things, they act without thinking carefully first, and therefore make mistakes or behave foolishly.

- It would be rash to rely on such evidence.
- The Prime Minister is making no rash promises.
- Don't do anything rash until the feelings subside.

2. countable noun

A **rash** is an area of red spots that appears on your skin when you are ill or have a bad reaction to something that you have eaten or touched.

- I noticed a rash on my leg.
- He may break out in a rash when he eats these nuts.
- The symptoms include skin rashes, fever, and painful joints.

3. singular noun

If you talk about a **rash of** events or things, you mean a large number of unpleasant events or undesirable things, which have happened or appeared within a short period of time.

- ...one of the few major airlines left untouched by the industry's rash of takeovers.
- Now a rash of scruffy little shops bordered one side of the street.

pump

pumps pumping pumped

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pump** is a machine or device that is used to force a liquid or gas to flow in a particular direction.

- ...pumps that circulate the fuel around in the engine.
- There was no water in the building, just a pump in the courtyard.
- You'll need a bicycle pump to keep the tyres topped up with air.

2. verb

To **pump** a liquid or gas in a particular direction means to force it to flow in that direction using a pump.

- It's not enough to get rid of raw sewage by pumping it out to sea.
- The money raised will be used to dig bore holes to pump water into the dried-up lake.
- ...drill rigs that are busy pumping natural gas.
- Age diminishes the heart's ability to pump harder and faster under exertion.

3. countable noun

A petrol or gas **pump** is a machine with a tube attached to it that you use to fill a car with petrol.

- There are already long queues of vehicles at petrol pumps.

- ...gas pumps.

4. verb

If someone **has** their stomach **pumped**, doctors remove the contents of their stomach, for example because they have swallowed poison or drugs.

- She was released from hospital yesterday after having her stomach pumped.

5. verb

If you **pump** money or other resources **into** something such as a project or an industry, you invest a lot of money or resources in it.

- The Government needs to pump more money into community care.

6. verb

If you **pump** someone **about** something, you keep asking them questions in order to get information.

- He ran in every five minutes to pump me about the case.
- He must have pumped Janey for details.
- Stop trying to pump information out of me.

7. verb

To **pump** bullets **into** someone means to fire a lot of bullets into them very quickly.

8. countable noun

Pumps are canvas shoes with flat rubber soles which people wear for sports and leisure.

9. countable noun

Pumps are women's shoes that do not cover the top part of the foot and are usually made of plain leather.

10. to prime the pump

reciprocal

Explain

1. adjective

A **reciprocal** action or agreement involves two people or groups who do the same thing to each other or agree to help each another in a similar way.

- They expected a reciprocal gesture before more hostages could be freed.
- Many countries have reciprocal agreements for health care.

rail

rails railing railed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rail** is a horizontal bar attached to posts or fixed round the edge of something as a fence or support.

- They had to walk across an emergency footbridge, holding onto a rope that served as a rail.
- She gripped the thin rail in the lift.

2. countable noun

A **rail** is a horizontal bar that you hang things on.

- ...frocks hanging from a rail.
- This pair of curtains will fit a rail up to 7ft 6in wide.

3. countable noun

Rails are the steel bars which trains run on.

- The train left the rails but somehow forced its way back onto the line.

4. uncountable noun

If you travel or send something **by rail** , you travel or send it on a train.

- The president traveled by rail to his home town.
- ...the electric rail link between Manchester and Sheffield.

5. verb

If you **rail** against something, you criticize it loudly and angrily.

- He railed against hypocrisy and greed.
- I'd cursed him and railed at him.

6. back on the rails

7. go off the rails

relative

relatives

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **relatives** are the members of your family.

- Do relatives of yours still live in Siberia?
- Get a relative to look after the children.

2. adjective

You use **relative** to say that something is true to a certain degree , especially when compared with other things of the same kind .

- The fighting resumed after a period of relative calm.
- It is a cancer that can be cured with relative ease.
- Pedestrian zones mean that children can play in relative safety.

3. adjective

You use **relative** when you are comparing the quality or size of two things.

- They chatted about the relative merits of London and Paris as places to live.
- I reflected on the relative importance of education in 50 countries.
- ...the relative strength of the central and state governments.

4. relative to sth

5. adjective

If you say that something is **relative** , you mean that it needs to be considered and judged in relation to other things.

- Fitness is relative; one must always ask 'Fit for what?'.
- Truth is relative.

6. countable noun

If one animal, plant, language, or invention is a **relative of** another, they have both developed from the same type of animal, plant, language, or invention.

- The pheasant is a close relative of the Guinea hen.

relativity

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The theory of **relativity** is Einstein's theory concerning space , time, and motion.

resemblance

resemblances

Explain

1. variable noun

If there is a **resemblance** between two people or things, they are similar to each other.

- There was a remarkable resemblance between him and Pete.
- Our tour prices bore little resemblance to those in the holiday brochures.

ridiculous

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something or someone is **ridiculous**, you mean that they are very foolish.

- It is ridiculous to suggest we are having a romance.
- It was an absolutely ridiculous decision.

reverse

reverses reversing reversed

Explain

1. verb

When someone or something **reverses** a decision, policy, or trend, they change it to the opposite decision, policy, or trend.

- They have made it clear they will not reverse the decision to increase prices.
- The rise, the first in 10 months, reversed the downward trend in the jobless rate.

2. verb

If you **reverse** the order of a set of things, you arrange them in the opposite order, so that the first thing comes last.

- Simply reversing the order of the questions made it more logical.

- The normal word order is reversed in passive sentences.

3. verb

If you **reverse** the positions or functions of two things, you change them so that each thing has the position or function that the other one had.

- He reversed the position of the two stamps.

4. verb

When a car **reverses** or when you **reverse** it, the car is driven backwards.

- Another car reversed out of the drive.
- He reversed and drove away.
- He reversed his car straight at the policeman.

5. uncountable noun

If your car is **in reverse**, you have changed gear so that you can drive it backwards.

- He lurched the car in reverse along the ruts to the access road.

6. adjective

Reverse means opposite to what you expect or to what has just been described.

- The wrong attitude will have exactly the reverse effect.

7. singular noun

If you say that one thing is **the reverse** of another, you are emphasizing that the first thing is the complete opposite of the second thing.

- There is no evidence that spectators want longer cricket matches. Quite the reverse.
- I expected a dense and detailed autobiography. The reverse is true. The book is short and spare.

8. countable noun

A **reverse** is a serious failure or defeat.

- It's clear that the party of the former Prime Minister has suffered a major reverse.

9. singular noun

The reverse or **the reverse side** of a flat object which has two sides is the less important or the other side.

- Write your address on the reverse of the cheque.

10. in reverse

11. reverse the charges

ruthless

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone is **ruthless**, you mean that you disapprove of them because they are very harsh or cruel, and will do anything that is necessary to achieve what they want.

- The President was ruthless in dealing with any hint of internal political dissent.
- ...an invasion by a ruthless totalitarian power.
- The late newspaper tycoon is condemned for his ruthless treatment of employees.

2. adjective

A **ruthless** action or activity is done forcefully and thoroughly, without much concern for its effects on other people.

- Her lawyers have been ruthless in thrashing out a settlement.
- Successfully merging two banks requires a fast and ruthless attack on costs.

shaft

shafts

Explain

1. countable noun

A **shaft** is a long vertical passage, for example for a lift.

- He was found dead at the bottom of a lift shaft.
- ...old mine shafts.

2. countable noun

In a machine, a **shaft** is a rod that turns round continually in order to transfer movement in the machine.

- ...a drive shaft.
- ...the propeller shaft.

3. countable noun

A **shaft** is a long thin piece of wood or metal that forms part of a spear, axe, golf club, or other object.

- ...golf clubs with steel shafts.

4. countable noun

A **shaft of light** is a beam of light, for example sunlight shining through an opening.

- A brilliant shaft of sunlight burst through the doorway.

same

Explain

1. adjective

If two or more things, actions, or qualities are **the same**, or if one is **the same as** another, they are very like each other in some way.

- *The houses were all the same—square, close to the street, needing paint.*
- *In essence, all computers are the same.*
- *People with the same experience in the job should be paid the same.*
- *Driving a boat is not the same as driving a car.*
- *I want my son to wear the same clothes as everyone else at the school.*
- *Bihar had a population roughly the same as that of England.*

2. *the same as*

3. *adjective*

You use **same** to indicate that you are referring to only one place, time, or thing, and not to different ones.

- *Bernard works at the same institution as Arlette.*
- *It's impossible to get everybody together at the same time.*
- *Members of his staff learn to work the same 13-hour days that he imposes on himself.*
- *John just told me that your birthday is on the same day as mine.*
- *...business people who spoke the same language as himself.*
- *Gary plays football with the other children of the same age.*

4. *adjective*

Something that is still **the same** has not changed in any way.

- *It has been rare for the environment to stay the same for very long.*
- *Only 17*

5. *pronoun*

You use **the same** to refer to something that has previously been mentioned or suggested. **Same** is also an adjective.

- *We made the decision which was right for us. Other parents must do the same.*
- *In the United States small specialised bookshops survive quite well. The same applies to small publishers.*
- *We like him very much and he says the same about us.*
- *Tom Wood is a player I admire because he is so honest, and Chris Robshaw has that same quality.*

6. *pronoun*

You use **same** to refer to something that has already been mentioned in a document such as a business letter or bill.

- *Wrist watches: £5. Inscription of same: £25.*

7. *convention*

You say '**same here**' in order to suggest that you feel the same way about something as the person who has just spoken to you, or that you have done the same thing.

- *'Nice to meet you,' said Michael. 'Same here,' said Mary Ann.*
- *'I hate going into stores.'—'Same here,' said William.*

8. *convention*

You say '**same to you**' in response to someone who wishes you well with something.

- *'Have a nice Easter.'—'And the same to you Bridie.'*
- *'Goodbye, then, and thanks. Good luck.'—'The same to you.'*

9. same again

10. all the same/just the same

11. all the same to me

12. one and the same

13. the same/the very same

tar

tars tarring tarred

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Tar is a thick black sticky substance that is used especially for making roads .

- The oil has hardened to tar.
- They drove across the river to New Hampshire on a hot tar road.

2. uncountable noun

Tar is one of the poisonous substances contained in tobacco .

3. tarred with the same brush

sincere

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone is **sincere** , you approve of them because they really mean the things they say. You can also describe someone's behaviour and beliefs as **sincere** .

- He's sincere in his views.
- He accepted her apologies as sincere.
- There was a sincere expression of friendliness on both their faces.

tree

trees

Explain

1. countable noun

A **tree** is a tall plant that has a hard trunk, branches, and leaves.

- I planted those apple trees.
- ...a variety of shrubs and trees.

2. to be barking up the wrong tree

3. can't see the wood for the trees

southern

Explain

1. adjective

Southern means in or from the south of a region, state, or country.

- The Everglades National Park stretches across the southern tip of Florida.
- ...a place where you can sample southern cuisine.

veil

veils

Explain

1. countable noun

A **veil** is a piece of thin soft cloth that women sometimes wear over their heads and which can also cover their face.

- She's got long fair hair, but she's got a veil over it.

- She swathes her face in a veil of decorative muslin.

2. countable noun

You can refer to something that hides or partly hides a situation or activity as a **veil** .

- The country is ridding itself of its disgraced prime minister in a veil of secrecy.
- The chilling facts behind this veil of silence were slow to emerge.

3. countable noun

You can refer to something that you can partly see through, for example a mist , as a **veil** .

- The eruption has left a thin veil of dust in the upper atmosphere.
- He recognized the coast of England through a veil of mist.
- Bright moonlight shines through a thin veil of clouds.

4. to draw a veil over something

vest

vests vesting vested

Explain

1. countable noun

A **vest** is a piece of underwear which you can wear on the top half of your body in order to keep warm .

2. countable noun

A **vest** is a sleeveless piece of clothing with buttons which people usually wear over a shirt .

3. verb

If something **is vested in** you, or if you **are vested with** it, it is given to you as a right or responsibility .

- All authority was vested in the woman, who discharged every kind of public duty.
- The mass media have been vested with significant power in modern societies.
- There's an extraordinary amount of power vested in us.

substantial

Explain

1. adjective

Substantial means large in amount or degree .

- The party has just lost office and with it a substantial number of seats.
- That is a very substantial improvement in the present situation.

2. graded adjective

A **substantial** building is large and strongly built .

- ...those fortunate enough to have a fairly substantial property to sell.

tentative

Explain

1. adjective

Tentative agreements , plans , or arrangements are not definite or certain, but have been made as a first step .

- Political leaders have reached a tentative agreement.
- Such theories are still very tentative.

2. adjective

If someone is **tentative** , they are cautious and not very confident because they are uncertain or afraid .

- *My first attempts at complaining were rather tentative.*
- *She did not return his tentative smile.*

war

wars

Explain

1. variable noun

A **war** is a period of fighting or conflict between countries or states.

- *He spent part of the war in the National Guard.*
- *...matters of war and peace.*
- *They've been at war for the last fifteen years.*

2. variable noun

War is intense economic competition between countries or organizations.

- *The most important thing is to reach an agreement and to avoid a trade war.*

3. variable noun

If you make **war on** someone or something that you are opposed to, you do things to stop them succeeding .

- *She has been involved in the war against organised crime.*
- *...if the United States is to be successful in its war on corruption.*

4. be in the wars

5. go to war

6. war of words

thick

thicker thickest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **thick** has a large distance between its two opposite sides.

- *For breakfast I had a thick slice of bread and syrup.*
- *He wore glasses with thick rims.*
- *This material is very thick and this needle is not strong enough to go through it.*

2. adjective

You can use **thick** to talk or ask about how wide or deep something is. **Thick** is also a combining form.

- *The folder was two inches thick.*
- *How thick are these walls?*
- *...a finger as thick as a sausage.*
- *His life was saved by a quarter-inch-thick bullet-proof steel screen.*

3. adjective

If something that consists of several things is **thick** , it has a large number of them very close together.

- *She inherited our father's thick, wavy hair.*
- *They walked through thick forest.*

4. adjective

If something is **thick with** another thing, the first thing is full of or covered with the second.

- *The air is thick with acrid smoke from the fires.*
- *She ate scones thick with butter.*

5. adjective

Thick clothes are made from heavy cloth , so that they will keep you warm in cold weather .

- In the winter she wears thick socks, Wellington boots and gloves.
- She wore a thick tartan skirt and a red cashmere sweater.

6. adjective

Thick smoke , fog , or cloud is difficult to see through.

- The smoke was bluish-black and thick.
- It wasn't very thick fog.

7. adjective

Thick liquids are fairly stiff and solid and do not flow easily .

- They had to battle through thick mud to reach construction workers.
- The sauce is thick and rich so don't bother trying to diet.

8. adjective

If someone's voice is **thick** , they are not speaking clearly , for example because they are ill , upset , or drunk.

- When he spoke his voice was thick with bitterness.

9. adjective

A **thick** accent is very obvious and easy to identify .

- He answered our questions in English but with a thick accent.
- 'What do you want?' a teenage girl demanded in a thick German accent.

10. adjective

If you describe someone as **thick** , you think they are stupid .

- How could she have been so thick?

11. thick and fast

12. in the thick of

13. through thick and thin

warfare

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Warfare is the activity of fighting a war.

- ...the threat of chemical warfare.

2. uncountable noun

Warfare is sometimes used to refer to any violent struggle or conflict.

- Much of the violence is related to gang warfare.
- At times party rivalries have broken out into open warfare.

urban

Explain

1. adjective

Urban means belonging to, or relating to, a town or city.

- Most of the population is an urban population.
- Most urban areas are close to a park.
- ...urban planning.

whisky

whiskies

Explain

1. variable noun

Whisky is a strong alcoholic drink made, especially in Scotland, from grain such as barley or rye. A **whisky** is a glass of whisky.

- ...a bottle of whisky.
- ...expensive whiskies and brandies.
- She handed him a whisky.

account

accounts accounting accounted

Explain

1. countable noun

If you have an **account** with a bank or a similar organization, you have an arrangement to leave your money there and take some out when you need it.

- Some banks make it difficult to open an account.
- I had two accounts with the bank, a savings account and a current account.

2. countable noun

In business, a regular customer of a company can be referred to as an **account**, especially when the customer is another company.

- The Glasgow-based marketing agency has won two Edinburgh accounts.

3. countable noun

Accounts are detailed records of all the money that a person or business receives and spends.

- He kept detailed accounts.
- ...an account book.

4. countable noun

An **account** is a written or spoken report of something that has happened.

- He gave a detailed account of what happened on the fateful night.
- And that, according to some accounts I have read, is why he adopted the name.

5. countable noun

An **account of** something is a theory which is intended to explain or describe it.

- This basic utilitarian model gives a relatively unsophisticated account of human behaviour.
- Science, on Weber's account, is an essentially value-free activity.

6. verb

If you say that something **is accounted** a particular thing, you are reporting someone's judgment or opinion that it is that thing.

- The opening day of the battle was, nevertheless, accounted a success.

7. by/from all accounts

8. give a good account of oneself

9. of no/little account

10. on account

11. on account of

12. on someone's account

13. on someone's account

14. on no account

15. on that/this account

16. *by their own account*
17. *on one's own account*
18. *on one's own account*
19. *settle (one's) accounts*
20. *take into account/take account of*
21. *be called/held/brought to account*

adventure

adventures adventuring adventured

Explain

1. *countable noun*
If someone has an **adventure**, they become involved in an unusual, exciting, and rather dangerous journey or series of events.
 - *I set off for a new adventure in the United States.*
2. *uncountable noun*
Adventure is excitement and willingness to do new, unusual, or rather dangerous things.
 - *Their cultural backgrounds gave them a spirit of adventure.*
 - *...a feeling of adventure and excitement.*
3. *verb*
If you **adventure** somewhere, you go somewhere new, unusual, and exciting.
 - *The group has adventured as far as the Austrian alps.*

appropriate

appropriates appropriating appropriated

Explain

1. *adjective*
Something that is **appropriate** is suitable or acceptable for a particular situation.
 - *It is appropriate that Irish names dominate the list.*
 - *Dress neatly and attractively in an outfit appropriate to the job.*
 - *The teacher can then take appropriate action.*
2. *verb*
If someone **appropriates** something which does not belong to them, they take it, usually without the right to do so.
 - *Several other newspapers have appropriated the idea.*
 - *The land was simply appropriated by the rulers.*
3. *verb*
If a government or organization **appropriates** an amount of money for a particular purpose, it reserves it for that purpose.
 - *The legislature authorized the raising of an army and appropriated money to supply it with weapons.*

bell

bells

Explain

1. *countable noun*
A **bell** is a device that makes a ringing sound and is used to give a signal or to attract people's attention.
 - *I had just enough time to finish eating before the bell rang and I was off to my first class.*

- *I've been ringing the door bell, there's no answer.*

2. countable noun

A **bell** is a hollow metal object shaped like a cup which has a piece hanging inside it that hits the sides and makes a sound.

- *Church bells tolled yesterday in remembrance of the five girls who were killed.*

3. as clear as a bell

4. give sb a bell

5. sth rings a bell

6. as sound as a bell

cheap

cheaper cheapest

Explain

1. adjective

Goods or services that are **cheap** cost less money than usual or than you expected .

- *I'm going to live off campus if I can find somewhere cheap enough.*
- *Smoke detectors are cheap and easy to put up.*
- *Running costs are coming down because of cheaper fuel.*
- *They served breakfast all day and sold it cheap.*

2. adjective

If you describe goods as **cheap** , you mean they cost less money than similar products but their quality is poor.

- *Don't resort to cheap copies; save up for the real thing.*

- *...a tight suit made of some cheap material.*

3. adjective

If you describe the cost of someone's work as **cheap** , you disapprove of the way people are taking advantage of a situation to pay someone less than they should for the work that they do.

- *...unscrupulous employers who treat children as a cheap source of labour.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone's remarks or actions as **cheap** , you mean that they are unkindly or insincerely using a situation to benefit themselves or to harm someone else.

- *These tests will inevitably be used by politicians to make cheap political points.*

5. adjective

If you describe someone as **cheap** , you are criticizing them for being unwilling to spend money.

- *Oh, please, Dad, just this once don't be cheap.*

6. life is cheap

7. on the cheap

bone

bones boning boned

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **bones** are the hard parts inside your body which together form your skeleton.

- *Many passengers suffered broken bones.*

- Stephen fractured a thigh bone.
- The body is made up primarily of bone, muscle, and fat.
- She scooped the chicken bones back into the stewpot.

2. verb

If you **bone** a piece of meat or fish , you remove the bones from it before cooking it.

- Make sure that you do not pierce the skin when boning the chicken thighs.
- The boned fish is so easy to serve.

3. adjective

A **bone** tool or ornament is made of bone.

- ...a small, expensive pocketknife with a bone handle.

4. bare bones

5. close to the bone

6. to feel something in your bones

7. make no bones

8. make no bones

9. skin and bone

10. to cut something to the bone

11. to the bone

clockwise

Explain

1. adverb

When something is moving **clockwise** , it is moving in a circle in the same direction as the hands on a clock. **Clockwise** is also an adjective .

- He told the children to start moving clockwise around the room.
- Gently swing your right arm in a clockwise direction.

calcium

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Calcium is a soft white element which is found in bones and teeth, and also in limestone , chalk , and marble .

complex

complexes

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **complex** has many different parts, and is therefore often difficult to understand .

- ...in-depth coverage of today's complex issues.
- ...a complex system of voting.
- ...her complex personality.
- ...complex machines.

2. adjective

In grammar , a **complex** sentence contains one or more subordinate clauses as well as a main clause. Compare compound , , simple .

3. countable noun

A **complex** is a group of buildings designed for a particular purpose, or one large building divided into several smaller areas.

- ...plans for constructing a new stadium and leisure complex.

- ...a complex of offices and flats.

4. countable noun

A **complex** of things is a group or system of things that are connected with each other in a complicated way.

- ...the complex of clans which occupied the land.
- ...the military-industrial complex.

5. countable noun

If someone has a **complex** about something, they have a mental or emotional problem relating to it, often because of an unpleasant experience in the past .

- I have never had a complex about my height.
- ...a deranged attacker, driven by a persecution complex.

campaign

campaigns campaigning campaigned

Explain

1. countable noun

A **campaign** is a planned set of activities that people carry out over a period of time in order to achieve something such as social or political change.

- During his election campaign he promised to put the economy back on its feet.
- ...the campaign against public smoking.

2. verb

If someone **campaigns for** something, they carry out a planned set of activities over a period of time in order to achieve their aim.

- We are campaigning for law reform.

- Mr Burns has actively campaigned against a hostel being set up here.

- They have been campaigning to improve the legal status of women.

3. countable noun

In a war , a **campaign** is a series of planned movements carried out by armed forces.

- The allies are intensifying their air campaign.
- ...a bombing campaign.

conservative

conservatives

Explain

1. adjective

A **Conservative** politician or voter is a member of or votes for the Conservative Party in Britain . **Conservative** is also a noun .

- Most Conservative MPs appear happy with the government's reassurances.
- ...disenchanted Conservative voters.
- In 1951, the Conservatives were returned to power.

2. adjective

Someone who is **conservative** has right-wing views . **Conservative** is also a noun.

- ...counties whose citizens invariably support the most conservative candidate in any election.
- The new judge is 50-year-old David Suitor who's regarded as a conservative.

3. adjective

Someone who is **conservative** or has **conservative** ideas is unwilling to accept changes and new ideas.

- It is essentially a narrow and conservative approach to child care.

4. adjective

If someone dresses in a **conservative** way, their clothes are conventional in style.

- The girl was well dressed, as usual, though in a more conservative style.

5. adjective

A **conservative** estimate or guess is one in which you are cautious and estimate or guess a low amount which is probably less than the real amount.

- A conservative estimate of the bill, so far, is about £22,000.
- This guess is probably on the conservative side.

choice

choices choicer choicest

Explain

1. countable noun

If there is a **choice of** things, there are several of them and you can choose the one you want .

- It's available in a choice of colours.
- At lunchtime, there's a choice between the buffet or the set menu.
- Club Sportif offer a wide choice of holidays.

2. countable noun

Your **choice** is someone or something that you choose from a range of things.

- Although he was only joking, his choice of words made Rodney angry.

3. adjective

Choice means of very high quality.

- ...Fortnum and Mason's choicest chocolates.

4. have no choice/ have little choice

5. of one's choice

6. of choice

conspicuous

Explain

1. adjective

If someone or something is **conspicuous** , people can see or notice them very easily .

- He spent his money in a conspicuous way on fast cars and luxury holidays.
- You may feel tearful in situations where you feel conspicuous.

2. conspicuous by one's absence

clock

clocks clocking clocked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **clock** is an instrument, for example in a room or on the outside of a building, that shows what time of day it is.

- He was conscious of a clock ticking.
- He also repairs clocks and watches.
- The hands of the clock on the wall moved with a slight click.
- ...a digital clock.

2. countable noun

A time **clock** in a factory or office is a device that is used to record the hours that people work. Each worker puts a special card into the device when they arrive and leave, and the times are recorded on the card.

- Government workers were made to punch time clocks morning, noon and night.

3. countable noun

In a car, **the clock** is the instrument that shows the speed of the car or the distance it has travelled .

- The car had 160,000 miles on the clock.
- At 240 mph the needle went off the clock.

4. verb

To **clock** a particular time or speed in a race means to reach that time or speed.

- Elliott clocked the fastest time this year for the 800 metres.
- The yacht swayed in 40-knot winds, clocking speeds of 17 knots at times.

5. verb

If something or someone **is clocked at** a particular time or speed, their time or speed is measured at that level.

- He has been clocked at 11 seconds for 100 metres.
- 170-mile-an-hour winds were clocked on a mountaintop in North Carolina.

6. verb

If you **clock** something, you notice or see it.

- I walked past that gate hundreds of times before I clocked it.

7. against the clock

8. to beat the clock

9. round the clock/around the clock

10. turn the clock back/put the clock back

11. watch the clock

dumb

dumber dumbest dumbs dumber dumber

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **dumb** is completely unable to speak.

- ...a young deaf and dumb man.

2. adjective

If someone is **dumb** on a particular occasion , they cannot speak because they are angry , shocked , or surprised .

- We were all struck dumb for a minute.

3. adjective

If you call a person **dumb** , you mean that they are stupid or foolish.

- I've met a lot of dumb people.
- The questions were set up to make her look dumb.

4. adjective

If you say that something is **dumb** , you think that it is silly and annoying .

- I came up with this dumb idea.

5. adjective

Something that is **dumb** is done or expressed without words .

- An expression of dumb recognition wiggled across her features.

constituent

constituents

Explain

1. countable noun

A **constituent** is someone who lives in a particular constituency, especially someone who is able to vote in an election .

2. countable noun

A **constituent of** a mixture , substance, or system is one of the things from which it is formed.

- Caffeine is the active constituent of drinks such as tea and coffee.

3. adjective

The **constituent** parts of something are the things from which it is formed.

- ...a plan to split the company into its constituent parts and sell them separately.
- ...the leaders of Russia's constituent republics.

eminent

Explain

1. adjective

An **eminent** person is well-known and respected , especially because they are good at their profession .

- ...an eminent scientist.

dial

dials dialling dialled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dial** is the part of a machine or instrument such as a clock or watch which shows you the time or a measurement that has been recorded .

- The luminous dial on the clock showed five minutes to seven.
- The dials of most barometers are inscribed with weather terms.

2. countable noun

A **dial** is a control on a device or piece of equipment which you can move in order to adjust the setting , for example to select or change the frequency on a radio or the temperature of a heater .

- He turned the dial on the radio.
- The heat dial was set at 150 degrees.

3. countable noun

On some telephones, especially older ones, **the dial** is the disc on the front that you turn with your finger to choose the number that you want to call. The disc has holes in it, and numbers or letters behind the holes.

- ...turning the dial on the phone.

4. verb

If you **dial** or if you **dial** a number, you turn the dial or press the buttons on a telephone in order to phone someone.

- He lifted the phone and dialled her number.
- He dialled, and spoke briefly to the duty officer.

ethnic

Explain

1. adjective

Ethnic means connected with or relating to different racial or cultural groups of people.

- ...a survey of Britain's ethnic minorities.
- ...ethnic tensions.

2. adjective

You can use **ethnic** to describe people who belong to a particular racial or cultural group but who, usually, do not live in the country where most members of that group live.

- There are still several million ethnic Germans in Russia.

3. adjective

Ethnic clothing , music , or food is characteristic of the traditions of a particular ethnic group, and different from what is usually found in modern Western culture.

- ...the original flavours of ethnic dishes.
- ...a magnificent range of ethnic fabrics.

dot

dots dotting dotted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dot** is a very small round mark, for example one that is used as the top part of the letter 'i', as a full stop , or as a decimal point.

2. countable noun

You can refer to something that you can see in the distance and that looks like a small round mark as a **dot** .

- Soon they were only dots above the hard line of the horizon.

3. verb

When things **dot** a place or an area, they are scattered or spread all over it.

- Small coastal towns dot the landscape.

4. on the dot

5. dot the i's and cross the t's

6. the year dot

exclusive

exclusives

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **exclusive** , you mean that it is limited to people who have a lot of money or who belong to a high social class, and is therefore not available to everyone.

- He is already a member of Britain's most exclusive club.
- The City was criticised for being too exclusive and uncompetitive.

2. adjective

Something that is **exclusive** is used or owned by only one person or group, and not shared with anyone else.

- Our group will have exclusive use of a 60-foot boat.
- Many of their cheeses are exclusive to our stores in Britain.

3. adjective

If a newspaper, magazine , or broadcasting organization describes one of its reports as **exclusive** , they mean that it is a special report which does not appear in any other publication or on any other channel . An **exclusive** is an exclusive article or report.

- He told the magazine in an *exclusive* interview: 'All my problems stem from drink'.
- Some papers thought they had an *exclusive*.

4. adjective

If a company states that its prices , goods, or services are **exclusive of** something, that thing is not included in the stated price, although it usually still has to be paid for.

- All charges for service are *exclusive of* value added tax.
- Skiing weekends cost £58 (*exclusive of* travel and accommodation).

5. mutually exclusive

friday

Fridays

Explain

1. variable noun

Friday is the day after Thursday and before Saturday .

- Mr Cook is intending to go to Brighton on Friday.
- The weekly series starts next Friday.
- I get home at half seven on Fridays.
- He left Heathrow airport on Friday morning.

galaxy

galaxies

Explain

1. countable noun

A **galaxy** is an extremely large group of stars and planets that extends over many billions of light years .

- Astronomers have discovered a distant galaxy.

2. proper noun

The Galaxy is the extremely large group of stars and planets to which the Earth and the Solar System belong.

- The Galaxy consists of 100 billion stars.

3. singular noun

If you talk about **a galaxy of** people from a particular profession , you mean a group of them who are all famous or important .

- He is one of a small galaxy of Dutch stars on German television.

fragrant

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **fragrant** has a pleasant, sweet smell.

- ...fragrant oils and perfumes.
- The air was fragrant with the smell of orange blossoms.

hook

hooks hooking hooked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **hook** is a bent piece of metal or plastic that is used for catching or holding things, or for hanging things up.

- One of his jackets hung from a hook.
- ...curtain hooks.
- He felt a fish pull at his hook.

2. verb

If you **hook** one thing **to** another, you attach it there using a hook. If something **hooks** somewhere, it can be hooked there.

- Paul hooked his tractor to the car and pulled it to safety.
- ...one of those can openers that hooked onto the wall.

3. verb

If you **hook** your arm, leg, or foot round an object, you place it like a hook round the object in order to move it or hold it.

- She latched on to his arm, hooking her other arm around a tree.
- I hooked my left arm over the side of the dinghy.

4. verb

If you **hook** a fish, you catch it with a hook on the end of a line.

- At the first cast I hooked a huge fish.

5. countable noun

A **hook** is a short sharp blow with your fist that you make with your elbow bent, usually in a boxing match.

- He was knocked down by a left hook in the first round.

6. verb

If you **are hooked into** something, or **hook into** something, you get involved with it.

- I'm guessing again now because I'm not hooked into the political circles.
- Eager to hook into a career but can't find one right for you?

7. verb

If you **hook into** the internet, you make a connection with the internet on a particular occasion so that you can use it. **Hook up** means the same as hook.

- ...an interactive media tent where people will be able to hook into the internet.
- It has no mobile connectivity, which means that users must rely on wi-fi to hook up to the internet.

8. to let someone off the hook

9. off the hook

10. ringing off the hook

heavy

heavier heaviest heavies

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **heavy** weighs a lot.

- These scissors are awfully heavy.
- Gosh, that was a heavy bag!
- The mud stuck to her boots, making her feet heavy and her legs tired.

2. adjective

You use **heavy** to ask or talk about how much someone or something weighs.

- *How heavy are you?*
 - *Protons are nearly 2000 times as heavy as electrons.*
3. *adjective*
Heavy means great in amount, degree, or intensity.
- *Heavy fighting has been going on.*
 - *The State fails to recognize the heavy responsibility that parents take on.*
 - *He worried about her heavy drinking.*
 - *...lengthy jail sentences and heavy fines.*
 - *The traffic along Fitzjohn's Avenue was heavy.*
4. *adjective*
 Someone or something that is **heavy** is solid in appearance or structure, or is made of a thick material.
- *We talk in her Belgrade flat, full of heavy old brown furniture.*
 - *He was short and heavy.*
 - *Put the sugar and water in a heavy pan and heat slowly.*
 - *...a heavy cream silk blouse.*
5. *graded adjective*
 A **heavy** substance is thick in texture .
- *It is advisable to mix coarse grit into heavy soil to improve drainage.*
 - *...11 million gallons of heavy crude oil.*
6. *adjective*
 A **heavy** meal is large in amount and often difficult to digest .
- *He had been feeling drowsy, the effect of an unusually heavy meal.*
7. *adjective*
 Something that is **heavy with** things is full of them or loaded with them.
- *The air is heavy with moisture.*
 - *She brought in a tray heavy with elegant sandwiches, scones and cakes.*
8. *adjective*
 If a person's breathing is **heavy** , it is very loud and deep.
- *Her breathing became slow and heavy.*
9. *adjective*
 A **heavy** movement or action is done with a lot of force or pressure.
- *...a heavy blow on the back of the skull.*
 - *The plane made a heavy landing.*
10. *adjective*
 A **heavy** machine or piece of military equipment is very large and very powerful.
- *...government militia backed by tanks and heavy artillery.*
 - *...armoured personnel carriers and other heavy vehicles.*
11. *adjective*
 If you describe a period of time or a schedule as **heavy** , you mean it involves a lot of work.
- *It's been a heavy day and I'm tired.*
 - *Hopefully, Max would be able to spend a few days with them, depending on his heavy schedule.*
12. *adjective*
Heavy work requires a lot of strength or energy.
- *The business is thriving and Philippa employs two full-timers for the heavy work.*

13. adjective

If you say that something is **heavy on** another thing, you mean that it uses a lot of that thing or too much of that thing.

- Tanks are heavy on fuel and destructive to roads.
- ...salads heavy on carrots.

14. adjective

Air or weather that is **heavy** is unpleasantly still, hot, and damp.

- The outside air was heavy and moist and sultry.

15. graded adjective

If you describe a person's face as **heavy**, you mean that it looks sad, tired, or unfriendly.

16. adjective

If your heart is **heavy**, you are sad about something.

- Mr Maddison handed over his resignation letter with a heavy heart.

17. adjective

A situation that is **heavy** is serious and difficult to cope with.

- I don't want any more of that heavy stuff.

18. countable noun

A **heavy** is a large strong man who is employed to protect a person or place, often by using violence.

- They had employed heavies to evict shop squatters from neighbouring sites.

hydrogen

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Hydrogen is a colourless gas that is the lightest and commonest element in the universe.

important

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **important** is very significant, is highly valued, or is necessary.

- Her sons are the most important thing in her life.
- The planned general strike represents an important economic challenge to the government.
- This gold is every bit as important to me as it is to you.
- It's important to answer her questions as honestly as you can.
- It was important that he rest.

2. adjective

Someone who is **important** has influence or power within a society or a particular group.

- He was the most important person on the island.
- ...an important figure in the media world.

key

keys keying keyed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **key** is a specially shaped piece of metal that you place in a lock and turn in order to open or lock a door, or to start or stop the engine of a vehicle.

- They put the key in the door and entered.
- She reached for her coat and car keys.

2. countable noun

The **keys** on a computer keyboard or typewriter are the buttons that you press in order to operate it.

3. countable noun

The **keys** of a piano or organ are the long narrow pieces of wood or plastic that you press in order to play it.

4. variable noun

In music, a **key** is a scale of musical notes that starts on one specific note.

- ...the key of A minor.

5. countable noun

The **key** on a map or diagram or in a technical book is a list of the symbols or abbreviations used and their meanings.

- You will find a key at the front of the book.

6. adjective

The **key** person or thing in a group is the most important one.

- He is expected to be the key witness at the trial.
- Education is likely to be a key issue in the next election.

7. countable noun

The **key to** a desirable situation or result is the way in which it can be achieved.

- The key to success is to be ready from the start.
- Diet and relaxation are two important keys to good health.

intricate

Explain

1. adjective

You use **intricate** to describe something that has many small parts or details .

- ...intricate patterns and motifs.

layoff

layoffs

Explain

1. countable noun

When there are **layoffs** in a company, workers are told by their employers to leave their job , usually because there is no more work for them in the company.

- Store closures will result in layoffs of an estimated 2,000 employees.

2. countable noun

A **layoff** is a period of time in which people do not work or take part in their normal activities, often because they are resting or are injured .

- They both made full recoveries after lengthy injury layoffs.

invisible

invisibles

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **invisible** , you mean that it cannot be seen, for example because it is transparent , hidden, or very small.

- The lines were so finely etched as to be invisible from a distance.

- The belt is invisible even under the thinnest garments.

2. adjective

You can use **invisible** when you are talking about something that cannot be seen but has a definite effect . In this sense , **invisible** is often used before a noun which refers to something that can usually be seen.

- Parents fear they might overstep these invisible boundaries.
- Her father's face had suddenly tightened as though he was being strangled by invisible hands.

3. adjective

If you say that you feel **invisible** , you are complaining that you are being ignored by other people. If you say that a particular problem or situation is **invisible** , you are complaining that it is not being considered or dealt with.

- It was strange, how invisible a clerk could feel.
- The problems of the poor are largely invisible.

4. adjective

In stories , **invisible** people or things have a magic quality which makes people unable to see them.

- ...The Invisible Man.

5. adjective

In economics , **invisible** earnings are the money that a country makes as a result of services such as banking and tourism , rather than by producing goods.

- Tourism is Britain's single biggest invisible export.
- The revenue from tourism is the biggest single item in the country's invisible earnings.

- The invisible trade surplus was £900 million lower than reported.

6. plural noun

Invisibles are services such as banking and tourism, which provide a country's invisible earnings.

limit

limits limiting limited

Explain

1. countable noun

A **limit** is the greatest amount, extent, or degree of something that is possible .

- Her love for him was being tested to its limits.
- There is no limit to how much fresh fruit you can eat in a day.
- Firefighters are being stretched to the limit as fire sweeps through the state.

2. countable noun

A **limit** of a particular kind is the largest or smallest amount of something such as time or money that is allowed because of a rule , law , or decision .

- The three month time limit will be up in mid-June.
- The economic affairs minister announced limits on petrol sales.

3. countable noun

The **limit** of an area is its boundary or edge.

- ...the city limits of Baghdad.

4. plural noun

The limits of a situation are the facts involved in it which make only some actions or results possible.

- *She has to work within the limits of a fairly tight budget.*
- *He outlined the limits of British power.*

5. verb

If you **limit** something, you prevent it from becoming greater than a particular amount or degree.

- *He limited payments on the country's foreign debt.*
- *Place numbers are limited to 25 on both tours, so please book early.*

6. verb

If you **limit yourself** to something, or if someone or something **limits** you, the number of things that you have or do is reduced .

- *It is now accepted that men should limit themselves to 20 units of alcohol a week.*
- *Voters cut councillors' pay and limited them to one staff member each.*

7. verb

If something **is limited to** a particular place or group of people, it exists only in that place, or is had or done only by that group.

- *The protests were not limited to New York.*
- *Entry to this prize draw is limited to U.K. residents.*

8. off limits

9. off limits

10. be over the limit

11. the sky is the limit

12. within limits

likely

likelier likeliest

Explain

1. adjective

You use **likely** to indicate that something is probably the case or will probably happen in a particular situation . **Likely** is also an adverb .

- *Experts say a 'yes' vote is still the likely outcome.*
- *If this is your first baby, it's far more likely that you'll get to the hospital too early.*
- *Francis thought it likely John still loved her.*
- *Profit will most likely have risen by about £25 million.*
- *Very likely he'd told them he had American business interests.*

2. adjective

If someone or something is **likely to** do a particular thing, they will very probably do it.

- *In the meantime the war of nerves seems likely to continue.*
- *Adolescents who watched more than two hours of TV a day were much more likely to be overweight.*

3. adjective

A **likely** person, place, or thing is one that will probably be suitable for a particular purpose.

- *At one point he had seemed a likely candidate to become Prime Minister.*
- *We aimed the microscope at a likely looking target.*

4. not likely

microscope

microscopes

Explain

1. countable noun

A **microscope** is a scientific instrument which makes very small objects look bigger so that more detail can be seen .

2. under the microscope

mute

mutes muting muted

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **mute** is silent for a particular reason and does not speak. **Mute** is also an adverb .

- He was mute, distant, and indifferent.
- I threw a mute look of appeal at Paula.
- He could watch her standing mute by the phone.
- He sat mute, speechless with ecstasy, gazing into the sky.

2. adjective

Someone who is **mute** is unable to speak.

- Marianna, the duke's daughter, became mute after a shock.

3. verb

If someone **mutes** something such as their feelings or their activities , they reduce the strength or intensity of them.

- The corruption does not seem to have muted the country's prolonged economic boom.

4. verb

If you **mute** a noise or sound, you lower its volume or make it less distinct .

- They begin to mute their voices, not be as assertive.

- At first the wooded hillsides muted the sounds.

5. countable noun

A **mute** is a device which can be used to make a musical instrument produce a quieter , softer sound.

monday

Mondays

Explain

1. variable noun

Monday is the day after Sunday and before Tuesday .

- I went back to work on Monday.
- The attack took place last Monday.
- I'm usually here on Mondays and Fridays.
- The deaths on Monday afternoon were being treated as accidental.

narrative

narratives

Explain

1. countable noun

A **narrative** is a story or an account of a series of events.

- ...a fast-moving narrative.

- Sloan began his narrative with the day of the murder.

2. uncountable noun

Narrative is the description of a series of events, usually in a novel .

- Neither author was very strong on narrative.
- ...Nye's simple narrative style.

pen

pens penning penned

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pen** is a long thin object which you use to write in ink.

2. verb

If someone **pens** a letter , article , or book, they write it.

- I really intended to pen this letter to you early this morning.
- She penned a short memo to his private secretary.

3. countable noun

A **pen** is also a small area with a fence round it in which farm animals are kept for a short time.

- ...a holding pen for sheep.
- He wasn't sure exactly how a fox could have got into the sheep's pen.

4. verb

If people or animals **are penned** somewhere or **are penned up** , they are forced to remain in a very small area.

- ...to drive the cattle back to the house so they could be milked and penned for the night.

- The goats are penned in and fodder has to be cut and carried each day.

- I don't have to stay in my room penned up like a prisoner.

5. countable noun

People sometimes say **the pen** to refer to a prison .

6. put pen to paper

narrow

narrower narrowest narrows narrowing narrowed

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **narrow** measures a very small distance from one side to the other, especially compared to its length or height .

- ...through the town's narrow streets.
- She had long, narrow feet.
- ...the narrow strip of land joining the peninsula to the rest of the island.

2. verb

If something **narrows** , it becomes less wide .

- The wide track narrows before crossing another stream.

3. verb

If your eyes **narrow** or if you **narrow** your eyes, you almost close them, for example because you are angry or because you are trying to concentrate on something.

- Coggins' eyes narrowed angrily. 'You think I'd tell you?'

- *He paused and narrowed his eyes in concentration.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone's ideas, attitudes , or beliefs as **narrow** , you disapprove of them because they are restricted in some way, and often ignore the more important aspects of an argument or situation.

- *...a narrow and outdated view of family life.*
- *I would have preferred somebody who had wider ideas, and he was rather narrow.*

5. verb

If something **narrows** or if you **narrow** it, its extent or range becomes smaller.

- *Most recent opinion polls suggest that the gap between the two main parties has narrowed.*
- *Negotiators narrowed their differences over federal spending for anti-drug programs.*

6. adjective

If you have a **narrow** victory , you succeed in winning but only by a small amount.

- *Delegates have voted by a narrow majority in favour of considering electoral reform.*

7. adjective

If you have a **narrow** escape, something unpleasant nearly happens to you.

- *Two police officers had a narrow escape when separatists attacked their vehicles.*

piano

pianos

Explain

1. variable noun

A **piano** is a large musical instrument with a row of black and white keys. When you press these keys with your fingers , little hammers hit wire strings inside the piano which vibrate to produce musical notes.

- *I taught myself how to play the piano.*
- *He started piano lessons at the age of 7.*
- *...sonatas for cello and piano.*
- *...Rachmaninov's Fourth Piano Concerto.*

2. adverb

A piece of music that is played **piano** is played quietly .

noticeable

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **noticeable** is very obvious , so that it is easy to see, hear , or recognize .

- *It is noticeable that trees planted next to houses usually lean away from the house wall.*
- *The most noticeable effect of these changes is in the way people are now working together.*

pint

pints

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pint** is a unit of measurement for liquids. In Britain , it is equal to 568 cubic centimetres or one eighth of an imperial gallon. In America ,

it is equal to 473 cubic centimetres or one eighth of an American gallon.

- ...a pint of milk.
- The military requested 6,000 pints of blood from the American Red Cross.
- ...glasses which can hold a full pint.

2. countable noun

If you go for a **pint** , you go to the pub to drink a pint of beer or more.

- He sits down and reads the paper, then goes out for a pint.

offensive

offensives

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **offensive** upsets or embarrasses people because it is rude or insulting.

- Some friends of his found the play horribly offensive.
- ...offensive remarks which called into question the integrity of my firm.

2. countable noun

A military **offensive** is a carefully planned attack made by a large group of soldiers .

- Its latest military offensive against rebel forces is aimed at re-opening trade routes.
- The armed forces have launched offensives to recapture lost ground.

3. countable noun

If you conduct an **offensive** , you take strong action to show how angry you are about something or how much you disapprove of something.

- Republicans acknowledged that they had little choice but to mount an all-out offensive on the Democratic nominee.

- ...a diplomatic offensive.

4. adjective

In sports such as American football or basketball , the **offensive** team is the team which has possession of the ball and is trying to score .

- The worst-ever defeat of this team proved once again that Stanford can be one of the most explosive offensive teams in the country.

5. go on the offensive

province

provinces

Explain

1. countable noun

A **province** is a large section of a country which has its own administration .

- ...the Algarve, Portugal's southernmost province.

2. plural noun

The provinces are all the parts of a country except the part where the capital is situated .

- The government plans to transfer some 30,000 government jobs from the capital to the provinces.

3. singular noun

If you say that a subject or activity is a particular person's **province** , you mean that this person has a special interest in it, a special knowledge of it, or a special responsibility for it.

- Arvo avoided committing himself. 'I'm afraid that's not my province,' he replied.

- *Industrial research is the province of the Department of Trade and Industry.*

plural

plurals

Explain

1. adjective

The **plural** form of a word is the form that is used when referring to more than one person or thing.

- *'Data' is the Latin plural form of 'datum'.*
- *...his use of the plural pronoun 'we'.*

2. countable noun

The **plural** of a noun is the form of it that is used to refer to more than one person or thing.

- *What is the plural of 'person'?*
- *...irregular plurals.*

3. graded adjective

A **plural** society or system involves different kinds of people.

- *Britain is a plural society in which the secular predominates.*
- *His government has pledged to move the country towards a plural democracy.*

rainbow

rainbows

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rainbow** is an arch of different colours that you can sometimes see in the sky when it is raining.

- *Oh look, a rainbow!*

- *...silk brocade of every colour of the rainbow.*

2. countable noun

A **rainbow** of colours is a wide range of bright colours.

- *...a rainbow of coloured cushions.*

3. the end of the rainbow

probable

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **probable**, you mean that it is likely to be true or likely to happen.

- *It is probable that the medication will suppress the symptom without treating the condition.*
- *The probable result is that asset prices will again rise rapidly.*
- *An airline official said a bomb was the incident's most probable cause.*

2. adjective

You can use **probable** to describe a role or function that someone or something is likely to have.

- *The Socialists united behind their probable presidential candidate.*

saturday

Saturdays

Explain

1. variable noun

Saturday is the day after Friday and before Sunday .

- She had a call from him on Saturday morning at the studio.
- They had a 3-1 win against Liverpool last Saturday.
- The overnight train runs only on Saturdays.
- It was Saturday evening and I was getting ready to go out.

proper

Explain

1. adjective

You use **proper** to describe things that you consider to be real and satisfactory rather than inadequate in some way.

- Two out of five people lack a proper job.
- I always cook a proper evening meal.

2. adjective

The **proper** thing is the one that is correct or most suitable .

- The Supreme Court will ensure that the proper procedures have been followed.
- He helped to put things in their proper place.

3. adjective

If you say that a way of behaving is **proper** , you mean that it is considered socially acceptable and right.

- In those days it was not thought entirely proper for a woman to be on the stage.
- It is right and proper to do this.

4. adjective

You can add **proper** after a word to indicate that you are referring to the central and most important part of a place, event, or object and want to distinguish it from other things which are not regarded as being important or central to it.

- A distinction must be made between archaeology proper and science-based archaeology.

skeleton

skeletons

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **skeleton** is the framework of bones in your body.

- ...a human skeleton.

2. adjective

A **skeleton** staff is the smallest number of staff necessary in order to run an organization or service.

- Only a skeleton staff remains to show anyone interested around the site.

3. countable noun

The **skeleton** of something such as a building or a plan is its basic framework.

- Only skeletons of buildings remained.
- ...a skeleton of policy guidelines.

4. a skeleton in the cupboard

racial

Explain

1. adjective

Racial describes things relating to people's race.

- ...the protection of national and racial minorities.
- ...the elimination of racial discrimination.

star

stars starring starred

Explain

1. countable noun

A **star** is a large ball of burning gas in space. Stars appear to us as small points of light in the sky on clear nights.

- The night was dark, the stars hidden behind cloud.

2. countable noun

You can refer to a shape or an object as a **star** when it has four, five, or more points sticking out of it in a regular pattern .

- Children at school receive coloured stars for work well done.

3. countable noun

You can say how many **stars** something such as a hotel or restaurant has as a way of talking about its quality, which is often indicated by a number of star-shaped symbols. The more stars something has, the better it is.

- ...five star hotels.

4. countable noun

Famous actors , musicians , and sports players are often referred to as **stars** .

- ...Gemma, 41, star of the TV series *Pennies From Heaven*.
- By now Murphy is Hollywood's top male comedy star.
- Some football stars are very wealthy.

5. verb

If an actor or actress **stars in** a play or film, he or she has one of the most important parts in it.

- I starred in a pantomime called *Puss in Boots*.
- He's starred in dozens of films.

6. verb

If a play or film **stars** a famous actor or actress, he or she has one of the most important parts in it.

- The comedy starred the young actor as an Irish policeman.
- ...a Hollywood film, *The Secret of Santa Vittoria*, directed by Stanley Kramer and starring Anthony Quinn.

7. plural noun

Predictions about people's lives which are based on astrology and appear regularly in a newspaper or magazine are sometimes referred to as **the stars** .

- There was nothing in my stars to say I'd have travel problems!

8. to thank your lucky stars

scientific

Explain

1. adjective

Scientific is used to describe things that relate to science or to a particular science.

- ...federal financing of basic scientific research , especially in the fields of health and national security.
- ...the use of animals in scientific experiments.

- ...scientific instruments.

2. adjective

If you do something in a **scientific** way, you do it carefully and thoroughly, using experiments or tests .

- It's not a scientific way to test their opinions.
- ...the scientific study of capitalist development.

steel

steels steeling steeled

Explain

1. variable noun

Steel is a very strong metal which is made mainly from iron. Steel is used for making many things, for example bridges , buildings, vehicles, and cutlery .

- ...steel pipes.
- ...the iron and steel industry.
- ...a fall in demand for cement, bricks, steel and glass.
- The front wall is made of corrugated steel.

2. uncountable noun

Steel is used to refer to the industry that produces steel and items made of steel.

- ...a three-month study of European steel.
- The company has interests in steel and other products.

3. verb

If you **steel yourself** , you prepare to deal with something unpleasant .

- Those involved are steeling themselves for the coming battle.

- I was steeling myself to call round when Simon arrived.

slender

Explain

1. adjective

A **slender** person is attractively thin and graceful .

- She was slender, with delicate wrists and ankles.
- ...a tall, slender figure in a straw hat.
- He gazed at her slender neck.

2. adjective

You can use **slender** to describe a situation which exists but only to a very small degree .

- The United States held a slender lead.
- He has won a vote of confidence but only by a slender majority.
- ...the first slender hope of peace.

stomach

stomachs stomaching stomached

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **stomach** is the organ inside your body where food is digested before it moves into the intestines .

- He had an upset stomach.
- My stomach is completely full.

2. countable noun

You can refer to the front part of your body below your waist as your **stomach** .

- The children lay down on their stomachs.
- ...stomach muscles.

3. countable noun

If the front part of your body below your waist feels uncomfortable because you are feeling worried or frightened , you can refer to it as your **stomach** .

- His stomach was in knots.

4. countable noun

If you say that someone has a strong **stomach** , you mean that they are not disgusted by things that disgust most other people.

- Surgery often demands actual physical strength, as well as the possession of a strong stomach.

5. verb

If you cannot **stomach** something, you cannot accept it because you dislike it or disapprove of it.

- I could never stomach the cruelty involved in the wounding of animals.

6. on an empty stomach

7. not have the stomach

8. sick to one's stomach

9. turn someone's stomach

slight

slighter slightest slights slighting slighted

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **slight** is very small in degree or quantity.

- Doctors say he has made a slight improvement.
- We have a slight problem.
- A slight smile flickered over his face.
- He's not the slightest bit worried.

2. adjective

A **slight** person has a fairly thin and delicate looking body.

- She is smaller and slighter than Christie.
- ...a slight, bespectacled figure.

3. verb

If you **are slighted** , someone does or says something that insults you by treating you as if your views or feelings are not important. **Slight** is also a noun .

- They felt slighted by not being adequately consulted.
- It isn't a slight on my husband that I enjoy my evening class.

4. in the slightest

strategy

strategies

Explain

1. variable noun

A **strategy** is a general plan or set of plans intended to achieve something, especially over a long period.

- The group hope to agree a strategy for policing the area.
- What should our marketing strategy have achieved?
- Community involvement is now integral to company strategy.

2. uncountable noun

Strategy is the art of planning the best way to gain an advantage or achieve success, especially in war.

- I've just been explaining the basic principles of strategy to my generals.

sly

Explain

1. adjective

A **sly** look , expression , or remark shows that you know something that other people do not know or that was meant to be a secret .

- His lips were spread in a sly smile.
- He gave me a sly, meaningful look.

2. adjective

If you describe someone as **sly** , you disapprove of them because they keep their feelings or intentions hidden and are clever at deceiving people.

- She is devious and sly and manipulative.
- He's a sly old beggar if ever there was one.

3. on the sly

sunday

Sundays

Explain

1. variable noun

Sunday is the day after Saturday and before Monday .

- I thought we might go for a drive on Sunday.
- Naomi went to church in Granville last Sunday.
- The buses run every 10 minutes even on Sundays.
- It was Sunday afternoon when I got a call from Rob.

sovereign

sovereigns

Explain

1. adjective

A **sovereign** state or country is independent and not under the authority of any other country.

- Lithuania and Armenia signed a treaty in Vilnius recognising each other as independent sovereign states.
- The Federation declared itself to be a sovereign republic.

2. adjective

Sovereign is used to describe the person or institution that has the highest power in a country.

- Sovereign power will continue to lie with the Supreme People's Assembly.

3. countable noun

A **sovereign** is a king , queen , or other royal ruler of a country.

- The British sovereign is also the head of the Church of England.

thought

thoughts

Explain

1. **Thought** is the past tense and past participle of think .

2. countable noun

A **thought** is an idea that you have in your mind .

- The thought of Nick made her throat tighten.
- I tormented myself with the thought that life was just too comfortable.
- He pushed the thought from his mind.
- I've just had a thought.

3. plural noun

A person's **thoughts** are their mind, or all the ideas in their mind when they are concentrating on one particular thing.

- I jumped to my feet so my thoughts wouldn't start to wander.
- Usually at this time our thoughts are on Christmas.
- If he wasn't there physically, he was always in her thoughts.

4. plural noun

A person's **thoughts** are their opinions on a particular subject.

- Many of you have written to us to express your thoughts on the conflict.
- Mr Goodman, do you have any thoughts on that?

5. uncountable noun

Thought is the activity of thinking, especially deeply, carefully, or logically.

- Alice had been so deep in thought that she had walked past her car without even seeing it.

- He had given some thought to what she had told him.

- After much thought I decided to end my marriage.

- ...the differences between his thought processes and ours.

6. countable noun

A **thought** is an intention, hope , or reason for doing something.

- Sarah's first thought was to run back and get Max.

- They had no thought of surrender.

- Morris has now banished all thoughts of retirement.

7. singular noun

A **thought** is an act of kindness or an offer of help ; used especially when you are thanking someone, or expressing admiration of someone.

- 'Would you like to move into the ward?'—'A kind thought, but no, thank you.'

- 'She has given them this seven hundred pounds.' 'What a lovely thought.'

8. uncountable noun

Thought is the group of ideas and beliefs which belongs, for example , to a particular religion , philosophy , science , or political party .

- Aristotle's scientific theories dominated Western thought for fifteen hundred years.

- This school of thought argues that depression is best treated by drugs.

striking

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **striking** is very noticeable or unusual .

- The most striking feature of those statistics is the high proportion of suicides.
- He bears a striking resemblance to Lenin.
- ...her striking good looks.

2. adjective

Someone who is **striking** is very attractive , in a noticeable way.

- She was a striking woman with long blonde hair.

throat

throats

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **throat** is the back of your mouth and the top part of the tubes that go down into your stomach and your lungs .

- She had a sore throat.
- As she stared at him, she felt her throat go dry.

2. countable noun

Your **throat** is the front part of your neck.

- His striped tie was loosened at his throat.

3. to clear your throat

4. to ram something down someone's throat

5. at each other's throats

6. to stick in your throat

terrible

Explain

1. adjective

A **terrible** experience or situation is very serious or very unpleasant.

- Tens of thousands more suffered terrible injuries in the world's worst industrial disaster.
- I often have the most terrible nightmares.
- Prison life, he told me, was terrible.

2. graded adjective

If you **feel terrible** , you feel extremely ill or unhappy . If you tell someone that they **look terrible** , you mean that they look as if they are extremely ill or unhappy.

- He did feel terrible at the time but seems to be fine now.
- Are you all right? You look terrible. Are you sick?

3. adjective

If something is **terrible** , it is very bad or of very poor quality.

- She admits her French is terrible.

4. adjective

You use **terrible** to emphasize the great extent or degree of something.

- I was a terrible fool, you know. I remember that now.
- Her death is a terrible waste.

thursday

Thursdays

Explain

1. variable noun

Thursday is the day after Wednesday and before Friday .

- On Thursday Barrett invited me for a drink.
- The local elections will be held this Thursday.
- We go and do the weekly shopping every Thursday morning.
- I'm always terribly busy on Thursdays.
- We go and do the weekly shopping every Thursday morning.

timid

Explain

1. adjective

Timid people are shy, nervous , and have no courage or confidence in themselves.

- A timid child, Isabella had learned obedience at an early age.

2. adjective

If you describe someone's attitudes or actions as **timid** , you are criticizing them for being too cautious or slow to act, because they are nervous about the possible consequences of their actions.

- The President's critics say he has been too timid in responding to changing international developments.
- The newspaper called the plan timid and unimaginative.

tremble

trembles trembling trembled

Explain

1. verb

If you **tremble** , you shake slightly because you are frightened or cold. **Tremble** is also a noun .

- His mouth became dry, his eyes widened, and he began to tremble all over.
- Gil was white and trembling with anger.
- With trembling fingers, he removed the camera from his pocket.
- I will never forget the look on the patient's face, the tremble in his hand.

2. verb

If something **trembles** , it shakes slightly.

- He felt the earth tremble under him.
- The leaves trembled in the trees.

3. verb

If your voice **trembles** , it sounds unsteady and uncertain , usually because you are upset or nervous . **Tremble** is also a noun.

- His voice trembled, on the verge of tears.
- 'Please understand this,' she began, a tremble in her voice.

valuable

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **valuable** , you mean that they are very useful and helpful .

- Many of our teachers also have valuable academic links with Heidelberg University.
- Here are a few valuable tips that will help you look your best.

- *The experience was very valuable.*

2. adjective

Valuable objects are objects which are worth a lot of money.

- *Just because a camera is old does not mean it is valuable.*
- *...valuable books.*

tuesday

Tuesdays

Explain

1. variable noun

Tuesday is the day after Monday and before Wednesday .

- *He phoned on Tuesday, just before you came.*
- *Talks are likely to start next Tuesday.*
- *On Tuesdays and Saturdays the market comes to town.*
- *They left Zeebrugge on Tuesday evening.*

visible

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **visible** , it can be seen .

- *The warning lights were clearly visible.*
- *They found a bacterium visible to the human eye.*
- *The meadows are hardly visible from the house.*

2. adjective

You use **visible** to describe something or someone that people notice or recognize .

- *The most visible sign of the intensity of the crisis is unemployment.*
- *He was making a visible effort to control himself.*
- *She has become a highly visible artist.*

3. adjective

In economics , **visible** earnings are the money that a country makes as a result of producing goods, rather than from services such as banking and tourism .

- *In the U.K. visible imports have traditionally been greater than visible exports.*

wednesday

Wednesdays

Explain

1. variable noun

Wednesday is the day after Tuesday and before Thursday .

- *Come and have supper with us on Wednesday, if you're free.*
- *Did you happen to see her leave last Wednesday?*
- *David always collects Alistair from school on Wednesdays.*
- *On a Wednesday afternoon, the shop was shut.*

visual

visuals

Explain

1. adjective

Visual means relating to sight , or to things that you can see.

- ...the graphic visual depiction of violence.
- ...music, film, dance, and the visual arts.
- ...visual jokes.

2. countable noun

A **visual** is something such as a picture , diagram , or piece of film that is used to show or explain something.

- Remember you want your visuals to reinforce your message, not detract from what you are saying.

week

weeks

Explain

1. countable noun

A **week** is a period of seven days. Some people consider that a week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday.

- I had a letter from my mother last week.
- This has been on my mind all week.
- I know a wonderful restaurant where we can have lunch next week.

2. countable noun

A **week** is a period of about seven days.

- Her mother stayed for another two weeks.
- Only 12 weeks ago he underwent major heart transplant surgery.
- Three million people will visit theatres in the annual six-week season.

3. countable noun

Your working **week** is the hours that you spend at work during a week.

- It is not unusual for women to work a 40-hour week.
- ...workers on a three-day week.

4. singular noun

The week is the part of the week that does not include Saturday and Sunday.

- ...the hard work of looking after the children during the week.
- They arrived at the weekend and gave three concerts in the week.

5. countable noun

You use **week** in expressions such as 'a week on Monday', 'a week next Tuesday ', and 'tomorrow week' to mean exactly one week after the day that you mention .

- The deadline to publish the document is a week tomorrow.
- The 800 metre final is on Monday week.

6. countable noun

You use **week** in expressions such as 'a week last Monday', 'a week ago this Tuesday', and 'a week ago yesterday ' to mean exactly one week before the day that you mention.

- She returned home to Leicestershire a week last Sunday.

7. week in week out

abrupt

Explain

1. adjective

An **abrupt** change or action is very sudden, often in a way which is unpleasant .

- Rosie's idyllic world came to an abrupt end when her parents' marriage broke up.
- The recession brought an abrupt halt to this happiness.
- His abrupt departure is bound to raise questions.

2. adjective

Someone who is **abrupt** speaks in a rather rude , unfriendly way.

- He was abrupt to the point of rudeness.
- Cross was a little taken aback by her abrupt manner.

assurance

assurances

Explain

1. variable noun

If you give someone an **assurance** *that* something is true or will happen , you say that it is definitely true or will definitely happen, in order to make them feel less worried .

- He would like an assurance that other forces will not move into the territory.
- ...the assurance of being loved and valued as a member of the household.

2. uncountable noun

If you do something **with assurance** , you do it with a feeling of confidence and certainty.

- Masur led the orchestra with assurance.
- The E.U. is now acquiring greater assurance and authority.

3. uncountable noun

Assurance is insurance that provides cover in the event of death.

- ...endowment assurance.

adverse

Explain

1. adjective

Adverse decisions , conditions, or effects are unfavourable to you.

- The police said Mr Hadfield's decision would have no adverse effect on the progress of the investigation.
- Despite the adverse conditions, the road was finished in just eight months.

autumn

autumns

Explain

1. variable noun

Autumn is the season between summer and winter when the weather becomes cooler and the leaves fall off the trees.

- We are always plagued by wasps in autumn.
- A final vote will take place next autumn.
- ...in the autumn of 2000.
- Her hair was the colour of autumn leaves.

alive

Explain

1. adjective

If people or animals are **alive** , they are not dead .

- She does not know if he is alive or dead.
- They kept her alive on a life support machine.

2. adjective

If you say that someone seems **alive** , you mean that they seem to be very lively and to enjoy everything that they do.

- Our relationship made me feel more alive.
- I never expected to feel so alive in my life again.

3. adjective

If an activity , organization , or situation is **alive** , it continues to exist or function .

- The big factories are trying to stay alive by cutting costs.
- Both communities have a tradition of keeping history alive.

4. adjective

If a place is **alive with** something, there are a lot of people or things there and it seems busy or exciting .

- The river was alive with birds.
- The street was alive with the sounds of the soldiers.

5. adjective

If you are **alive to** a situation or problem , you are aware of it and realize how important it is.

- You must be alive to opportunity!
- He was alive to what he was doing.

6. come alive

7. come/bring alive

8. to be eaten alive

9. alive and kicking

10. alive and well

banana

bananas

Explain

1. variable noun

Bananas are long curved fruit with yellow skins .

- ...a bunch of bananas.

2. adjective

If someone is behaving in a silly or crazy way, or if they become extremely angry , you can say that they are going **bananas** .

- People went bananas with boredom.
- Adamson's going to go bananas on this one.

apt

Explain

1. adjective

An **apt** remark , description , or choice is especially suitable.

- The words of this report are as apt today as in 1929.
- ...an apt description of the situation.

2. adjective

If someone is **apt to** do something, they often do it and so it is likely that they will do it again.

- She was apt to raise her voice and wave her hands about.
- This type of weather is apt to be more common in winter.

bowling

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Bowling is a game in which you roll a heavy ball down a narrow track towards a group of wooden objects and try to knock down as many of them as possible .

- I go bowling for relaxation.

2. uncountable noun

In a sport such as cricket , **bowling** is the action or activity of bowling the ball towards the batsman.

beautiful

Explain

1. adjective

A **beautiful** person is very attractive to look at.

- She was a very beautiful woman.
- To me he is the most beautiful child in the world.

2. adjective

If you describe something as **beautiful** , you mean that it is very attractive or pleasing.

- New England is beautiful.
- It was a beautiful morning.
- He has beautiful manners.

3. adjective

You can describe something that someone does as **beautiful** when they do it very skilfully.

- That's a beautiful shot!

cap

caps capping capped

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cap** is a soft, flat hat with a curved part at the front which is called a peak. Caps are usually worn by men and boys .

- ...a dark-blue baseball cap.

2. countable noun

A **cap** is a special hat which is worn as part of a uniform .

- ...a frontier guard in olive-grey uniform and a peaked cap.

3. verb

If a sports player **is capped** , they are chosen to represent their country in a team game such as football , rugby , or cricket .

- Rees, 32, has been capped for England 23 times.
- ...England's most capped rugby union player.

4. countable noun

If a sports player represents their country in a team game such as football, rugby, or cricket, you can say that they have been awarded a **cap** .

- He will win his first cap for Wales in Sunday's Test match against Australia.

5. countable noun

You can refer to someone who is representing their country for the first time in a team game such as football, rugby, or cricket, as a new **cap** .

- New Zealand - who have one new cap - won last year's fixture 29-9.

6. verb

If the government **caps** an organization, council , or budget , it limits the amount of money that the organization or council is allowed to spend , or limits the size of the budget.

- The Secretary of State for Environment has the power to cap councils which spend excessively.

- Nearly half of all local councils face being capped.

7. countable noun

The **cap** of a bottle is its lid.

- She unscrewed the cap of her water bottle and gave him a drink.

8. countable noun

A **cap** is a circular rubber device that a woman places inside her vagina to prevent herself from becoming pregnant .

9. verb

If you **cap** one thing **with** another, you put the other thing on top.

- They had capped the roof with plywood.
- ...homemade scones capped with cream.

10. verb

If someone says that a good or bad event **caps** a series of events, they mean it is the final event in the series, and the other events were also good or bad.

- The win capped a fine tournament for the Irish team.

11. verb

If someone's teeth **are capped** , covers are fixed over them so that they look better .

- He suddenly smiled, revealing teeth that had recently been capped.
- I had my teeth capped.

12. countable noun

A **cap** is a small amount of explosive that is wrapped in paper. Caps are often used in toy guns .

13. cap in hand

brave

braver bravest braves braving braved

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **brave** is willing to do things which are dangerous , and does not show fear in difficult or dangerous situations .

- He was not brave enough to report the loss of the documents.
- ...those brave people who dared to challenge the Stalinist regimes.

2. verb

If you **brave** unpleasant or dangerous conditions, you deliberately expose yourself to them, usually in order to achieve something.

- Thousands have braved icy rain to demonstrate their support.

3. countable noun

A **brave** is a young Native American man, especially one who is good at fighting .

4. put on a brave face/put a brave face on

category

categories

Explain

1. countable noun

If people or things are divided into **categories** , they are divided into groups in such a way that the members of each group are similar to each other in some way.

- This book clearly falls into the category of fictionalised autobiography.

- The tables were organised into six different categories.
- Designer wedding dresses make wedding fashion a separate category from mainstream fashion.

crazy

crazier craziest crazies

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **crazy**, you think they are very foolish or strange.

- People thought they were all crazy to try to make money from manufacturing.
- That's why he's got so caught up with this crazy idea about Mr. Trancas.
- ...that crazy, mixed-up world out there.

2. adjective

Someone who is **crazy** is insane. **Crazy** is also a noun.

- If I sat home and worried about all this stuff, I'd go crazy.
- He strides around the room beaming like a crazy man.
- Outside, mumbling, was one of New York's ever-present crazies.

3. adjective

If you are **crazy about** something, you are very enthusiastic about it. If you are **not crazy about** something, you do not like it. **Crazy** is also a combining form.

- He's still crazy about both his work and his hobbies.

- I'm also not crazy about the initial terms of the deal.

- This city is football-crazy and deserves a top side.

4. adjective

If you are **crazy about** someone, you are deeply in love with them.

- None of that matters, because we're crazy about each other.

5. adjective

If something or someone makes you **crazy** or drives you **crazy**, they make you extremely annoyed or upset.

- This sitting around is driving me crazy.
- When Jock woke up and found you gone he went crazy.

6. like crazy

champagne

champagnes

Explain

1. variable noun

Champagne is an expensive French white wine with bubbles in. It is often drunk to celebrate something.

2. champagne corks pop

delicious

Explain

1. adjective

Food that is **delicious** has a very pleasant taste.

- *There's always a wide selection of delicious meals to choose from.*

- *Pecan nuts are delicious both raw and cooked.*

2. adjective

*If you describe something as **delicious** , you mean that it is very pleasant.*

- *There is a delicious irony in all this.*
- *...that delicious feeling of surprise.*

complication

complications

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **complication** is a problem or difficulty that makes a situation harder to deal with.*

- *The age difference was a complication to the relationship.*
- *An added complication is the growing concern for the environment.*

2. countable noun

*A **complication** is a medical problem that occurs as a result of another illness or disease.*

- *Blindness is a common complication of diabetes.*
- *He died of complications from a heart attack.*

dense

denser densest

Explain

1. adjective

*Something that is **dense** contains a lot of things or people in a small area.*

- *Where Bucharest now stands, there once was a large, dense forest.*
- *Its fur is short, dense and silky.*
- *They thrust their way through the dense crowd.*

2. adjective

***Dense** fog or smoke is difficult to see through because it is very heavy and dark.*

- *A dense column of smoke rose several miles into the air.*

3. adjective

*In science , a **dense** substance is very heavy in relation to its volume .*

- *...a small dense star.*

4. graded adjective

*If you describe writing or a film as **dense** , you mean that it is difficult to understand because it contains a lot of information and ideas .*

- *His prose is vigorous and dense, occasionally to the point of obscurity.*

5. adjective

*If you say that someone is **dense** , you mean that you think they are stupid and that they take a long time to understand simple things.*

- *He's not a bad man, just a bit dense.*

conservation

Explain

1. uncountable noun

***Conservation** is saving and protecting the environment.*

- ...a four-nation regional meeting on elephant conservation.
- ...tree-planting and other conservation projects.

2. uncountable noun

Conservation is saving and protecting historical objects or works of art such as paintings, sculptures, or buildings.

- The second image was discovered during conservation of the painting.

3. uncountable noun

The **conservation** of a supply of something is the careful use of it so that it lasts for a long time.

- ...projects aimed at promoting energy conservation.
- ...rules concerning the conservation of fishery resources.

different

Explain

1. adjective

If two people or things are **different**, they are not like each other in one or more ways. In British English, people sometimes say that one thing is **different to** another. Some people consider this use to be incorrect. People sometimes say that one thing is **different than** another. This use is often considered incorrect in British English, but it is acceptable in American English.

- London was different from most European capitals.
- If he'd attended music school, how might things have been different?
- We have totally different views.

- My approach is totally different to his.
- We're not really any different than they are.
- ...a style of advertising that's different than the rest of the country.

2. adjective

You use **different** to indicate that you are talking about two or more separate and distinct things of the same kind.

- Different countries specialised in different products.
- The number of calories in different brands of drinks varies enormously.

3. adjective

You can describe something as **different** when it is unusual and not like others of the same kind.

- This recipe is certainly interesting and different.

convenience

conveniences

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If something is done for your **convenience**, it is done in a way that is useful or suitable for you.

- He was happy to make a detour for her convenience.
- ...the need to put the rights of citizens above the convenience of elected officials.

2. countable noun

If you describe something as a **convenience**, you mean that it is very useful.

- Mail order is a convenience for buyers who are too busy to shop.

3. countable noun

Conveniences are pieces of equipment designed to make your life easier .

- ...21st-century conveniences such as a bath-room for each of its two bedrooms.
- ...an apartment with all the modern conveniences.

4. countable noun

A public **convenience** is a building containing toilets which is provided in a public place for anyone to use.

- ...the cubicles of a public convenience.

divine

divines divining divined

Explain

1. adjective

You use **divine** to describe something that is provided by or relates to a god or goddess .

- He suggested that the civil war had been a divine punishment.
- ...divine inspiration.

2. countable noun

A **divine** is a priest who specializes in the study of God and religion.

3. graded adjective

People use **divine** to express their pleasure or enjoyment of something.

- 'Isn't it divine?' she said. 'I wish I had the right sort of brooch to lend you for it.'
- Darling how lovely to see you, you look simply divine.

4. verb

If you **divine** something, you discover or learn it by guessing.

- ...the child's ability to divine the needs of its parents and respond to them.
- From this he divined that she did not like him much.

5. verb

If you **divine** , you try to find underground supplies of water or minerals , using a special rod or pair of rods.

- The only reason I was divining for water was because of the drought.
- ...a divining rod.

duplicate

duplicates duplicating duplicated

Explain

1. verb

If you **duplicate** something that has already been done , you repeat or copy it. **Duplicate** is also a noun .

- His task will be to duplicate his success overseas here at home.
- Scientists hope that their findings may be duplicated elsewhere.
- Charles scored again, with an exact duplicate of his first goal.

2. verb

To **duplicate** something which has been written , drawn , or recorded onto tape means to make exact copies of it. **Duplicate** is also a noun.

- She found Ned alone in the photocopy room, duplicating some articles.

- ...a business which duplicates video and cinema tapes for the movie makers.
- I'm on my way to Switzerland, but I've lost my card. I've got to get a duplicate.

3. adjective

Duplicate is used to describe things that have been made as an exact copy of other things, usually in order to serve the same purpose .

- He let himself in with a duplicate key.
- ...a duplicate copy of the loan contract.

flexible

Explain

1. adjective

A **flexible** object or material can be bent easily without breaking.

- ...brushes with long, flexible bristles.

2. adjective

Something or someone that is **flexible** is able to change easily and adapt to different conditions and circumstances as they occur.

- Look for software that's flexible enough for a range of abilities.
- ...flexible working hours.

easter

Easters

Explain

1. variable noun

Easter is a Christian festival when Jesus Christ's return to life is celebrated. It is celebrated on a Sunday in March or April .

- 'Happy Easter,' he yelled.

- ...the first Easter morning.

2. variable noun

Easter is the period of several days around and including Easter Sunday.

- They usually have a walking holiday at Easter.
- She spends her Easter holidays taking groups of children to France.
- The government declared Easter Monday a public holiday.

front

fronts fronting fronted

Explain

1. countable noun

The front of something is the part of it that faces you, or that faces forward, or that you normally see or use.

- One man sat in an armchair, and the other sat on the front of the desk.
- Stand at the front of the line.
- Her cotton dress had ripped down the front.

2. countable noun

The front of a building is the side or part of it that faces the street.

- Attached to the front of the house, there was a large veranda.

3. singular noun

A person's or animal's **front** is the part of their body between their head and their legs that is on the opposite side to their back.

- *If you lie your baby on his front, he'll lift his head and chest up.*
4. adjective
Front is used to refer to the side or part of something that is towards the front or nearest to the front.
- *I went out there on the front porch.*
 - *She was only six and still missing her front teeth.*
 - *Children may be tempted to climb into the front seat while the car is in motion.*
5. adjective
The **front** page of a newspaper is the outside of the first page, where the main news stories are printed.
- *The Guardian's front page carries a photograph of the two foreign ministers.*
 - *The story made the front page of most of the newspapers.*
6. singular noun
The front is a road next to the sea in a seaside town.
- *...a stroll on the front.*
 - *Amy went out for a last walk along the sea front.*
7. countable noun
In a war, the **front** is a line where two opposing armies are facing each other.
- *Sonja's husband is fighting at the front.*
8. countable noun
If you say that something is happening on a particular **front**, you mean that it is happening with regard to a particular situation or field of activity.
- *...research across a wide academic front.*
 - *We're moving forward on a variety of fronts.*
9. countable noun
If someone puts on a particular kind of **front**, they pretend to have a particular quality.
- *Michael kept up a brave front both to the world and in his home.*
 - *His laugh-a-minute image is just a front to hide his deep unhappiness.*
10. countable noun
An organization or activity that is a **front** for one that is illegal or secret is used to hide it.
- *...a firm later identified by the police as a front for crime syndicates.*
 - *He said the present civilian government is just a front for the old military regime.*
11. countable noun
In relation to the weather, a **front** is a line where a mass of cold air meets a mass of warm air.
- *The snow signaled the arrival of a front, and a high-pressure area seemed to be settling in.*
 - *A very active cold front brought dramatic weather changes to Kansas on Wednesday.*
12. noun, in names
Front is often used in the titles of political organizations with a particular aim.
- *...the People's Liberation Front.*
13. verb
A building or an area of land that **fronts** a particular place or **fronts onto** it is next to it and faces it.

- ...real estate, which includes undeveloped land fronting the city convention center.
- There are some delightful Victorian houses fronting onto the pavement.
- ...quaint cottages fronted by lawns and flowerbeds.

14. verb

The person who **fronts** an organization is the most senior person in it.

- He fronted a formidable band of fighters.
- The public relations operation has been fronted by Mr Hayward.

15. verb

The person who **fronts** a pop group or rock band is the main singer.

- She didn't want to be seen as a token woman fronting a band.
- Queen were three great musicians fronted by a showman of genius.

16. in front

17. in front

18. in front of

19. in front of

20. on the home front/on the domestic front

fuse

fuses fusing fused

Explain

1. countable noun

A **fuse** is a safety device in an electric plug or circuit. It contains a piece of wire which melts when there is a fault so that the flow of electricity stops .

- The fuse blew as he pressed the button to start the motor.
- Remove the circuit fuse before beginning electrical work.

2. verb

When an electric device **fuses** or when you **fuse** it, it stops working because of a fault.

- The wire snapped at the wall plug and the light fused.
- Rainwater had fused the bulbs.

3. countable noun

A **fuse** is a device on a bomb or firework which delays the explosion so that people can move a safe distance away .

- A bomb was deactivated at the last moment, after the fuse had been lit.

4. verb

When things **fuse** or **are fused** , they join together physically or chemically, usually to become one thing. You can also say that one thing **fuses** with another.

- The skull bones fuse between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five.
- Conception occurs when a single sperm fuses with an egg.
- Manufactured glass is made by fusing various types of sand.
- Their solution was to isolate specific clones of B cells and fuse them with cancer cells.

- The flakes seem to fuse together and produce ice crystals.

5. verb

If something **fuses** two different qualities, ideas, or things, or if they **fuse**, they join together, especially in order to form a pleasing or satisfactory combination.

- His music fused the rhythms of jazz with classical forms.
- They have fused two different types of entertainment, the circus and the rock concert.
- Past and present fuse.

6. blow a fuse

7. light the fuse

8. on a short fuse/have a short fuse

gracious

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone, especially someone you think is superior to you, as **gracious**, you mean that they are very well-mannered and pleasant.

- She is a lovely and gracious woman.

2. adjective

If you describe the behaviour of someone in a position of authority as **gracious**, you mean that they behave in a polite and considerate way.

- She closed with a gracious speech of thanks.

3. adjective

You use **gracious** to describe the comfortable way of life of wealthy people.

- He drove through the gracious suburbs with the swimming pools and tennis courts.

4. good gracious

gravity

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Gravity is the force which causes things to drop to the ground.

- Arrows would continue to fly forward forever were it not for gravity, which brings them down to earth.

2. uncountable noun

The **gravity** of a situation or event is its extreme importance or seriousness.

- They deserve punishment which matches the gravity of their crime.
- Not all acts of vengeance are of equal gravity.

3. uncountable noun

The **gravity** of someone's behaviour or speech is the extremely serious way in which they behave or speak.

- There was an appealing gravity to everything she said.

guarantee

guarantees guaranteeing guaranteed

Explain

1. verb

If one thing **guarantees** another, the first is certain to cause the second thing to happen.

- Surplus resources alone do not guarantee growth.
- ...a man whose fame guarantees that his calls will nearly always be returned.

2. countable noun

Something that is a **guarantee of** something else makes it certain that it will happen or that it is true .

- A famous old name on a firm is not necessarily a guarantee of quality.
- There is still no guarantee that a formula could be found.

3. verb

If you **guarantee** something, you promise that it will definitely happen, or that you will do or provide it for someone. **Guarantee** is also a noun .

- Most states guarantee the right to free and adequate education.
- All students are guaranteed campus accommodation for their first year.
- We guarantee that you will find a community with which to socialise.
- We guarantee to refund your money if you are not delighted with your purchase.
- ...a guaranteed income of £3.6 million.
- The Editor can give no guarantee that they will fulfil their obligations.
- California's state Constitution includes a guarantee of privacy.

4. countable noun

A **guarantee** is a written promise by a company to replace or repair a product free of charge if it has any faults within a particular time.

- Whatever a guarantee says, if something is faulty, you can still claim your rights from the shop.
- It was still under guarantee.

5. verb

If a company **guarantees** its product or work, they provide a guarantee for it.

- Some builders guarantee their work.
- All Dreamland's electric blankets are guaranteed for three years.
- ... parts of guaranteed quality.

6. countable noun

A **guarantee** is money or something valuable which you give to someone to show that you will do what you have promised.

- They had to leave a deposit as a guarantee of returning to do their military service.

gross

grosser grossest grosses grossing grossed

Explain

1. adjective

You use **gross** to describe something unacceptable or unpleasant to a very great amount, degree , or intensity .

- The company were guilty of gross negligence.
- ...an act of gross injustice.

2. adjective

If you say that someone's speech or behaviour is **gross** , you think it is very rude or unacceptable.

- He abused the Admiral in the grossest terms.
- I feel disgusted and wonder how I could ever have been so gross.

3. adjective

If you describe something as **gross** , you think it is very unpleasant.

- *I spat them out because they tasted so gross.*
- *He wears really gross holiday outfits.*

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **gross** , you mean that they are extremely fat and unattractive .

- *I only resist things like chocolate if I feel really gross.*

5. adjective

Gross means the total amount of something, especially money, before any has been taken away . **Gross** is also an adverb .

- *...a fixed rate account guaranteeing 10.4*
- *Interest is paid gross, rather than having tax deducted.*
- *...a father earning £20,000 gross a year.*

6. adjective

Gross means the total amount of something, after all the relevant amounts have been added together.

- *National Savings gross sales in June totalled £709 million.*

7. adjective

Gross means the total weight of something, including its container or wrapping .

8. verb

If a person or a business **grosses** a particular amount of money, they earn that amount of money before tax has been taken away.

- *I'm a factory worker who grossed £9,900 last year.*
- *So far the films have grossed more than £590 million.*

9. number

A **gross** is a group of 144 things.

- *He ordered twelve gross of the disks.*

importance

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **importance** of something is its quality of being significant , valued, or necessary in a particular situation .

- *We have always stressed the importance of economic reform.*
- *Safety is of paramount importance.*

2. uncountable noun

Importance means having influence , power, or status.

holy

holier holiest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **holy** , you mean that it is considered to be special because it is connected with God or a particular religion .

- *To them, as to all Christians, this is a holy place.*
- *...Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar.*

2. adjective

A **holy** person is a religious leader or someone who leads a religious life.

- *The Indians think of him as a holy man, a combination of doctor and priest.*

3. adjective

Holy is used in exclamations such as 'Holy cow !' and 'Holy smoke !' to express an emotion such as surprise or panic .

insurance

insurances

Explain

1. variable noun

Insurance is an arrangement in which you pay money to a company , and they pay money to you if something unpleasant happens to you, for example if your property is stolen or damaged, or if you get a serious illness .

- The insurance company paid out for the stolen jewellery and silver.
- We recommend that you take out travel insurance on all holidays.

2. variable noun

If you do something as **insurance against** something unpleasant happening , you do it to protect yourself in case the unpleasant thing happens.

- The country needs a defence capability as insurance against the unexpected.

hopeful

hopefuls

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **hopeful** , you are fairly confident that something that you want to happen will happen.

- I am hopeful this misunderstanding will be rectified very quickly.
- Surgeons were hopeful of saving the sight in Sara's left eye.

2. adjective

If something such as a sign or event is **hopeful** , it makes you feel that what you want to happen will happen.

- The result of the election in is yet another hopeful sign that peace could come to the Middle East.

- ...hopeful forecasts that the economy will improve.

3. adjective

A **hopeful** action is one that you do in the hope that you will get what you want to get.

- We've chartered the plane in the hopeful anticipation that the government will allow them to leave.

4. countable noun

If you refer to someone as a **hopeful** , you mean that they are hoping and trying to achieve success in a particular career , election , or competition .

- On the show, young hopefuls are given the opportunity to work in different aspects of the fashion world.

loan

loans loaning loaned

Explain

1. countable noun

A **loan** is a sum of money that you borrow .

- The country has no access to foreign loans or financial aid.
- The president wants to make it easier for small businesses to get bank loans.
- ...loan repayments.

2. singular noun

If someone gives you a **loan of** something, you borrow it from them.

- *I am in need of a loan of a bike for a few weeks.*
- *He had offered the loan of his small villa at Cap Ferrat.*

3. verb

If you **loan** something to someone, you lend it to them. **Loan out** means the same as loan .

- *He had kindly offered to loan us all the plants required for the exhibit.*
- *We were approached by the Royal Yachting Association to see if we would loan our boat to them.*
- *It is common practice for clubs to loan out players to sides in the lower divisions.*
- *The ground was loaned out for numerous events including pop concerts.*

4. on loan

5. on loan

imperial

Explain

1. adjective

Imperial is used to refer to things or people that are or were connected with an empire.

- *...the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.*
- *They executed Russia's imperial family in 1918.*

2. adjective

The **imperial** system of measurement uses inches, feet , and yards to measure length, ounces and pounds to measure weight, and pints and gallons to measure volume .

option

options

Explain

1. countable noun

An **option** is something that you can choose to do in preference to one or more alternatives .

- *He's argued from the start that America and its allies are putting too much emphasis on the military option.*
- *What other options do you have?*

2. singular noun

If you have the **option** of doing something, you can choose whether to do it or not.

- *Criminals are given the option of going to jail or facing public humiliation.*
- *We had no option but to abandon the meeting.*

3. countable noun

In business , an **option** is an agreement or contract that gives someone the right to buy or sell something such as property or shares at a future date.

- *Each bank has granted the other an option on 19.9*

4. countable noun

An **option** is one of a number of subjects which a student can choose to study as a part of his or her course .

- *Several options are offered for the student's senior year.*

5. to keep your options open

6. soft option

impressive

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **impressive** impresses you, for example because it is great in size or degree , or is done with a great deal of skill .

- It is an impressive achievement.
- The film's special effects are particularly impressive.

paragraph

paragraphs

Explain

1. countable noun

A **paragraph** is a section of a piece of writing. A paragraph always begins on a new line and contains at least one sentence .

- The length of a paragraph depends on the information it conveys.
- Paragraph 81 sets out the rules that should apply if a gift is accepted.

indoor

Explain

1. adjective

Indoor activities or things are ones that happen or are used inside a building and not outside.

- No smoking in any indoor facilities.
- ...an indoor market.
- ...indoor plants.

intimate

intimates intimating intimated

Explain

1. adjective

If you have an **intimate** friendship with someone, you know them very well and like them a lot . An **intimate** is an intimate friend.

- I discussed with my intimate friends whether I would immediately have a baby.
- They are to have an autumn wedding, an intimate of the couple confides.

2. adjective

If two people are in an **intimate** relationship, they are involved with each other in a loving or sexual way.

- I just won't discuss my intimate relationships.
- ...their intimate moments with their boyfriends.

3. adjective

An **intimate** conversation or detail , for example , is very personal and private.

- He wrote about the intimate details of his family life.
- I hate to interrupt your intimate conversation but we do have an assignment to discuss.

4. adjective

If you use **intimate** to describe an occasion or the atmosphere of a place, you like it because it is quiet and pleasant , and seems suitable for close conversations between friends.

- ...an intimate candlelit dinner for two.

5. adjective

An **intimate** connection between ideas or organizations , for example, is a very strong link between them.

- ...an intimate connection between madness and wisdom.
- France has kept the most intimate links with its former African territories.

6. adjective

An **intimate** knowledge of something is a deep and detailed knowledge of it.

- He surprised me with his intimate knowledge of Kierkegaard and Schopenhauer.

7. verb

If you **intimate** something, you say it in an indirect way.

- He went on to intimate that he was indeed contemplating a shake-up of the company.
- He had intimated to the French and Russians his readiness to come to a settlement.

perfume

perfumes perfuming perfumed

Explain

1. variable noun

Perfume is a pleasant-smelling liquid which women put on their skin to make themselves smell nice .

- The hall smelled of her mother's perfume.
- ...a bottle of perfume.
- ...the manufacture of soaps and perfumes.

2. variable noun

Perfume is the ingredient that is added to some products to make them smell nice.

- ...a delicate white soap without perfume.

- ...a perfume for skin creams.

3. countable noun

The **perfume** of something is the pleasant smell it has.

- ...the perfume of roses.
- There were two lemon trees and I paused to enjoy their perfume.

4. verb

If the smell of something **perfumes** a place or area, it makes it smell nice.

- Flowers started to perfume the air.
- As they bake, they perfume the whole house with the aroma of apples and spices.
- ...gardens perfumed with jasmine.

5. verb

If something is used to **perfume** a product, it is added to the product to make it smell nice.

- The oil is used to flavour and perfume soaps, foam baths, and scents.
- ...shower gel perfumed with the popular Paris fragrance.

limp

limps limping limped limper limpest

Explain

1. verb

If a person or animal **limps** , they walk with difficulty or in an uneven way because one of their legs or feet is hurt . **Limp** is also a noun .

- I wasn't badly hurt, but I injured my thigh and had to limp.

- *He had to limp off with a leg injury.*
- *A stiff knee following surgery forced her to walk with a limp.*

2. verb

*If you say that something such as an organization, process, or vehicle **limps along**, you mean that it continues slowly or with difficulty, for example because it has been weakened or damaged .*

- *In recent years the newspaper had been limping along on limited resources.*
- *A British battleship, which had been damaged severely in the battle of Crete, came limping into Pearl Harbor.*

3. adjective

*If you describe something as **limp**, you mean that it is soft or weak when it should be firm or strong .*

- *She was told to reject applicants with limp handshakes.*
- *A residue can build up on the hair shaft, leaving the hair limp and dull looking.*

4. adjective

*If someone is **limp**, their body has no strength and is not moving, for example because they are asleep or unconscious .*

- *He carried her limp body into the room and laid her on the bed.*
- *He hit his head against a rock and went limp.*

plantation

plantations

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **plantation** is a large piece of land, especially in a tropical country, where crops such as rubber, coffee, tea, or sugar are grown.*

- *...banana plantations in Costa Rica.*

2. countable noun

*A **plantation** is a large number of trees that have been planted together.*

- *...a plantation of almond trees.*

linguistic

linguistics

Explain

1. adjective

***Linguistic** abilities or ideas relate to language or linguistics.*

- *...linguistic skills.*
- *...linguistic theory.*

2. uncountable noun

***Linguistics** is the study of the way in which language works.*

- *Modern linguistics emerged as a distinct field in the nineteenth century.*
- *...applied linguistics.*

repair

repairs repairing repaired

Explain

1. verb

If you **repair** something that has been damaged or is not working properly, you mend it.

- Goldsmith has repaired the roof to ensure the house is wind-proof.
- The cost of repairing earthquake damage could be more than seven-thousand-million dollars.
- A woman drove her car to the garage to have it repaired.

2. verb

If you **repair** a relationship or someone's reputation after it has been damaged, you do something to improve it.

- The government continued to try to repair the damage caused by the minister's interview.
- The first and most important thing was to repair my relationship with my father.

3. variable noun

A **repair** is something that you do to mend a machine, building, piece of clothing, or other thing that has been damaged or is not working properly.

- Many people don't know how to carry out repairs on their cars.
- Many of the buildings are in need of repair.
- There is no doubt now that her relationship is beyond repair.

4. verb

If someone **repairs to** a particular place, they go there.

- We then repaired to the pavilion for lunch.

5. in good/bad repair

lively

livelier liveliest

Explain

1. adjective

You can describe someone as **lively** when they behave in an enthusiastic and cheerful way.

- She had a sweet, lively personality.
- Josephine was bright, lively and cheerful.

2. adjective

A **lively** event or a **lively** discussion, for example, has lots of interesting and exciting things happening or being said in it.

- It turned out to be a very interesting session with a lively debate.
- Their 4-1 win in Honduras was a particularly lively affair.

3. adjective

Someone who has a **lively** mind is intelligent and interested in a lot of different things.

- She was a very well educated girl with a lively mind, a girl with ambition.
- ...her very lively imagination.

4. graded adjective

A **lively** feeling or awareness is a strong or enthusiastic one.

- The papers also show a lively interest in European developments.

repetition

repetitions

Explain

1. variable noun

If there is a **repetition of** an event, usually an undesirable event, it happens again.

- The government has taken measures to prevent a repetition of last year's confrontation.
- They don't want the repetition of the past mistakes.

2. variable noun

Repetition means using the same words again.

- He could also have cut out much of the repetition and thus saved many pages.

living

livings

Explain

1. countable noun

The work that you do for a **living** is the work that you do in order to earn the money that you need .

- Father never talked about what he did for a living.
- He earns his living doing all kinds of things.

2. uncountable noun

You use **living** when you are talking about the quality of people's daily lives.

- Olivia has always been a model of healthy living.
- ...the stresses of urban living.

3. adjective

You use **living** to talk about the places where people relax when they are not working .

- The spacious living quarters were on the second floor.

- The study links the main living area to the kitchen.

4. plural noun

The living are people who are alive, rather than people who have died .

- The young man is dead. We have only to consider the living.

5. to scrape a living

reservation

reservations

Explain

1. variable noun

If you have **reservations about** something, you are not sure that it is entirely good or right.

- I told him my main reservation about his film was the ending.
- After three days, the strikers' demands were met almost without reservation.

2. countable noun

If you make a **reservation** , you arrange for something such as a table in a restaurant or a room in a hotel to be kept for you.

- He went to the desk to make a reservation.
- Accommodation is restricted so a reservation is essential.

3. countable noun

A **reservation** is an area of land that is kept separate for a particular group of people to live in.

- Seventeen thousand Native Americans live on this reservation.

retention

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **retention** of something is the keeping of it.

- They supported the retention of a strong central government.

musical

musicals

Explain

1. adjective

You use **musical** to indicate that something is connected with playing or studying music.

- We have a wealth of musical talent in this region.
- Stan Getz's musical career spanned five decades.
- London's musical life might become as exciting as Berlin's.

2. countable noun

A **musical** is a play or film that uses singing and dancing in the story .

- ...London's smash hit musical Miss Saigon.

3. adjective

Someone who is **musical** has a natural ability and interest in music.

- I came from a musical family.

4. adjective

Sounds that are **musical** are light and pleasant to hear .

- He had a soft, almost musical voice.

sausage

sausages

Explain

1. variable noun

A **sausage** consists of minced meat, usually pork, mixed with other ingredients and is contained in a tube made of skin or a similar material .

- ...sausages and chips.

mysterious

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **mysterious** is strange and is not known about or understood .

- He died in mysterious circumstances.
- A mysterious illness confined him to bed for over a month.
- The whole thing seems very mysterious.
- He began to feel sympathy for this slightly mysterious man.

2. adjective

If someone is **mysterious** about something, they deliberately do not talk much about it, sometimes because they want to make people more interested in it.

- As for his job—well, he was very mysterious about it.

science

sciences

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Science is the study of the nature and behaviour of natural things and the knowledge that we obtain about them.

- The best discoveries in science are very simple.
- ...science and technology.

2. countable noun

A **science** is a particular branch of science such as physics , chemistry , or biology .

- Physics is the best example of a science which has developed strong, abstract theories.
- ...the science of microbiology.

3. countable noun

A **science** is the study of some aspect of human behaviour, for example sociology or anthropology .

- ...the modern science of psychology.

nervous

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **nervous** , they are frightened or worried about something that is happening or might happen , and show this in their behaviour .

- The party has become deeply nervous about its prospects of winning the next election.
- She described Mr Hutchinson as nervous and jumpy after his wife's disappearance.

2. adjective

A **nervous** person is very tense and easily upset .

- She was apparently a very nervous woman, and that affected her career.

3. adjective

A **nervous** illness or condition is one that affects your emotions and your mental state.

- The number of nervous disorders was rising in the region.
- He developed nervous problems after people began repeatedly correcting him.

scientist

scientists

Explain

1. countable noun

A **scientist** is someone who has studied science and whose job is to teach or do research in science.

- Scientists have collected more data than expected.

nice

nicer nicest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **nice** , you mean that you find it attractive , pleasant, or enjoyable.

- I think silk ties can be quite nice.
- It's nice to be here together again.
- We had a nice meal with a bottle of champagne.

2. adjective

If you say that it is **nice of** someone to say or do something, you are saying that they are being kind and thoughtful . This is often used as a way of thanking someone.

- It's awfully nice of you to come all this way to see me.
- 'How are your boys?'—'How nice of you to ask.'
- This has been so nice, so terribly kind of you.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **nice** , you mean that you like them because they are friendly and pleasant.

- I've met your father and he's rather nice.
- He was a nice fellow, very quiet and courteous.

4. adjective

If you are **nice to** people, you are friendly, pleasant, or polite towards them.

- She met Mr and Mrs Ricciardi, who were very nice to her.

5. adjective

When the weather is **nice** , it is warm and pleasant.

- He nodded to us and said, 'Nice weather we're having.'

6. adjective

You can use **nice** to emphasize a particular quality that you like.

- Once they are a nice dark golden brown, turn them over.
- People have got used to nice glossy magazines.

- Add the oats to thicken the mixture and stir until it is nice and creamy.

- I'll explain it nice and simply so you can understand.

7. adjective

A **nice** point or distinction is very clear , precise, and based on good reasoning .

- Those are nice academic arguments, but what about the immediate future?

8. adjective

You can use **nice** when you are greeting people. For example , you can say ' **Nice to meet you** ' ; ' **Nice to have met you** ' , or ' **Nice to see you** ' .

- Good morning. Nice to meet you and thanks for being with us this weekend.

- 'It's so nice to see you,' said Charles.

9. nice one

seed

seeds seeding seeded

Explain

1. variable noun

A **seed** is the small, hard part of a plant from which a new plant grows .

- ...a packet of cabbage seed.
- I sow the seed in pots of soil-based compost.
- ...sunflower seeds.

2. verb

If you **seed** a piece of land , you plant seeds in it.

- Men mowed the wide lawns and seeded them.

- *The primroses should begin to seed themselves down the steep hillside.*
 - *...his newly seeded lawns.*
3. plural noun
You can refer to the **seeds of** something when you want to talk about the beginning of a feeling or process that gradually develops and becomes stronger or more important .
- *He raised questions meant to plant seeds of doubts in the minds of jurors.*
 - *He considered that there were, in these developments, the seeds of a new moral order.*
4. countable noun
In sports such as tennis or badminton , a **seed** is a player who has been ranked according to his or her ability .
- *...He is Wimbledon's top seed and the world No.1.*
 - *In the final, the third seed defeated the reigning champion.*
5. verb
When a player or a team **is seeded** in a sports competition , they are ranked according to their ability.
- *In the UEFA Cup the top 16 sides are seeded for the first round.*
 - *He could be seeded second at the French Open.*
 - *The top four seeded nations are through to the semi-finals.*
6. go to seed
7. to go to seed/run to seed

outdoor

Explain

1. adjective

Outdoor activities or things happen or are used outside and not in a building.

- *If you enjoy outdoor activities, this is the trip for you.*
- *There were outdoor cafes on almost every block.*

segment

segments segmenting segmented

Explain

1. countable noun

A **segment of** something is one part of it, considered separately from the rest .

- *...the poorer segments of society.*
- *...the third segment of his journey.*

2. countable noun

A **segment** of fruit such as an orange or grapefruit is one of the sections into which it is easily divided.

3. countable noun

A **segment** of a circle is one of the two parts into which it is divided when you draw a straight line through it.

4. countable noun

A **segment** of a market is one part of it, considered separately from the rest.

- *Three-to-five day cruises are the fastest-growing segment of the market.*
- *Women's tennis is the market leader in a growing market segment—women's sports.*

5. verb

If a company **segments** a market, it divides it into separate parts, usually in order to improve marketing opportunities .

- The big multinational companies can segment the world markets into national ones.

outstanding

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **outstanding** , you think that they are very remarkable and impressive .

- Derartu is an outstanding athlete and deserved to win.
- ...an area of outstanding natural beauty.
- He was outstanding at tennis and golf.

2. adjective

Money that is **outstanding** has not yet been paid and is still owed to someone.

- The total debt outstanding is 70 billion. You have to pay your outstanding bill before joining the scheme.

3. adjective

Outstanding issues or problems have not yet been resolved .

- We still have some outstanding issues to resolve.

4. adjective

Outstanding means very important or obvious .

- The company is an outstanding example of a small business that grew into a big one.
- His mother, whose influence on his development was outstanding, came of a distinguished American family.

selection

selections

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Selection is the act of selecting one or more people or things from a group.

- ...Darwin's principles of natural selection.
- Dr. Sullivan's selection to head the Department of Health was greeted with satisfaction.
- The children have to sit a tough selection test.

2. countable noun

A **selection of** people or things is a set of them that have been selected from a larger group.

- ...this selection of popular songs.
- ...a dramatic rendition of selections from Dickens' A Christmas Carol.

3. countable noun

The **selection of** goods in a shop is the particular range of goods that it has available and from which you can choose what you want .

- It offers the widest selection of antiques of every description in a one-day market.

prime

primes priming primed

Explain

1. adjective

You use **prime** to describe something that is most important in a situation .

- Political stability, meanwhile, will be a prime concern.

- It could be a **prime** target for guerrilla attack.
- The police will see me as the **prime** suspect!
- She is the **prime** candidate to take over his job.

2. adjective

You use **prime** to describe something that is of the best possible quality.

- It was one of the City's **prime** sites, near the Stock Exchange.

3. adjective

You use **prime** to describe an example of a particular kind of thing that is absolutely typical .

- Marianne North was a **prime** example of Victorian womanhood of the more adventurous kind.

4. uncountable noun

If someone or something is **in** their **prime** , they are at the stage in their existence when they are at their strongest , most active , or most successful .

- Maybe I'm just coming into my **prime** now.
- She was in her intellectual **prime**.
- We've had a series of athletes trying to come back well past their **prime**.
- ...young persons in the **prime** of life.

5. verb

If you **prime** someone **to** do something, you prepare them to do it, for example by giving them information about it beforehand.

- Claire wished she'd **primed** Sarah beforehand.
- Arnold **primed** her for her duties.

- The press corps was **primed** to leap to the defense of the fired officials.

6. verb

If someone **primes** a bomb or a gun, they prepare it so that it is ready to explode or fire .

- He was **priming** the bomb to go off in an hour's time.
- Tom keeps a **primed** 10-foot shotgun in his office.

slipper

slippers

Explain

1. countable noun

Slippers are loose , soft shoes that you wear at home .

prominent

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **prominent** is important .

- ...a **prominent** member of the Law Society.
- ...the children of very **prominent** or successful parents.

2. adjective

Something that is **prominent** is very noticeable or is an important part of something else.

- Here the window plays a **prominent** part in the design.
- ...Romania's most **prominent** independent newspaper.

sort

sorts sorting sorted

Explain

1. countable noun

If you talk about a particular **sort of** something, you are talking about a class of things that have particular features in common and that belong to a larger group of related things.

- What sort of school did you go to?
- There are so many different sorts of mushrooms available these days.
- A dozen trees of various sorts were planted.
- He had a nice, serious sort of smile.
- That's just the sort of abuse that he will be investigating.
- Eddie was playing a game of some sort.
- It is the last time I will take on this sort of work.
- Let's have some more articles of this sort.

2. singular noun

You describe someone as a particular **sort** when you are describing their character.

- He seemed to be just the right sort for the job.
- She was a very vigorous sort of person.
- What sort of men were they?

3. verb

If you **sort** things, you separate them into different classes, groups, or places, for example so that you can do different things with them.

- He sorted the materials into their folders.

- The students are sorted into three ability groups.
- He unlatched the box and sorted through the papers.
- I sorted the laundry.

4. verb

If you get a problem or the details of something **sorted**, you do what is necessary to solve the problem or organize the details.

- I'm trying to get my script sorted.
- These problems have now been sorted.

5. all sorts

6. of sorts/a sort

7. sort of

8. out of sorts

sacred

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **sacred** is believed to be holy and to have a special connection with God.

- The owl is sacred for many Californian Indian people.
- ...shrines and sacred places.

2. adjective

Something connected with religion or used in religious ceremonies is described as **sacred**.

- ...sacred art.
- ...sacred songs or music.

3. adjective

You can describe something as **sacred** when it is regarded as too important to be changed or interfered with.

- My memories are sacred.
- He said the unity of the country was sacred.

technology

technologies

Explain

1. variable noun

Technology refers to methods, systems, and devices which are the result of scientific knowledge being used for practical purposes .

- Technology is changing fast.
- They should be allowed to wait for cheaper technologies to be developed.
- ...nuclear weapons technology.

steep

steeper steepest steps steeping steeped

Explain

1. adjective

A **steep** slope rises at a very sharp angle and is difficult to go up.

- San Francisco is built on 40 hills and some are very steep.
- ...a narrow, steep-sided valley.

2. adjective

A **steep** increase or decrease in something is a very big increase or decrease.

- Consumers are rebelling at steep price increases.

3. adjective

If you say that the price of something is **steep** , you mean that it is expensive .

- The annual premium can be a little steep, but will be well worth it if your dog is injured.

4. verb

To **steep** food **in** a liquid means to put the food in the liquid for some time so that the food gets flavour from the liquid.

- It's a drink made by steeping pineapple rind in water.
- ...green beans steeped in olive oil.

tribe

tribes

Explain

1. countable noun

Tribe is sometimes used to refer to a group of people of the same race , language, and customs , especially in a developing country. Some people disapprove of this use.

- ...three-hundred members of the Xhosa tribe.
- ...a map of Maryland marked with the names of Indian tribes.

2. countable noun

You can use **tribe** to refer to a group of people who are all doing the same thing or who all behave in the same way.

- ...tribes of talented young people.

strenuous

Explain

1. adjective

A **strenuous** activity or action involves a lot of energy or effort.

- Avoid strenuous exercise in the evening.
- These trips were strenuous, and the couple did not enjoy them.
- Strenuous efforts had been made to improve conditions in the jail.
- Despite strenuous objections by the right wing, the grant was agreed.

3. countable noun

A **variety of** something is a type of it.

- I'm always pleased to try out a new variety.
- She has 12 varieties of old-fashioned roses.

4. uncountable noun

Variety is a type of entertainment which includes many different kinds of acts in the same show .

- ...a variety show of music, comedy, and magic.

variety

varieties

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If something has **variety** , it consists of things which are different from each other.

- Susan's idea of freedom was to have variety in her lifestyle.
- I know no store anywhere in the world that has such variety and display.
- The music itself has so much variety.

2. singular noun

A **variety of** things is a number of different kinds or examples of the same thing.

- West Hampstead has a variety of good shops and supermarkets.
- The island offers such a wide variety of scenery and wildlife.
- People change their mind for a variety of reasons.

urgent

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **urgent** , it needs to be dealt with as soon as possible .

- There is an urgent need for food and water.
- He had urgent business in New York.

2. adjective

If you speak in an **urgent** way, you show that you are anxious for people to notice something or to do something.

- His voice was low and urgent.
- His mother leaned forward and spoke to him in urgent undertones.

weight

weights weighting weighted

Explain

1. variable noun

The **weight** of a person or thing is how heavy they are, measured in units such as kilograms, pounds, or tons .

- What is your height and weight?
- This reduced the weight of the load.
- Turkeys can reach enormous weights of up to 50 pounds.

2. uncountable noun

A person's or thing's **weight** is the fact that they are very heavy.

- His weight was harming his health.
- Despite the vehicle's size and weight, it is not difficult to drive.

3. singular noun

If you move your **weight** , you change position so that most of the pressure of your body is on a particular part of your body.

- He shifted his weight from one foot to the other.
- He kept the weight from his left leg.

4. countable noun

Weights are objects which weigh a known amount and which people lift as a form of exercise .

- I was in the gym lifting weights.

5. countable noun

Weights are metal objects which weigh a known amount and which are used on a set of scales to weigh other things.

6. countable noun

You can refer to a heavy object as a **weight** , especially when you have to lift it.

- Straining to lift heavy weights can lead to a rise in blood pressure.

7. verb

If you **weight** something, you make it heavier by adding something to it, for example in order to stop it from moving easily .

- It can be sewn into curtain hems to weight the curtain and so allow it to hang better.

8. verb

If you **weight** things, you give them different values according to how important or significant they are.

- ...a computer program which weights the different transitions according to their likelihood.
- Responses were weighted by region to more accurately reflect the population. .

9. variable noun

If something is given a particular **weight** , it is given a particular value according to how important or significant it is.

- The scientists involved put different weight on the conclusions of different models.
- We had this understanding that courses were roughly the same weight.

10. uncountable noun

If you talk about **the weight of** something, you mean that it is large in amount or has great power, which means that it is difficult to oppose or fight against.

- The weight of expectation was getting to them.
- Companies found themselves collapsing under the weight of debts.

11. uncountable noun

If someone or something gives **weight** to what a person says , thinks , or does, they emphasize its significance .

- The fact that he is gone has given more weight to fears that he may try to launch a civil war.
- Do you think, perhaps, that what happened today might lend weight to that criticism?

12. uncountable noun

If you give something or someone **weight** , you consider them to be very important or influential in a particular situation.

13. ...the overwhelming weight Freud assigned parents in our development.

- This might have been avoided had ministers placed more weight on scientific advice.
- ...the overwhelming weight Freud assigned parents in our development.

singular noun

If you feel a **weight** on you, you have a problem or a responsibility that is difficult for you to manage and that you are very worried about.

- The relief was indescribable. A great weight lifted from me.

to carry weight

worth your weight in gold

to pull your weight

to throw your weight about

throw one's weight behind

absent

absents absenting absented

Explain

1. adjective

If someone or something is **absent from** a place or situation where they should be or where they usually are, they are not there.

- He has been absent from his desk for two weeks.
- The pictures, too, were absent from the walls.
- Evans was absent without leave from his Hong Kong-based regiment.

2. adjective

If someone appears **absent** , they are not paying attention because they are thinking about something else.

- 'Nothing,' Rosie said in an absent way.

3. adjective

An **absent** parent does not live with his or her children.

- ...absent fathers who fail to pay towards the costs of looking after their children.

4. verb

If someone **absents themselves from** a place where they should be or where they usually are, they do not go there or they do not stay there.

- She was old enough to absent herself from the lunch table if she chose.
- He pleaded guilty before a court martial to absenting himself without leave.

5. preposition

If you say that **absent** one thing, another thing will happen , you mean that if the first thing does not happen, the second thing will happen.

- Absent a solution, people like Sue Godfrey will just keep on fighting.

appetite

appetites

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **appetite** is your desire to eat .

- He has a healthy appetite.
- Symptoms are a slight fever, headache and loss of appetite.

2. countable noun

Someone's **appetite for** something is their strong desire for it.

- ...his appetite for success.
- ...Americans' growing appetite for scandal.
- She gave him just enough information to whet his appetite.

3. adjective

An **absolute** ruler has complete power and authority over his or her country.

- He ruled with absolute power.
- ...the doctrine of absolute monarchy based upon divine right.

4. adjective

Absolute is used to say that something is definite and will not change even if circumstances change.

- John brought the absolute proof that we needed.
- They had given an absolute assurance that it would be kept secret.

5. adjective

An amount that is expressed in **absolute** terms is expressed as a fixed amount rather than referring to variable factors such as what you earn or the effects of inflation .

- In absolute terms British wages remain low by European standards.

6. adjective

Absolute rules and principles are believed to be true , right, or relevant in all situations.

- There are no absolute rules.
- ...certain assumptions which are accepted without question as absolute truths.

7. countable noun

An **absolute** is a rule or principle that is believed to be true, right, or relevant in all situations.

- We tend to think in absolutes.

absolute

absolutes

Explain

1. adjective

Absolute means total and complete.

- It's not really suited to absolute beginners.
- A sick person needs absolute confidence and trust in a doctor.

2. adjective

You use **absolute** to emphasize something that you are saying .

- About 12 inches wide is the absolute minimum you should consider.
- I think it's absolute nonsense.

bait

baits baiting baited

Explain

1. variable noun

Bait is food which you put on a hook or in a trap in order to catch fish or animals.

2. verb

If you **bait** a hook or trap, you put bait on it or in it.

- He baited his hook with pie.
- The boys dug pits and baited them so that they could spear their prey.
- ...baited lures.

3. variable noun

To use something as **bait** means to use it to trick or persuade someone to do something.

- Service stations use petrol as a bait to lure drivers into the restaurants and other facilities.
- Television programmes are essentially bait to attract an audience for advertisements.

4. verb

If you **bait** someone, you deliberately try to make them angry by teasing them.

- He delighted in baiting his mother.

5. take the bait

anonymous

Explain

1. adjective

If you remain **anonymous** when you do something, you do not let people know that you were the person who did it.

- You can remain anonymous if you wish.

- An anonymous benefactor stepped in to provide the prize money.

- ...anonymous phone calls.

2. adjective

Something that is **anonymous** does not reveal who you are.

- Of course, that would have to be by anonymous vote.

3. adjective

If you describe a place as **anonymous**, you dislike it because it has no unusual or interesting features and seems unwelcoming.

- ...the most anonymous part of north-west Washington.
- It's nice to stay in a home rather than in an anonymous holiday villa.

basin

basins

Explain

1. countable noun

A **basin** is a large or deep bowl that you use for holding liquids, or for mixing or storing food. A **basin of** something such as water is an amount of it that is contained in a basin.

- Place the eggs and sugar in a large basin.
- ...a pudding basin.
- We were given a basin of water to wash our hands in.

2. countable noun

A **basin** is the same as a washbasin.

- ...a cast-iron bath with a matching basin and WC.

3. countable noun

The **basin** of a large river is the area of land around it from which streams run down into it.

- ...the Amazon basin.

4. countable noun

In geography , a **basin** is a particular region of the world where the earth's surface is lower than in other places.

- ...countries around the Pacific Basin.

5. countable noun

A **basin** is a partially enclosed area of deep water where boats or ships are kept .

bankrupt

bankrupts bankrupting bankrupted

Explain

1. adjective

People or organizations that go **bankrupt** do not have enough money to pay their debts.

- If the firm cannot sell its products, it will go bankrupt.
- He was declared bankrupt after failing to pay a £114m loan guarantee.

2. verb

To **bankrupt** a person or organization means to make them go bankrupt.

- The move to the market nearly bankrupted the firm and its director.
- Uninsured people can be bankrupted by big medical bills.

3. countable noun

A **bankrupt** is a person who has been declared bankrupt by a court of law .

4. adjective

If you say that something is **bankrupt** , you are emphasizing that it lacks any value or worth .

- He really thinks that European civilisation is morally bankrupt.

biscuit

biscuits

Explain

1. countable noun

A **biscuit** is a small flat cake that is crisp and usually sweet.

2. countable noun

A **biscuit** is a small round dry cake that is made with baking powder , baking soda , or yeast .

3. to take the biscuit

better

betters bettering bettered

Explain

1. **Better** is the comparative of good .

2. **Better** is the comparative of well2 .

3. adverb

If you like one thing **better than** another, you like it more.

- I like your interpretation better than the one I was taught.
- I'd like nothing better than to join you girls.
- They liked it better when it rained.

4. adjective

If you are **better** after an illness or injury , you have recovered from it. If you feel **better** , you no longer feel so ill .

- He is much better now, he's fine.
- The doctors were saying there wasn't much hope of me getting better.

5. phrase

You use **had better** or **'d better** when you are advising , warning , or threatening someone, or expressing an opinion about what should happen . In spoken English , people sometimes use **better** without 'had' or 'be' before it. It has the same meaning .

- It's half past two. I think we had better go home.
- You'd better run if you're going to get your ticket.
- He'd better not try to fool me.
- You better not say too much aloud.

6. pronoun

If you say that you expect or deserve **better** , you mean that you expect or deserve a higher standard of achievement , behaviour , or treatment from people than they have shown you.

- We expect better of you in the future.
- Our long-suffering mining communities deserve better than this.

7. plural noun

Your **bettors** are people who have a higher status or rank than you do.

- Sit down and be quiet in front of your elders and bettors.

8. verb

If someone **bettors** a high achievement or standard, they achieve something higher.

- He recorded a time of 4 minutes 23, bettering the old record of 4-24.
- As an account of adolescence it could hardly be bettered.

9. verb

If you **better** your situation , you improve your social status or the quality of your life . If you **better yourself** , you improve your social status.

- Others dreamed of owning land and of bettering their social position.
- Our parents chose to come here with the hope of bettering themselves.

10. **Better** is used to form the comparative of compound adjectives beginning with ' good ' and ' well .' For example , the comparative of ' well-off ' is 'better-off.'

11. be better doing sth/it is better doing sth

12. to change for the better

13. to get the better of sb

14. to get the better of sb

15. to know better

16. to know better

17. be better off

18. go one better

19. that's better

20. so much the better

21. the bigger/sooner/smaller etc the better

22. the better to do sth

23. to think better of it

24. for better or worse

bonus

bonuses

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bonus** is an extra amount of money that is added to someone's pay, usually because they have worked very hard .

- Workers receive a large part of their pay in the form of bonuses and overtime.
- ...a £15 bonus.
- ...a special bonus payment.

2. countable noun

A **bonus** is something good that you get in addition to something else, and which you would not usually expect.

- We felt we might finish third. Any better would be a bonus.
- It has the added bonus of containing 30 per cent less fat than ordinary cheese.

3. countable noun

A **bonus** is a sum of money that an insurance company pays to its policyholders, for example a percentage of the company's profits.

- These returns will not be enough to meet the payment of annual bonuses to policyholders.

circular

circulars

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **circular** is shaped like a circle.

- ...a circular hole twelve feet wide and two feet deep.

- Using a circular motion, massage gently.

2. adjective

A **circular** journey or route is one in which you go to a place and return by a different route.

- Both sides of the river can be explored on this circular walk.

3. adjective

A **circular** argument or theory is not valid because it uses a statement to prove something which is then used to prove the statement.

4. countable noun

A **circular** is an official letter or advertisement that is sent to a large number of people at the same time.

- The proposal has been widely publicised in information circulars sent to newspapers.

cake

cakes caking caked

Explain

1. variable noun

A **cake** is a sweet food made by baking a mixture of flour, eggs, sugar, and fat in an oven . Cakes may be large and cut into slices or small and intended for one person only.

- ...a piece of cake.
- Would you like some chocolate cake?
- ...little cakes with white icing.

2. countable noun

Food that is formed into flat round shapes before it is cooked can be referred to as **cakes** .

- ...fish cakes.

- ...home-made potato cakes.

3. countable noun

A **cake of** soap is a small block of it.

- ...a small cake of lime-scented soap.

4. verb

If something such as blood or mud **cakes** , it changes from a thick liquid to a dry layer or lump .

- The blood had begun to cake and turn brown.

5. to have your cake and eat it

6. to sell like hot cakes

7. a piece of cake

8. take the cake

compact

compacts compacting compacted

Explain

1. adjective

Compact things are small or take up very little space. You use this word when you think this is a good quality.

- ...my compact office in Washington.
- ...the new, more compact Czech government.

2. adjective

A **compact** person is small but strong .

- He was compact, probably no taller than me.
- He looked physically very powerful, athletic in a compact way.

3. adjective

A **compact** cassette , camera , or car is a small type of cassette, camera, or car.

4. verb

To **compact** something means to press it so that it becomes more solid.

- The Smith boy was compacting the trash.
- The soil settles and is compacted by the winter rain.

5. countable noun

A **compact** is a small, flat case that contains face powder and a mirror.

canoe

canoes

Explain

1. countable noun

A **canoe** is a small, narrow boat that you move through the water using a stick with a wide end called a paddle.

confidential

Explain

1. adjective

Information that is **confidential** is meant to be kept secret or private.

- She accused them of leaking confidential information about her private life.
- We'll take good care and keep what you've told us strictly confidential, Mr. Lane.

2. adjective

If you talk to someone in a **confidential** way, you talk to them quietly because what you are saying is secret or private.

- *All of this is delivered in a warm, confidential tone.*
- *His face suddenly turned solemn, his voice confidential.*

captive

captives

Explain

1. adjective

A **captive** person or animal is being kept imprisoned or enclosed . A **captive** is someone who is captive.

- *Her heart had begun to pound inside her chest like a captive animal.*
- *He described the difficulties of surviving for four months as a captive.*

2. adjective

A **captive** audience is a group of people who are not free to leave a certain place and so have to watch or listen . A **captive** market is a group of people who cannot choose whether or where to buy things.

- *We all performed dances before a captive audience of parents and patrons.*
- *Airlines consider business travellers a captive market.*

3. take sb captive/hold sb captive

deadly

deadlier deadliest

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **deadly** , it is likely or able to cause someone's death, or has already caused someone's death.

- *He was acquitted on charges of assault with a deadly weapon.*
- *...a deadly disease currently affecting dolphins.*
- *Passive smoking can be deadly too.*
- *The authorities are looking into last week's deadly gas explosions.*

2. adjective

If you describe a person or their behaviour as **deadly** , you mean that they will do or say anything to get what they want , without caring about other people.

- *His mother's voice was one he knew; ice cold and deadly.*
- *The Duchess levelled a deadly look at Nikko.*

3. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **deadly** , you mean that you think they are very dull and boring.

- *She finds these parties deadly.*

4. adverb

You can use **deadly** to emphasize that something has a particular quality, especially an unpleasant or undesirable quality.

- *Broadcast news was accurate and reliable but deadly dull.*
- *The north wind was bitter and deadly cold.*
- *The United States had been deadly serious in its threat of military action.*

5. adjective

A **deadly** situation has unpleasant or dangerous consequences .

- ...the deadly combination of low expectations and low achievement.
- It is here that most students fall into a subtle and deadly trap.

6. adjective

Deadly enemies or rivals fight or compete with each other in a very aggressive way.

- The two became deadly enemies.
- That would make the competition between rival suppliers even deadlier.

7. graded adjective

In sport , **deadly** players and actions are extremely skilful and successful .

- ...the fastest and deadliest bowlers in world cricket today.

client

clients

Explain

1. countable noun

A **client** of a professional person or organization is a person or company that receives a service from them in return for payment .

- ...a solicitor and his client.
- The company required clients to pay substantial fees in advance.

destructive

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **destructive** causes or is capable of causing great damage , harm , or injury .

- ...the awesome destructive power of nuclear weapons.
- Guilt can be very destructive.

emperor

emperors

Explain

1. countable noun

An **emperor** is a man who rules an empire or is the head of state in an empire.

earnest

Explain

1. in earnest

2. adjective

Earnest people are very serious and sincere in what they say or do, because they think that their actions and beliefs are important.

- Ella was a pious, earnest woman.
- His expression is as earnest when he smiles as when he is arguing.
- Despite their earnest efforts, they still struggle to win support.

3. in earnest

envelope

envelopes

Explain

1. countable noun

An **envelope** is the rectangular paper cover in which you send a letter to someone through the post .

2. push the envelope

elderly

Explain

1. adjective

You use **elderly** as a polite way of saying that someone is old. **The elderly** are people who are old. This use could cause offence .

- ...an elderly couple.
- Many of those most affected are elderly.
- The elderly are a formidable force in any election.

2. graded adjective

If you describe an object as **elderly** , you are referring , often in a humorous way, to the fact that it is rather old or old-fashioned and not as good or efficient as a new one would be.

- Some of those artillery pieces look a little elderly.

escape

escapes escaping escaped

Explain

1. verb

If you **escape from** a place, you succeed in getting away from it.

- A prisoner has escaped from a jail in northern England.
- They are reported to have escaped to the other side of the border.
- He was fatally wounded as he tried to escape.

2. countable noun

Someone's **escape** is the act of escaping from a particular place or situation.

- The man made his escape.

3. verb

You can say that you **escape** when you survive something such as an accident . **Escape** is also a noun .

- The two officers were extremely lucky to escape serious injury.
- The man's girlfriend managed to escape unhurt.
- He narrowly escaped with his life when he was attacked by a bear.
- I hear you had a very narrow escape on the bridge.

4. countable noun

If something is an **escape** , it is a way of avoiding difficulties or responsibilities .

- But for me television is an escape.
- ...an escape from the depressing realities of wartime.

5. adjective

You can use **escape** to describe things which allow you to avoid difficulties or problems . For example, an **escape route** is an activity or opportunity that lets you improve your situation. An **escape clause** is part of an agreement that allows you to avoid having to do something that you do not want to do.

- We all need the occasional escape route from the boring, routine aspects of our lives.
- This is a wonderful escape clause for dishonest employers everywhere.

6. verb

If something **escapes** you or **escapes** your attention , you do not know about it, do not remember it, or do not notice it.

- It was an actor whose name escapes me for the moment.

7. verb

When gas, liquid, or heat **escapes** , it comes out from a pipe , container, or place.

- Leave a vent open to let some moist air escape.

enthusiastic

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **enthusiastic about** something, you show how much you like or enjoy it by the way that you behave and talk .

- Tom was very enthusiastic about the place.
- He knew much about pictures and fine furniture, and was an enthusiastic gardener.

faith

faiths

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you have **faith in** someone or something, you feel confident about their ability or goodness .

- She had placed a great deal of faith in Mr Penleigh.
- People have lost faith in the British Parliament.

2. countable noun

A **faith** is a particular religion, for example Christianity , Buddhism , or Islam .

- He established a reputation as a steadfast defender of the Catholic faith.

3. uncountable noun

Faith is strong religious belief in a particular God.

- Umberto Eco's loss of his own religious faith is reflected in his novels.

4. break faith with

5. in good faith

6. keep faith with

fatal

Explain

1. adjective

A **fatal** action has very undesirable effects.

- She knew it was fatal to try to argue with Stephen.
- He made the fatal mistake of compromising early.
- It would deal a fatal blow to his fading chances of success.

2. adjective

A **fatal** accident or illness causes someone's death.

- ...the fatal stabbing of a police sergeant.
- A hospital spokesman said she had suffered a fatal heart attack.

food

foods

Explain

1. variable noun

Food is what people and animals eat.

- Enjoy your food.
- ...supplies of food and water.
- ...emergency food aid.
- ...frozen foods.

2. be off your food

3. food for thought

genuine

Explain

1. adjective

Genuine is used to describe people and things that are exactly what they appear to be, and are not false or an imitation .

- He is an inspiration and a genuine hero.
- ...genuine leather.
- They're convinced the picture is genuine.

2. adjective

Genuine refers to things such as emotions that are real and not pretended.

- There was genuine joy in this room.

- If this offer is genuine I will gladly accept it.

3. adjective

If you describe a person as **genuine** , you approve of them because they are honest , truthful , and sincere in the way they live and in their relationships with other people.

- She is very caring and very genuine.

fountain

fountains

Explain

1. countable noun

A **fountain** is an ornamental feature in a pool or lake which consists of a long narrow stream of water that is forced up into the air by a pump .

2. countable noun

A **fountain of** a liquid is an amount of it which is sent up into the air and falls back .

- The volcano spewed a fountain of molten rock 650 feet in the air.

3. countable noun

If you describe a person or thing as a **fountain of** something, you mean they are an important source of it and supply a lot of it.

- You are a fountain of ideas.

gradual

Explain

1. adjective

A **gradual** change or process occurs in small stages over a long period of time, rather than suddenly .

- *Losing weight is a slow, gradual process.*
- *You can expect her progress at school to be gradual rather than brilliant.*

future

futures

Explain

1. singular noun

The future is the period of time that will come after the present , or the things that will happen then.

- *The spokesman said no decision on the proposal was likely in the immediate future.*
- *He was making plans for the future.*
- *I had little time to think about what the future held for me.*

2. adjective

Future things will happen or exist after the present time.

- *By taking action now we can ensure that future generations will not be put at risk.*
- *...a report on the future role of local government.*
- *...the future King and Queen.*

3. countable noun

Someone's **future** , or **the future of** something, is what will happen to them or what they will do after the present time.

- *His future as prime minister depends on the outcome of the elections.*
- *Graeme is a supremely talented cricketer with a splendid future in the game.*

- *...a proposed national conference on the country's political future.*
- *Young people are an investment for our future.*

4. countable noun

If you say that someone or something has **a future** , you mean that they are likely to be successful or to survive .

- *These abandoned children have now got a future.*
- *There's no future in this relationship.*

5. plural noun

When people trade in **futures** , they buy stocks and shares , commodities such as coffee or oil , or foreign currency at a price that is agreed at the time of purchase for items which are delivered some time in the future.

- *This report could spur some buying in corn futures when the market opens today.*
- *Futures prices recovered from sharp early declines to end with moderate losses.*

6. adjective

In grammar , the **future** tense of a verb is the one used to talk about things that are going to happen. In English, this applies to verb groups consisting of 'will' or 'shall' and the base form of a verb. The **future perfect** tense of a verb is used to talk about things that will have happened at some time in the future.

7. in (the) future

8. what the future holds

9. sb's future lies swb

hostile

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **hostile to** another person or an idea , you disagree with them or disapprove of them, often showing this in your behaviour .

- Many people felt he would be hostile to the idea of foreign intervention.
- The West has gradually relaxed its hostile attitude to this influential state.
- The Governor faced hostile crowds when he visited the town yesterday.

2. adjective

Someone who is **hostile** is unfriendly and aggressive .

- They usually relate in a cold and hostile way to the world.
- The prisoner eyed him in hostile silence.

3. adjective

Hostile situations and conditions make it difficult for you to achieve something.

- ...some of the most hostile climatic conditions in the world.
- The world's trading environment is likely to become increasingly hostile.

4. adjective

A **hostile** takeover bid is one that is opposed by the company that is being bid for.

- The Malaysian tycoon launched a hostile bid.

5. adjective

In a war, you use **hostile** to describe your enemy's forces, organizations, weapons , land, and activities.

- The city is encircled by a hostile army.
- They were in hostile territory.
- ...hostile aircraft.

ghost

ghosts ghosting ghosted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **ghost** is the spirit of a dead person that someone believes they can see or feel .

- ...the ghost of Marie Antoinette.
- The village is haunted by the ghosts of the dead children.

2. countable noun

The **ghost of** something, especially of something bad that has happened , is the memory of it.

- The Rams have finally laid the ghost of seasons past to rest.
- ...the ghost of anti-Americanism.

3. singular noun

If there is a **ghost of** something, that thing is so faint or weak that it hardly exists.

- He gave the ghost of a smile.
- The sun was warm and there was just a ghost of a breeze from the north-west.

4. verb

If a book or other piece of writing **is ghosted** , it is written by a writer for another person, for example a politician or sportsman , who then publishes it as his or her own work.

- I published his autobiography, which was very competently ghosted by a woman journalist from the Daily Mail.

- *I ghosted his weekly rugby column for the Telegraph.*

5. *a ghost of a chance*

6. *to give up the ghost*

lower

lowers lowering lowered

Explain

1. adjective

You can use **lower** to refer to the bottom one of a pair of things.

- *She bit her lower lip.*
- *...the lower deck of the bus.*
- *The upper layer of felt should overlap the lower.*
- *...the lower of the two holes.*

2. adjective

You can use **lower** to refer to the bottom part of something.

- *Use a small cushion to help give support to the lower back.*
- *...fires which started in the lower part of a tower block.*

3. adjective

You can use **lower** to refer to people or things that are less important than similar people or things.

- *Already the awards are causing resentment in the lower ranks of council officers.*
- *The nation's highest court reversed the lower court's decision.*

- *The higher orders of society must rule the lower.*

4. verb

If you **lower** something, you move it slowly downwards .

- *Two reporters had to help lower the coffin into the grave.*
- *Sokolowski lowered himself into the black leather chair.*
- *'No movies of me getting out of the pool, boys.' They dutifully lowered their cameras.*

5. verb

If you **lower** something, you make it less in amount, degree , value, or quality.

- *The bank has lowered interest rates by 2 per-cent.*
- *This drug lowers cholesterol levels by binding fats in the intestine.*

6. verb

If someone **lowers** their head or eyes, they look downwards, for example because they are sad or embarrassed .

- *She lowered her head and brushed past photographers as she went back inside.*
- *She lowered her gaze to the hands in her lap.*

7. verb

If you say that you would not **lower yourself** by doing something, you mean that you would not behave in a way that would make you or other people respect you less.

- *Don't lower yourself, don't be the way they are.*
- *I've got no qualms about lowering myself to Lemmer's level to get what I want.*

8. verb

If you **lower** your voice or if your voice **lowers** , you speak more quietly .

- The man moved closer, lowering his voice.
- His voice lowers confidentially.

grocer

grocers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **grocer** is a shopkeeper who sells foods such as flour , sugar , and tinned foods.

2. countable noun

A **grocer** or a **grocer's** is a shop where foods such as flour, sugar, and tinned foods are sold.

malignant

Explain

1. adjective

A **malignant** tumour or disease is out of control and likely to cause death .

- She developed a malignant breast tumour.

2. adjective

If you say that someone is **malignant** , you think they are cruel and like to cause harm.

- He said that we were evil, malignant and mean.
- ...a community over-run by a malignant minority indulging in crime and violence.

minor

minors minoring minored

Explain

1. adjective

You use **minor** when you want to describe something that is less important, serious , or significant than other things in a group or situation.

- She is known in Italy for a number of minor roles in films.
- Western officials say the problem is minor, and should be quickly overcome.

2. adjective

A **minor** illness or operation is not likely to be dangerous to someone's life or health .

- Sarah had been plagued continually by a series of minor illnesses.
- His mother had to go to the hospital for minor surgery.

3. adjective

In European music, a **minor** scale is one in which the third note is three semitones higher than the first.

- ...the unfinished sonata movement in F minor.

4. countable noun

A **minor** is a person who is still legally a child. In Britain and most states in the United States, people are minors until they reach the age of eighteen .

- The approach has virtually ended cigarette sales to minors.

5. countable noun

At a university or college in the United States, a student's **minor** is a subject that they are studying in addition to their main subject, or major.

6. countable noun

At a university or college in the United States, if a student is, for example, a geology **minor** , they are studying geology as well as their main subject.

7. verb

If a student at a university or college in the United States **minors in** a particular subject, they study it in addition to their main subject.

- *I'm minoring in computer science.*

lawyer

lawyers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lawyer** is a person who is qualified to advise people about the law and represent them in court.

- *Prosecution and defense lawyers are expected to deliver closing arguments next week.*

mortal

mortals

Explain

1. adjective

If you refer to the fact that people are **mortal**, you mean that they have to die and cannot live for ever.

- *A man is deliberately designed to be mortal. He grows, he ages, and he dies.*

2. countable noun

You can describe someone as a **mortal** when you want to say that they are an ordinary person.

- *Tickets seem unobtainable to the ordinary mortal.*
- *...impossible needs for any mere mortal to meet.*

3. adjective

You can use **mortal** to show that something is very serious or may cause death.

- *The police were defending themselves and others against mortal danger.*
- *Broadcasting was regarded at the time as the mortal enemy of live music-making.*

4. adjective

You can use **mortal** to emphasize that a feeling is extremely great or severe.

- *When self-esteem is high, we lose our mortal fear of jealousy.*

letter

letters lettering lettered

Explain

1. countable noun

If you write a **letter** to someone, you write a message on paper and send it to them, usually by post.

- *I had received a letter from a very close friend.*
- *...a letter of resignation.*
- *Our long courtship had been conducted mostly by letter.*

2. countable noun

Letters are written symbols which represent one of the sounds in a language.

- *...the letters of the alphabet.*
- *...the letter E.*

3. countable noun

If a student earns a **letter** in sports or athletics by being part of the university or college team

, they are entitled to wear on their jacket the initial letter of the name of their university or college.

- Valerie earned letters in three sports: volleyball, basketball, and field hockey.

4. verb

If a student **letters** in sports or athletics by being part of the university or college team, they are entitled to wear on their jacket the initial letter of the name of their university or college.

- Burkoth lettered in soccer.

5. the letter of the law

6. to the letter

naughty

naughtier naughtiest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that a child is **naughty**, you mean that they behave badly or do not do what they are told.

- Girls, you're being very naughty.
- You naughty boy, you gave me such a fright.

2. adjective

You can describe books, pictures, or words as **naughty** when they are slightly rude or related to sex.

- You know what little boys are like with naughty words.
- ...saucy TV shows, crammed full of naughty innuendo.

lion

lions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lion** is a large wild member of the cat family that is found in Africa. Lions have yellowish fur, and male lions have long hair on their head and neck.

next

Explain

1. ordinal number

The **next** period of time, event, person, or thing is the one that comes immediately after the present one or after the previous one.

- I got up early the next morning.
- ...the next available flight.
- Who will be the next prime minister?
- I want my next child born at home.
- Many senior citizens have very few visitors from one week to the next.
- And then Captain Charles sings, 'Don't ever laugh when a hearse goes by or you will be the next to die.'

2. determiner

You use **next** in expressions such as **next Friday**, **next day** and **next year** to refer, for example, to the first Friday, day, or year that comes after the present or previous one. **Next** is also an adjective. **Next** is also a pronoun.

- Let's plan a big night next week.
- He retires next January.

- *Next day the E.U. summit strengthened their ultimatum.*

- *I shall be 26 years old on Friday next.*

- *He predicted the region's economy would grow both this year and next.*

3. adjective

The next place or person is the one that is nearest to you or that is the first one that you come to.

- *Grace sighed so heavily that Trish could hear it in the next room.*
- *The man in the next chair was asleep.*
- *Stop at the next corner. I'm getting out.*

4. adverb

The thing that happens **next** is the thing that happens immediately after something else.

- *Next, close your eyes then screw them up tight.*
- *I don't know what to do next.*
- *The news is next.*

5. adverb

When you **next** do something, you do it for the first time since you last did it.

- *I next saw him at his house in Berkshire.*
- *When we next met, he was much more jovial.*

6. adverb

You use **next** to say that something has more of a particular quality than all other things except one. For example, the thing that is **next** best is the one that is the best except for one other thing.

- *He didn't have a son; I think he felt that a grandson is the next best thing.*

- *At least three times more daffodils are grown than in Holland, the next largest grower.*

7. *after next*

8. *as the next*

9. *the next thing sb knows*

10. *next to*

11. *next to*

12. *next to*

medal

medals

Explain

1. countable noun

A **medal** is a small metal disc which is given as an award for bravery or as a prize in a sporting event.

nuclear

Explain

1. adjective

Nuclear means relating to the nuclei of atoms, or to the energy released when these nuclei are split or combined .

- *...a nuclear power station.*
- *...nuclear energy.*
- *...nuclear physics.*

2. adjective

Nuclear means relating to weapons that explode by using the energy released when the nuclei of atoms are split or combined.

- *They rejected a demand for the removal of all nuclear weapons from U.K. soil.*
- *...nuclear testing.*

pose

poses posing posed

Explain

1. verb

If something **poses** a problem or a danger , it is the cause of that problem or danger.

- This could pose a threat to jobs in the coal industry.
- His ill health poses serious problems for the future.

2. verb

If you **pose** a question, you ask it. If you **pose** an issue that needs considering , you mention the issue.

- When I finally posed the question, 'Why?' he merely shrugged.
- ...the moral issues posed by new technologies.

3. verb

If you **pose as** someone, you pretend to be that person in order to deceive people.

- Industrial spies posed as flight attendants.

4. verb

If you **pose for** a photograph or painting, you stay in a particular position so that someone can photograph you or paint you.

- Before going into their meeting the six foreign ministers posed for photographs.

5. verb

You can say that people **are posing** when you think that they are behaving in an insincere or exaggerated way because they want to make a particular impression on other people.

- He criticized them for dressing outrageously and posing pretentiously.

6. countable noun

A **pose** is a particular way that you stand , sit , or lie , for example when you are being photographed or painted.

- We have had several preliminary sittings in various poses.

7. countable noun

A **pose** is an insincere or exaggerated way of behaving that is intended to make a particular impression on other people.

- In many writers modesty is a pose, but in Ford it seems to have been genuine.

particular

Explain

1. adjective

You use **particular** to emphasize that you are talking about one thing or one kind of thing rather than other similar ones.

- I remembered a particular story about a postman who was a murderer.
- I have to know exactly why it is I'm doing a particular job.
- ...if there are particular things you're interested in.

2. adjective

If a person or thing has a **particular** quality or possession , it is distinct and belongs only to them.

- I have a particular responsibility to ensure I make the right decision.

3. adjective

You can use **particular** to emphasize that something is greater or more intense than usual .

- Particular emphasis will be placed on oral language training.
4. adjective
If you say that someone is **particular** , you mean that they choose things and do things very carefully, and are not easily satisfied .
- Ted was very particular about the colors he used.
5. in particular
6. nothing in particular

prize

prizes prizing prized

Explain

1. countable noun
A **prize** is money or something valuable that is given to someone who has the best results in a competition or game, or as a reward for doing good work.
- You must claim your prize by phoning our claims line.
 - He won first prize at the Leeds Piano Competition.
 - He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1985.
 - They were going all out for the prize-money, £6,500 for the winning team.
2. adjective
You use **prize** to describe things that are of such good quality that they win prizes or deserve to win prizes.
- ...a prize bull.
 - ...prize blooms.

3. countable noun
You can refer to someone or something as a **prize** when people consider them to be of great value or importance .
- With no lands of his own, he was no great matrimonial prize.
4. verb
Something that **is prized** is wanted and admired because it is considered to be very valuable or very good quality.
- Military figures, made out of lead are prized by collectors.
 - His Fender Stratocaster remains one of his most prized possessions.
5. verb
If you **prize** something open or **prize** it away from a surface , you force it to open or force it to come away from the surface.
- He tried to prize the dog's mouth open.
 - I prised off the metal rim surrounding one of the dials.
 - He held on tight but she prised it from his fingers.
6. verb
If you **prize** something such as information **out of** someone, you persuade them to tell you although they may be very unwilling to.
- Alison and I had to prize conversation out of him.

primitive

Explain

1. adjective
Primitive means belonging to a society in which people live in a very simple way, usually without industries or a writing system.

- ...studies of primitive societies.

- ...primitive tribes.

2. adjective

Primitive means belonging to a very early period in the development of an animal or plant.

- ...primitive whales.
- Primitive humans needed to be able to react like this to escape from dangerous animals.
- It is a primitive instinct to flee a place of danger.

3. adjective

If you describe something as **primitive**, you mean that it is very simple in style or very old-fashioned.

- The conditions are primitive by any standards.
- The primitive surgery of those days left him virtually deaf in one ear.
- It's using some rather primitive technology.

pulse

pulses pulsing pulsed

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **pulse** is the regular beating of blood through your body, which you can feel when you touch particular parts of your body, especially your wrist.

- Mahoney's pulse was racing, and he felt confused.

2. countable noun

In music, a **pulse** is a regular beat, which is often produced by a drum.

- ...the repetitive pulse of the music.

3. countable noun

A **pulse of** electrical current, light, or sound is a temporary increase in its level.

- The switch works by passing a pulse of current between the tip and the surface.

4. singular noun

If you refer to **the pulse of** a group in society, you mean the ideas, opinions, or feelings they have at a particular time.

- I love the way he is so absolutely in tune with the pulse of his audience.

5. verb

If something **pulses**, it moves, appears, or makes a sound with a strong regular rhythm.

- His temples pulsed a little, threatening a headache.
- It was a slow, pulsing rhythm that seemed to sway languidly in the air.

6. plural noun

Some seeds which can be cooked and eaten are called **pulses**, for example peas, beans, and lentils.

7. finger on the pulse

8. take someone's pulse/feel someone's pulse

real

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **real** actually exists and is not imagined, invented, or theoretical.

- No, it wasn't a dream. It was real.

- Legends grew up around a great many figures, both real and fictitious.
2. adjective
If something is **real to** someone, they experience it as though it really exists or happens, even though it does not.
- Whitechild's life becomes increasingly real to the reader.
3. adjective
A material or object that is **real** is natural or functioning, and not artificial or an imitation.
- ...the smell of real leather.
 - Who's to know if they're real guns or not?
 - Desmond did not believe the diamond was real.
4. adjective
You can use **real** to describe someone or something that has all the characteristics or qualities that such a person or thing typically has.
- ...his first real girlfriend.
 - He's not a real artist.
 - The only real job I'd ever had was as manager of the local cafe.
5. adjective
You can use **real** to describe something that is the true or original thing of its kind, in contrast to one that someone wants you to believe is true.
- This was the real reason for her call.
 - Her real name had been Miriam Pinckus.
6. adjective
You can use **real** to describe something that is the most important or typical part of a thing.
- When he talks, he only gives glimpses of his real self.
- The smart executive has people he can trust doing all the real work.
 - ...a solo journey to discover the real America.
7. adjective
You can use **real** when you are talking about a situation or feeling to emphasize that it exists and is important or serious.
- Global warming is a real problem.
 - The prospect of civil war is very real.
 - There was never any real danger of the children being affected.
 - Political defeat seemed a real possibility at the end of 1981.
 - At least they have a real chance to find work.
8. adjective
You can use **real** to emphasize a quality that is genuine and sincere.
- You've been drifting from job to job without any real commitment.
 - I thought we were the team who showed real determination to win.
9. adjective
You can use **real** before nouns to emphasize your description of something or someone.
- 'It's a fabulous deal, a real bargain.'
 - 'You must think I'm a real idiot.'
10. adjective
The **real** cost or value of something is its cost or value after other amounts have been added or subtracted and when factors such as the level of inflation have been considered.
- ...the real cost of borrowing.

11. adverb

You can use **real** to emphasize an adjective or adverb .

- He is finding prison life 'real tough'.
- I don't think you are trying real hard.

12. for real

13. for real

14. the real thing

pursuit

pursuits

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Your **pursuit of** something is your attempts at achieving it. If you do something **in pursuit of** a particular result, you do it in order to achieve that result.

- ...a young man whose relentless pursuit of excellence is conducted with determination.
- ...individuals who impoverish their families in pursuit of some dream.

2. uncountable noun

The **pursuit of** an activity, interest, or plan consists of all the things that you do when you are carrying it out.

- The vigorous pursuit of policies is no guarantee of success.

3. uncountable noun

Someone who is **in pursuit of** a person, vehicle, or animal is chasing them.

- ...a police officer who drove a patrol car at more than 120mph in pursuit of a motor cycle.

4. singular noun

In cycling and skating , **the pursuit** is a race in which two competitors or teams start on opposite sides of a circular track and try to catch up with each other.

- Moreau took gold in the five-kilometre individual pursuit competition.

5. countable noun

Your **pursuits** are your activities, usually activities that you enjoy when you are not working .

- They both love outdoor pursuits.
- His favourite childhood pursuits were sailing, swimming and cycling.

6. in hot pursuit

round

Explain

1. preposition

To be positioned **round** a place or object means to surround it or be on all sides of it. To move **round** a place means to go along its edge, back to the point where you started. **Round** is also an adverb .

- They were sitting round the kitchen table.
- The nightdress has handmade lace round the armholes and neckline.
- All round us was desert.
- I shivered and pulled my scarf more tightly round my neck.
- He tramped hurriedly round the lake towards the garden.
- ...cycling round and round the park.
- Visibility was good all round.

- The goldfish swam round and round in their tiny bowls.

2. preposition

If you move **round** a corner or obstacle , you move to the other side of it. If you look **round** a corner or obstacle, you look to see what is on the other side.

- Suddenly a car came round a corner on the opposite side.
- Stay on the left-hand pavement to follow a road downhill round a curve.
- One of his men tapped and looked round the door.

3. preposition

You use **round** to say that something happens in or relates to different parts of a place, or is near a place. **Round** is also an adverb.

- He happens to own half the land round here.
- I think he has earned the respect of leaders all round the world.
- She's been on at me for weeks to show her round the stables.
- They need some way of getting round the country.
- Shirley found someone to show them round.
- So you're going to have a look round?

4. adverb

If a wheel or object spins **round** , it turns on its axis.

- Holes can be worn remarkably quickly by a wheel going round at 60mph.
- Stars appeared everywhere, spinning round and round, faster and faster.

5. adverb

If you turn **round** , you turn so that you are facing or going in the opposite direction.

- She paused, but did not turn round.
- The end result was that the ship had to turn round, and go back home.
- The wind veered round to the east.
- Tricia looked round in surprise.

6. adverb

If you move things **round** , you move them so they are in different places.

- He will be glad to refurnish where possible, change things round and redecorate.
- I've already moved things round a bit to make it easier for him.

7. adverb

If you hand or pass something **round** , it is passed from person to person in a group. **Round** is also a preposition .

- John handed round the plate of sandwiches.
- Coffee was being passed round.
- They started handing the microphone out round the girls at the front.
- The word is passed round the industry if you think there's a troublesome driver.

8. adverb

If you go **round** to someone's house, you visit them. **Round** is also a preposition in non-standard English.

- I think we should go round and tell Kevin to turn his music down.
- He came round with a bottle of champagne.
- I went round my friend's house.

9. *adverb*

You use **round** in informal expressions such as **sit round** or **hang round** when you are saying that someone is spending time in a place and is not doing anything very important. **Round** is also a preposition.

- As we sat round chatting, I began to think I'd made a mistake.
- I was running round all hyped up.
- She would spend the day hanging round street corners.
- Leonard potted round the greenhouse, tying up canes for the tomatoes.

10. *preposition*

If something is built or based **round** a particular idea, that idea is the basis for it.

- That was for a design built round an existing American engine.
- The core of the festival's programme centres round performances of new and 20th century work.

11. *preposition*

If you get **round** a problem or difficulty, you find a way of dealing with it.

- Don't just immediately give up but think about ways round a problem.
- There are ways of getting round most things!

12. *adverb*

If you win someone **round**, or if they come **round**, they change their mind about something and start agreeing with you.

- He did his best to talk me round, but I wouldn't speak to him.
- The Chandler twins were coming round to the same opinion.

13. *adverb*

You use **round** in expressions such as **this time round** or **to come round** when you are describing something that has happened before or things that happen regularly.

- At least two directors were expected to vote to increase rates this time round.
- Of course, it isn't the same first time round.
- We were very keen when the 1954 Rally came round.

14. *preposition*

You can use **round** to give the measurement of the outside of something that is shaped like a circle or a cylinder. **Round** is also an adverb.

- I'm about two inches larger round the waist.
- ...forty-eight inches round the hips.
- It's six feet high and five feet round.

15. *adverb*

You use **round** in front of times or amounts to indicate that they are approximate.

- I go to bed round 11:00 at night.

16. *round about*

17. *all round*

18. *go round and round*

19. *all year round*

reliance

Explain

1. *uncountable noun*

A person's or thing's **reliance on** something is the fact that they need it and often cannot live or work without it.

- ...the country's increasing reliance on foreign aid.

scarce

scarcer scarcest

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **scarce** , there is not enough of it.

- Food was scarce and expensive.
- Jobs are becoming increasingly scarce.
- ...the allocation of scarce resources.

2. make oneself scarce

royalty

royalties

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The members of royal families are sometimes referred to as **royalty** .

- Royalty and government leaders from all around the world are gathering together.
- ...a ceremony attended by royalty.

2. plural noun

Royalties are payments made to authors and musicians when their work is sold or performed. They usually receive a fixed percentage of the profits from these sales or performances.

- I lived on the royalties on my book.

3. countable noun

Payments made to someone whose invention, idea , or property is used by a commercial company can be referred to as **royalties** .

- The royalties enabled the inventor to re-establish himself in business.

special

specials

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **special** is better or more important than other people or things.

- You're very special to me, darling.
- There are strong arguments for holidays at Easter and Christmas because these are special occasions.
- Just to see him was something special.
- The famous author was going to be a special guest lecturer on the campus.

2. adjective

Special means different from normal .

- The committee can waive this three-year rule in special cases.
- So you didn't notice anything special about him?
- On her birthday, she invites her dearest friends over for a special meal.
- ...'Little Scarlet' strawberry jam, made from a special variety of strawberry.

3. adjective

You use **special** to describe someone who is officially appointed or who has a particular position specially created for them.

- Due to his wife's illness, he returned to the State Department as special adviser to the President.
- He is a special correspondent for Newsweek magazine.

4. adjective

Special institutions are for people who have serious physical or mental problems .

- Police are still searching for a convicted rapist, who escaped from Broadmoor special hospital yesterday.

5. adjective

You use **special** to describe something that relates to one particular person, group, or place.

- Every anxious person will have his or her own special problems or fears.
- ...it requires a very special brand of courage to fight dictators.

6. countable noun

A **special** is a product, programme , or meal which is not normally available , or which is made for a particular purpose.

- ...complaints about the BBC's Hallowe'en special, 'Ghostwatch'.
- Grocery stores have to offer enough specials to bring people into the store.
- ...talk shows and news specials.

2. verb

If your skin **is scarred** , it is badly marked as a result of a wound.

- He was scarred for life during a pub fight.
- His scarred face crumpled with pleasure.

3. verb

If a surface **is scarred** , it is damaged and there are ugly marks on it.

- The arena was scarred by deep muddy ruts.
- ...scarred wooden table tops.

4. countable noun

If an unpleasant physical or emotional experience leaves a **scar** on someone, it has a permanent effect on their mind .

- The early years of fear and the hostility left a deep scar on the young boy.

5. verb

If an unpleasant physical or emotional experience **scars** you, it has a permanent effect on your mind.

- This is something that's going to scar him forever.

scar

scars scarring scarred

Explain

1. countable noun

A **scar** is a mark on the skin which is left after a wound has healed.

- He had a scar on his forehead.
- ...facial injuries which have left permanent scars.

statistical

Explain

1. adjective

Statistical means relating to the use of statistics.

- The report contains a great deal of statistical information.
- We need to back that suspicion up with statistical proof.

scholarship

scholarships

Explain

1. countable noun

If you get a **scholarship** to a school or university, your studies are paid for by the school or university or by some other organization.

- He got a scholarship to the Pratt Institute of Art.
- ...scholarships for women over 30.

2. uncountable noun

Scholarship is serious academic study and the knowledge that is obtained from it.

- I want to take advantage of your lifetime of scholarship.

stubborn

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **stubborn** or who behaves in a **stubborn** way is determined to do what they want and is very unwilling to change their mind.

- He is a stubborn character used to getting his own way.
- His face was set in an expression of stubborn determination.

2. adjective

A **stubborn** stain or problem is difficult to remove or to deal with.

- This treatment removes the most stubborn stains.
- The first and most stubborn problem was that of reductions in the number of aircraft.

signal

signals signalling signalled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **signal** is a gesture, sound, or action which is intended to give a particular message to the person who sees or hears it.

- They fired three distress signals.
- As soon as it was dark, Mrs Evans gave the signal.
- You mustn't fire without my signal.

2. verb

If you **signal to** someone, you make a gesture or sound in order to send them a particular message.

- The United manager was to be seen frantically signalling to McClair.
- He stood up, signalling to the officer that he had finished with his client.
- She signalled a passing taxi and ordered him to take her to the rue Marengo.

3. countable noun

If an event or action is a **signal of** something, it suggests that this thing exists or is going to happen.

- Kurdish leaders saw the visit as an important signal of support.
- The first warning signals came in March.
- The Red Cross is withdrawing its staff until they receive clear signals from all sides that their presence is welcomed.

4. verb

If someone or something **signals** an event, they suggest that the event is happening or likely to happen.

- *She will be signalling massive changes in energy policy.*
- *Britain was signalling its readiness to have the embargo lifted.*
- *The outcome of the meeting could signal whether there is a political will to begin negotiating.*

5. countable noun

A **signal** is a piece of equipment beside a railway , which indicates to train drivers whether they should stop the train or not.

6. countable noun

A **signal** is a series of radio waves, light waves, or changes in electrical current which may carry information.

- *...high-frequency radio signals.*

7. adjective

You use **signal** to describe a success or failure when you are emphasizing the fact that it has occurred and are indicating that the consequences are significant .

- *His final round was a signal triumph in a career marked by many sweet moments.*
- *...Marlantes's signal failure to master some of the more central aspects of novel writing, including character, pace and style.*

successful

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **successful** achieves what it was intended to achieve. Someone who is **successful** achieves what they intended to achieve.

- *How successful will this new treatment be?*
- *I am looking forward to a long and successful partnership with him.*

- *She has been comparatively successful in maintaining her privacy.*

2. adjective

Something that is **successful** is popular or makes a lot of money.

- *...the hugely successful movie that brought Robert Redford an Oscar for his directing.*
- *One of the keys to successful business is careful planning.*

3. adjective

Someone who is **successful** achieves a high position in what they do, for example in business or politics .

- *Women do not necessarily have to imitate men to be successful in business.*
- *She is a successful lawyer.*

slot

slots slotting slotted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **slot** is a narrow opening in a machine or container , for example a hole that you put coins in to make a machine work.

- *He dropped a coin into the slot and dialed.*

2. verb

If you **slot** something into something else, or if it **slots** into it, you put it into a space where it fits.

- *The seatbelt buckle has red LED lights to indicate where to slot the belt in.*
- *The car seat belt slotted into place easily.*
- *She slotted in a fresh filter.*

3. countable noun

A **slot** in a schedule or scheme is a place in it where an activity can take place.

- Visitors can book a time slot a week or more in advance.
- The first episode occupies a peak evening viewing slot.

- Birds use thermals to lift them through the air.

thermal

thermals

Explain

1. adjective

Thermal means relating to or caused by heat or by changes in temperature.

- ...thermal power stations.
- ...financial assistance with repair, thermal insulation and improvements to homes through Government grants.

2. adjective

Thermal streams or baths contain water which is naturally hot or warm.

- Volcanic activity has created thermal springs and boiling mud pools.

3. adjective

Thermal clothes are specially designed to keep you warm in cold weather. **Thermals** are thermal clothes.

- My feet were like blocks of ice despite the thermal socks.
- I put on my thermal leggings, long socks and the rest of my clothes.
- Have you got your thermals on?

4. countable noun

A **thermal** is a movement of rising warm air.

solo

solos

Explain

1. adjective

You use **solo** to indicate that someone does something alone rather than with other people. **Solo** is also an adverb.

- He had just completed his final solo album.
- ...his spectacular solo goal.
- She had long since quit the band for a solo career.
- Charles Lindbergh became the very first person to fly solo across the Atlantic.

2. countable noun

A **solo** is a piece of music or a dance performed by one person.

- The original version featured a guitar solo.

sword

swords

Explain

1. countable noun

A **sword** is a weapon with a handle and a long sharp blade.

2. to cross swords

3. a double-edged sword

tropical

Explain

1. adjective

Tropical means belonging to or typical of the tropics.

- ...tropical diseases.
- ...a plan to preserve the world's tropical forests.

2. adjective

Tropical weather is hot and damp weather that people believe to be typical of the tropics.

trade

trades trading traded

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Trade is the activity of buying, selling, or exchanging goods or services between people, firms, or countries.

- The ministry had direct control over every aspect of foreign trade.
- ...negotiations on a new international trade agreement.
- Texas has a long history of trade with Mexico.

2. verb

When people, firms, or countries **trade**, they buy, sell, or exchange goods or services between themselves.

- They may refuse to trade, even when offered attractive prices.
- Australia and New Zealand trade extensively with each other.

- He has been trading in antique furniture for 25 years.

3. countable noun

A **trade** is a particular area of business or industry.

- They've completely ruined the tourist trade for the next few years.
- ...the arms trade.

4. countable noun

Someone's **trade** is the kind of work that they do, especially when they have been trained to do it over a period of time.

- He learnt his trade as a diver in the North Sea.
- Allyn was a jeweller by trade.
- She is a patron of small businesses and trades.

5. verb

If someone **trades** one thing **for** another or if two people **trade** things, they agree to exchange one thing for the other thing. **Trade** is also a noun.

- They traded land for goods and money.
- He still claims the arms weren't traded for hostages.
- Kids used to trade baseball cards.
- They suspected that Neville had traded secret information with Mr Foster.
- I am willing to make a trade with you.
- It wouldn't exactly have been a fair trade.

6. verb

If you **trade** places **with** someone or if the two of you **trade** places, you move into the other person's position or situation, and they move into yours.

- Mike asked George to trade places with him so he could ride with Tod.
- Kennedy mischievously suggested that professors ought to trade jobs for a time with janitors.
- The receiver and the quarterback are going to trade positions.

7. verb

In professional sports, for example football or baseball , if a player **is traded** from one team to another, they leave one team and begin playing for another.

- He was traded from the Giants to the Yankees.
- The A's have not won a game since they traded him.

8. verb

If two people or groups **trade** something such as blows , insults , or jokes , they hit each other, insult each other, or tell each other jokes.

- Children would settle disputes by trading punches or insults in the schoolyard.
- They traded artillery fire with government forces inside the city.

vicious

Explain

1. adjective

A **vicious** person or a **vicious** blow is violent and cruel.

- He was a cruel and vicious man.
- He suffered a vicious attack by a gang of white youths.
- The blow was so sudden and vicious that he dropped to his knees.

2. adjective

A **vicious** remark is cruel and intended to upset someone.

- It is a deliberate, nasty and vicious attack on a young man's character.

triumph

triumphs triumphing triumphed

Explain

1. variable noun

A **triumph** is a great success or achievement, often one that has been gained with a lot of skill or effort .

- The championships proved to be a personal triumph for the coach.
- Cataract operations are a triumph of modern surgery.
- In the moment of triumph I felt uneasy.

2. uncountable noun

Triumph is a feeling of great satisfaction and pride resulting from a success or victory.

- Her sense of triumph was short-lived.
- He was laughing with triumph.

3. verb

If someone or something **triumphs** , they gain complete success, control, or victory, often after a long or difficult struggle .

- All her life, Kelly had stuck with difficult tasks and challenges, and triumphed.
- The whole world looked to her as a symbol of good triumphing over evil.

bloody

bloodier bloodiest bloodies bloodying bloodied

Explain

1. adjective

Bloody is used by some people to emphasize what they are saying, especially when they are angry.

2. adjective

If you describe a situation or event as **bloody**, you mean that it is very violent and a lot of people are killed.

- Forty-three demonstrators were killed in bloody clashes.
- They came to power after a bloody civil war.

3. adjective

You can describe someone or something as **bloody** if they are covered in a lot of blood.

- He was arrested last October, still carrying a bloody knife.
- Yulka's fingers were bloody and cracked.

4. verb

If you have **bloodied** part of your body, there is blood on it, usually because you have had an accident or you have been attacked.

- One of our children fell and bloodied his knee.
- She stared at her own bloodied hands, unable to think or move.

5. passive verb

If someone or something **is bloodied** by an experience, they are hurt or damaged by it.

- She'd been bloodied in love.
- The reinsurance market has been bloodied by disasters in the U.S.

advance

advances advancing advanced

Explain

1. verb

To **advance** means to move forward, often in order to attack someone.

- The Allies began advancing on the city in 1943.
- The water is advancing at a rate of 5cm a day.
- ...a picture of a man throwing himself before an advancing tank.

2. verb

To **advance** means to make progress, especially in your knowledge of something.

- Medical technology has advanced considerably.

3. verb

If you **advance** someone a sum of money, you lend it to them, or pay it to them earlier than arranged.

- I advanced him some money, which he would repay on our way home.
- The bank advanced 1.2 billion to help the country with debt repayments.

4. countable noun

An **advance** is money which is lent or paid to someone before they would normally receive it.

- She was paid a £100,000 advance for her next two novels.

5. verb

To **advance** an event, or the time or date of an event, means to bring it forward to an earlier time or date.

- Too much protein in the diet may advance the ageing process.

- The country's election commission has advanced the date of the election by three days.

6. verb

If you **advance** a cause, interest, or claim, you support it and help to make it successful.

- When not producing art of his own, Oliver was busy advancing the work of others.

7. verb

When a theory or argument **is advanced**, it is put forward for discussion.

- Many theories have been advanced as to why some women suffer from depression.
- An explanation has now been advanced by scientists.

8. variable noun

An **advance** is a forward movement of people or vehicles, usually as part of a military operation.

- ...an advance on enemy positions.
- The defences are intended to obstruct any advance by tanks and other vehicles.

9. plural noun

If you make **advances** to someone, you try to start a sexual relationship with them.

- Mark had for some time been making advances towards her.
- She rejected his advances during the trip to Cannes.

10. variable noun

An **advance** in a particular subject or activity is progress in understanding it or in doing it well.

- ...the technological advances of the last four decades.
- Their progress at work was mirrored by their children's educational advance.

11. singular noun

If something is an **advance on** what was previously available or done, it is better in some way.

- This could be an advance on the present situation.

12. adjective

Advance booking, notice, or warning is done or given before an event happens.

- They don't normally give any advance notice about which building they're going to inspect.
- The event received little advance publicity.

13. adjective

An **advance** party or group is a small group of people who go on ahead of the main group.

- The 20-strong advance party will be followed by another 600 soldiers.

14. in advance of

15. in advance

broad

broader broadest broads

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **broad** is wide.

- His shoulders were broad and his waist narrow.
- The hills rise green and sheer above the broad river.
- ...a broad expanse of green lawn.

2. adjective

A **broad** smile is one in which your mouth is stretched very wide because you are very pleased or amused .

- He greeted them with a wave and a broad smile.

3. adjective

You use **broad** to describe something that includes a large number of different things or people.

- A broad range of issues was discussed.
- ...a broad coalition of workers, peasants, students and middle class professionals.

4. adjective

You use **broad** to describe a word or meaning which covers or refers to a wide range of different things.

- The term Wissenschaft has a much broader meaning than the English word 'science'.
- ...restructuring in the broad sense of the word.

5. adjective

You use **broad** to describe a feeling or opinion that is shared by many people, or by people of many different kinds .

- The agreement won broad support in the U.S. Congress.
- ...a film with broad appeal.

6. adjective

A **broad** description or idea is general rather than detailed.

- These documents provided a broad outline of the Society's development.
- We have discussed in broad terms the course of action appropriate at each stage.

7. adjective

A **broad** hint is a very obvious hint.

- They've been giving broad hints about what to expect.

8. adjective

A **broad** accent is strong and noticeable .

- ...a Briton who spoke in a broad Yorkshire accent.

9. countable noun

Some men refer to women as **broads** . This use could cause offence .

amount

amounts amounting amounted

Explain

1. variable noun

The **amount of** something is how much there is, or how much you have, need , or get .

- He needs that amount of money to survive.
- I still do a certain amount of work for them.

- Postal money orders are available in amounts up to 700.

2. verb

If something **amounts to** a particular total, all the parts of it add up to that total.

- Consumer spending on sports-related items amounted to £9.75 billion.

3. any amount of something

competitive

Explain

1. adjective

Competitive is used to describe situations or activities in which people or firms compete with each other.

- Only by keeping down costs will America maintain its competitive advantage over other countries.
- Japan is a highly competitive market system.
- Universities are very competitive for the best students.

2. adjective

A **competitive** person is eager to be more successful than other people.

- He has always been ambitious and fiercely competitive.
- I'm a very competitive person and I was determined not to be beaten.

3. adjective

Goods or services that are at a **competitive** price or rate are likely to be bought, because they are less expensive than other goods of the same kind.

- Homes for sale at competitive prices will secure interest from serious purchasers.
- ...a travel company specialising in amazingly competitive rates for flights.

analogue

analogues

Explain

1. countable noun

If one thing is an **analogue** of another, it is similar in some way.

- No model can ever be a perfect analogue of nature itself.

2. adjective

Analogue technology involves measuring, storing, or recording an infinitely variable amount of information by using physical quantities such as voltage.

- The analogue signals from the video tape are converted into digital code.

3. adjective

An **analogue** watch or clock shows what it is measuring with a pointer on a dial rather than with a number display. Compare digital.

cool

cooler coolest cools cooling cooled

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **cool** has a temperature which is low but not very low.

- I felt a current of cool air.
- The water was slightly cooler than a child's bath.
- The vaccines were kept cool in refrigerators.

2. adjective

If it is **cool**, or if a place is **cool**, the temperature of the air is low but not very low. **Cool** is also a noun.

- Thank goodness it's cool in here.

- Store grains and cereals in a cool, dry place.
 - ...a cool November evening.
 - She walked into the cool of the hallway.
3. adjective
Clothing that is **cool** is made of thin material so that you do not become too hot in hot weather .
- In warm weather, you should wear clothing that is cool and comfortable.
4. adjective
Cool colours are light colours which give an impression of coolness.
- Choose a cool colour such as cream.
 - The drawing-room was a cool silver green.
5. verb
When something **cools** or when you **cool** it, it becomes lower in temperature. To **cool down** means the same as to cool .
- Drain the meat and allow it to cool.
 - Huge fans will have to cool the concrete floor to keep it below 150 degrees.
 - ...a cooling breeze.
 - Avoid putting your car away until the engine has cooled down.
 - The other main way the body cools itself down is by panting.
6. verb
When a feeling or emotion **cools** , or when you **cool** it, it becomes less powerful .
- Within a few minutes tempers had cooled.
 - His weird behaviour had cooled her passion.
7. adjective
If you say that a person or their behaviour is **cool** , you mean that they are calm and unemotional , especially in a difficult situation.
- He was marvellously cool again, smiling as if nothing had happened.
 - At that, Reno lost her cool composure.
8. adjective
If you say that a person or their behaviour is **cool** , you mean that they are unfriendly or not enthusiastic .
- I didn't like him at all. I thought he was cool, aloof, and arrogant.
 - The idea met with a cool response.
 - He was given a cool reception.
9. adjective
If you say that a person or their behaviour is **cool** , you mean that they are fashionable and attractive .
- He was trying to be really cool and trendy.
 - ...some 15-year-old kid who thinks it's cool to do heroin.
10. adjective
If you say that someone is **cool about** something, you mean that they accept it and are not angry or upset about it.
- Bev was really cool about it all.
11. adjective
If you say that something is **cool** , you think it is very good.
- Kathleen gave me a really cool dress.
12. adjective
You can use **cool** to emphasize that an amount or figure is very large, especially when it has been obtained easily .
- Columbia recently re-signed the band for a cool 30million.
13. cool it
14. keep your cool
15. play it cool

analogy

analogies

Explain

1. countable noun

If you make or draw an **analogy between** two things, you show that they are similar in some way.

- Once again, Hockett draws an analogy with American football

crisp

crisper crispest crisps crisping crisped

Explain

1. adjective

Food that is **crisp** is pleasantly hard , or has a pleasantly hard surface.

- Bake the potatoes for 15 minutes, till they're nice and crisp.
- ...crisp bacon.
- ...crisp lettuce.

2. verb

If food **crisps** or if you **crisp** it, it becomes pleasantly hard, for example because you have heated it at a high temperature .

- Cook the bacon until it begins to crisp.
- Spread breadcrumbs on a dry baking sheet and crisp them in the oven.

3. countable noun

Crisps are very thin slices of fried potato that are eaten cold as a snack.

- ...a packet of crisps.

- ...cheese and onion potato crisps.

4. adjective

Weather that is pleasantly fresh, cold, and dry can be described as **crisp** .

- ...a crisp autumn day.

5. adjective

Crisp cloth or paper is clean and has no creases in it.

- He wore a panama hat and a crisp white suit.
- I slipped between the crisp clean sheets.
- ...crisp banknotes.

6. graded adjective

Leaves or snow that make a loud noise when you walk on them can be described as **crisp** .

- ...crisp autumn leaves.
- He crunched through the crisp snow.

7. graded adjective

If you describe someone's writing or speech as **crisp** , you mean they write or speak very clearly , without mentioning unnecessary details . This may make them seem unfriendly .

- 'Very well,' I said, adopting a crisp authoritative tone.

8. be burnt to a crisp

beauty

beauties

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Beauty is the state or quality of being beautiful

- ...an area of outstanding natural beauty.
- Everyone admired her elegance and her beauty.

2. countable noun

A **beauty** is a beautiful woman.

- She is known as a great beauty.

3. countable noun

You can say that something is a **beauty** when you think it is very good.

- The pass was a real beauty, but the shot was poor.

4. countable noun

The **beauties** of something are its attractive qualities or features.

- He was beginning to enjoy the beauties of nature.

5. adjective

Beauty is used to describe people, products, and activities that are concerned with making women look beautiful.

- Additional beauty treatments can be booked in advance.

6. countable noun

If you say that a particular feature is **the beauty of** something, you mean that this feature is what makes the thing so good.

- There would be no effect on animals—that's the beauty of such water-based materials.

desirable

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **desirable** is worth having or doing because it is useful, necessary, or popular

- Prolonged negotiation was not desirable.
- The crowd moved indoors for what were deemed the most desirable items.

2. adjective

Someone who is **desirable** is considered to be sexually attractive.

- ...the young women whom his classmates thought most desirable.

bomb

bombs bombing bombed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bomb** is a device which explodes and damages or destroys a large area.

- Bombs went off at two London train stations.
- It's not known who planted the bomb.
- Most of the bombs fell in the south.
- There were two bomb explosions in the city overnight.

2. singular noun

Nuclear weapons are sometimes referred to as **the bomb**.

- They are generally thought to have the bomb.

3. verb

When people **bomb** a place, they attack it with bombs.

- Airforce jets bombed the airport.

domestic

domestics

Explain

1. adjective

Domestic political activities, events, and situations happen or exist within one particular country.

- ...over 100 domestic flights a day to 15 U.K. destinations.
- ...sales in the domestic market.

2. See also gross domestic product

3. adjective

Domestic duties and activities are concerned with the running of a home and family.

- ...a plan for sharing domestic chores.

4. adjective

Domestic items and services are intended to be used in people's homes rather than in factories or offices .

- ...domestic appliances.

5. adjective

A **domestic** situation or atmosphere is one which involves a family and their home.

- It was a scene of such domestic bliss.
- I was called out to attend a domestic dispute.

6. graded adjective

Someone who is **domestic** enjoys being at home and running a family.

- She was kind and domestic and put her family before her part-time job.

7. adjective

A **domestic** animal is one that is not wild and is kept either on a farm to produce food or in someone's home as a pet.

- ...a domestic cat.

8. countable noun

A **domestic** , a **domestic help** , or a **domestic worker** is a person who is paid to come to help with the work that has to be done in a house such as the cleaning , washing , and ironing .

capital

capitals

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Capital is a large sum of money which you use to start a business, or which you invest in order to make more money.

- Companies are having difficulty in raising capital.
- A large amount of capital is invested in all these branches.

2. uncountable noun

You can use **capital** to refer to buildings or machinery which are necessary to produce goods or to make companies more efficient , but which do not make money directly .

- ...capital equipment that could have served to increase production.

- ...capital investment.
3. uncountable noun
Capital is the part of an amount of money borrowed or invested which does not include interest.
- With a conventional repayment mortgage, the repayments consist of both capital and interest.
4. countable noun
 The **capital** of a country is the city or town where its government or parliament meets .
- ...Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.
5. countable noun
 If a place is **the capital of** a particular industry or activity, it is the place that is most famous for it, because it happens in that place more than anywhere else.
- Colmar has long been considered the capital of the wine trade.
 - ...New York, the fashion capital of the world.
6. countable noun
Capitals or **capital letters** are written or printed letters in the form which is used at the beginning of sentences or names. ' T ', ' B ', and ' F ' are capitals.
- The name and address are written in capitals.
7. adjective
 A **capital** offence is one that is so serious that the person who commits it can be punished by death.
- Espionage is a capital offence in this country.
 - ...Americans wrongly convicted of capital crimes.

8. countable noun
 A **capital** is the top part of a stone column, which is sometimes decorated with stone leaves or other patterns.
9. make capital of sth/make capital out of sth
10. with a capital

easy

easier easiest

Explain

1. adjective
 If a job or action is **easy** , you can do it without difficulty or effort, because it is not complicated and causes no problems .
- The shower is easy to install.
 - It's easy to get a seat at the best shows in town.
 - This is not an easy task.
 - The home is situated within easy access of shops and other facilities.
2. adjective
 If you describe an action or activity as **easy** , you mean that it is done in a confident , relaxed way. If someone is **easy about** something, they feel relaxed and confident about it.
- She is laughing and joking and making easy conversation with people she has never met before.
 - He was an easy person to talk to.
 - ...when you are both feeling a little easier about the break up of your relationship.
3. adjective
 If you say that someone has an **easy** life, you mean that they live comfortably without any problems or worries .

- *She has not had an easy life.*

4. adjective

If you say that something is **easy** or too **easy**, you are criticizing someone because they have done the most obvious or least difficult thing, and have not considered the situation carefully enough.

- *That's easy for you to say.*
- *It was all too easy to believe it.*

5. graded adjective

You use **easy** in expressions such as **easy on the ear** or **easy on the eye** when you are describing things that are pleasant and that do not need much effort to be enjoyed or done.

- *The music sounds like an advert—easy on the ear but bland and forgettable.*
- *The layout should be clear and easy on the eye.*
- *...a low-impact form of aerobic exercise that's easy on the joints.*

6. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **easy prey** or as an **easy target**, you mean that they can easily be attacked or criticized.

- *Tourists have become easy prey.*
- *Leaders are easy targets for critics, because they have visibility.*

7. easy come, easy go

8. easy does it

9. go easy on sth

10. go/be easy on sb

11. easier said than done

12. take it easy

captain

captains captaining captained

Explain

1. title noun

In the army, navy, and some other armed forces, a **captain** is an officer of middle rank.

- *...Captain Mark Phillips.*
- *...a captain in the British army.*
- *Are all your weapons in place, Captain?*

2. countable noun

The **captain of** a sports team is the player in charge of it.

- *...Mickey Thomas, the captain of Wrexham football club.*
- *The former Australia cricket captain offers a unique insight into his nation's sporting psyche.*

3. countable noun

The **captain of** a ship is the sailor in charge of it.

- *...the captain of the aircraft carrier Saratoga.*

4. countable noun

The **captain of** an aeroplane is the pilot in charge of it.

5. countable noun

In the United States and some other countries, a **captain** is a police officer or firefighter of fairly senior rank.

6. verb

If you **captain** a team or a ship, you are the captain of it.

- *Two months later, he captained Pakistan to victory in the World Cup.*
- *I did once dream of becoming the first woman to captain an ocean liner.*

epidemic

epidemics

Explain

1. countable noun

*If there is an **epidemic of** a particular disease somewhere , it affects a very large number of people there and spreads quickly to other areas.*

- *A flu epidemic is sweeping through Moscow.*
- *...a killer epidemic of yellow fever.*

2. countable noun

*If an activity that you disapprove of is increasing or spreading rapidly, you can refer to this as an **epidemic of** that activity.*

- *...an epidemic of serial killings.*
- *Drug experts say it could spell the end of the crack epidemic.*

cave

caves caving caved

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **cave** is a large hole in the side of a cliff or hill , or one that is under the ground.*

- *...a cave more than 1,000 feet deep.*

fashionable

Explain

1. adjective

*Something or someone that is **fashionable** is popular or approved of at a particular time.*

- *It became fashionable to eat certain kinds of fish.*
- *Chelsea Harbour is renowned for its fashionable restaurants.*

concert

concerts

Explain

1. countable noun

*A **concert** is a performance of music.*

- *...a short concert of piano music.*
- *I've been to plenty of live rock concerts.*
- *...a new concert hall.*

2. in concert

3. in concert

fluent

Explain

1. adjective

*Someone who is **fluent in** a particular language can speak the language easily and correctly. You can also say that someone speaks **fluent** French , Chinese , or some other language.*

- *She studied eight foreign languages but is fluent in only six of them.*
- *He speaks fluent Russian.*

2. adjective

If your speech , reading , or writing is **fluent** , you speak, read , or write easily, smoothly, and clearly with no mistakes .

- He had emerged from being a hesitant and unsure candidate into a fluent debater.

difference

differences

Explain

1. countable noun

The **difference** between two things is the way in which they are unlike each other.

- That is the fundamental difference between the two societies.
- There is no difference between the sexes.
- ...the vast difference in size.
- We do have problems here. The difference is that people try to help each other.

2. singular noun

A **difference** between two quantities is the amount by which one quantity is less than the other.

- The difference is 8532.

3. countable noun

If people have their **differences** about something, they disagree about it.

- The two communities are learning how to resolve their differences.

4. make a/no difference

5. split the difference

6. with a difference

7. difference of opinion

fluid

fluids

Explain

1. variable noun

A **fluid** is a liquid.

- The blood vessels may leak fluid, which distorts vision.
- Make sure that you drink plenty of fluids.
- ...fluid retention.

2. adjective

Fluid movements or lines or designs are smooth and graceful .

- The forehand stroke should be fluid and well balanced.
- ...long, fluid dresses.

3. adjective

A situation that is **fluid** is unstable and is likely to change often.

- The situation is extremely fluid and it can be changing from day to day.

empire

empires

Explain

1. countable noun

An **empire** is a number of individual nations that are all controlled by the government or ruler of one particular country.

- ...the Roman Empire.

2. countable noun

You can refer to a group of companies controlled by one person as an **empire** .

- ...the big Mondadori publishing empire.

generous

Explain

1. adjective

A **generous** person gives more of something, especially money, than is usual or expected .

- German banks are more generous in their lending.
- The gift is generous by any standards.

2. adjective

A **generous** person is friendly , helpful , and willing to see the good qualities in someone or something.

- He was always generous in sharing his enormous knowledge.
- He was generous enough to congratulate his successor on his decision.

3. adjective

A **generous** amount of something is much larger than is usual or necessary .

- ...a generous six weeks of annual holiday.
- He should be able to keep his room tidy with the generous amount of storage space.

executive

executives

Explain

1. countable noun

An **executive** is someone who is employed by a business at a senior level. Executives decide what the business should do, and ensure that it is done.

- ...an advertising executive.
- She is a senior bank executive.

2. adjective

The **executive** sections and tasks of an organization are concerned with the making of decisions and with ensuring that decisions are carried out.

- A successful job search needs to be as well organised as any other executive task.
- I will not take an executive role, but rather become a consultant.

3. adjective

Executive goods are expensive goods designed or intended for executives and other people at a similar social or economic level.

- ...an executive briefcase.
- ...a chain of shops specialising in pricey executive toys.
- ...executive cars.

4. singular noun

The **executive** committee or board of an organization is a committee within that organization which has the authority to make decisions and ensures that these decisions are carried out.

- He sits on the executive committee that manages Lloyds.
- Some executive members have called for his resignation.
- ...the executive of the National Union of Students.

5. singular noun

The **executive** is the part of the government of a country that is concerned with carrying out decisions or orders, as opposed to the part that makes laws or the part that deals with criminals .

- The government, the executive and the judiciary are supposed to be separate.
- The matter should be resolved by the executive branch of government.

glad

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **glad** about something, you are happy and pleased about it.

- *I'm glad I relented in the end.*
- *The people seem genuinely glad to see you.*
- *I ought to be glad about what happened.*
- *I'd be glad if the boys slept a little longer so I could do some ironing.*

2. adjective

If you say that you will be **glad to** do something, usually for someone else, you mean that you are willing and eager to do it.

- *I'll be glad to show you everything.*
- *We should be glad to answer any questions.*

3. glad tidings

flood

floods flooding flooded

Explain

1. variable noun

If there is a **flood**, a large amount of water covers an area which is usually dry, for example when a river flows over its banks or a pipe bursts.

- *More than 70 people were killed in the floods, caused when a dam burst.*
- *This is the type of flood dreaded by cavers.*
- *Over 25 people drowned when a schoolbus tried to cross a river and flood waters swept through.*

2. verb

If something such as a river or a burst pipe **floods** an area that is usually dry or if the area **floods**, it becomes covered with water.

- *The Chicago River flooded the city's underground tunnel system.*
- *The kitchen flooded.*

3. verb

If a river **floods**, it overflows, especially after very heavy rain.

- *...the relentless rain that caused twenty rivers to flood.*
- *Many streams have flooded their banks, making some roads impassable.*

4. countable noun

If you say that a **flood of** people or things arrive somewhere, you are emphasizing that a very large number of them arrive there.

- *...a flood of new university graduates.*
- *He received a flood of letters from irate constituents.*

5. verb

If you say that people or things **flood** into a place, you are emphasizing that they arrive there in large numbers.

- *Enquiries flooded in from all over the world.*
- *They flooded out of the ground in their thousands long before the final whistle.*

6. verb

If you **flood** a place **with** a particular type of thing, or if a particular type of thing **floods** a place, the place becomes full of so many of them that it cannot hold or deal with any more.

- *...a policy aimed at flooding Europe with exports.*

- *Brokers expect the markets to be flooded with the shares.*
- *German cameras at knock-down prices flooded the British market.*

7. verb

*If an emotion , feeling , or thought **floods** you, you suddenly feel it very intensely. If feelings or memories **flood back** , you suddenly remember them very clearly .*

- *A wave of happiness flooded me.*
- *Mary Ann was flooded with relief.*
- *It was probably the shock which had brought all the memories flooding back.*

8. verb

*If light **floods** a place or **floods** into it, it suddenly fills it.*

- *The afternoon light flooded the little rooms.*
- *Morning sunshine flooded in through the open curtains.*

9. in flood

10. floods of tears

healthy

healthier healthiest

Explain

1. adjective

*Someone who is **healthy** is well and is not suffering from any illness .*

- *Most of us need to lead more balanced lives to be healthy and happy.*
- *She had a normal pregnancy and delivered a healthy child.*

2. adjective

*If a feature or quality that you have is **healthy** , it makes you look well or shows that you are well.*

- *...the glow of healthy skin.*
- *...young adults with healthy appetites.*

3. adjective

*Something that is **healthy** is good for your health.*

- *...a great healthy outdoor pursuit.*
- *...a healthy diet.*

4. adjective

*A **healthy** organization or system is successful .*

- *...an economically healthy socialist state.*

5. adjective

*A **healthy** amount of something is a large amount that shows success .*

- *He predicts a continuation of healthy profits in the current financial year.*
- *...a healthy bank account.*

6. adjective

*If you have a **healthy** attitude about something, you show good sense .*

- *She has a refreshingly healthy attitude to work.*
- *It's very healthy to be afraid when there's something to be afraid of.*

forehead

foreheads

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **forehead** is the area at the front of your head between your eyebrows and your hair .

gesture

gestures gesturing gestured

Explain

1. countable noun

A **gesture** is a movement that you make with a part of your body, especially your hands, to express emotion or information .

- Sarah made a menacing gesture with her fist.
- He throws his hands open in a gesture which clearly indicates his relief.

2. countable noun

A **gesture** is something that you say or do in order to express your attitude or intentions, often something that you know will not have much effect .

- I wasn't expecting a fortune, just a gesture of goodwill.
- There's not greater gesture of love than having someone's name tattooed on your body.
- As a gesture to security, cars were fitted with special locks.

3. verb

If you **gesture** , you use movements of your hands or head in order to tell someone something or draw their attention to something.

- I gestured towards the boathouse, and he looked inside.
- He gestures, gesticulates, and moves with the grace of a dancer.

marine

marines

Explain

1. countable noun

A **marine** is a member of an armed force, for example the US Marine Corps or the Royal Marines, who is specially trained for military duties at sea as well as on land.

2. adjective

Marine is used to describe things relating to the sea or to the animals and plants that live in the sea.

- ...breeding grounds for marine life.
- ...research in marine biology.

3. adjective

Marine is used to describe things relating to ships and their movement at sea.

- ...a solicitor specialising in marine law.
- ...marine insurance claims.

hole

holes holing holed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **hole** is a hollow space in something solid, with an opening on one side.

- He took a shovel, dug a hole, and buried his once-prized possessions.
- The builders had cut holes into the soft stone to support the ends of the beams.
- ...a 60ft hole.

2. countable noun

A **hole** is an opening in something that goes right through it.

- These tiresome creatures eat holes in the leaves.
- Armed robbers broke into the jeweller's through a hole in the wall.
- ...kids with holes in the knees of their jeans.

3. countable noun

A **hole** is the home or hiding place of a mouse , rabbit , or other small animal.

- ...a rabbit hole.

4. countable noun

A **hole in** a law, theory, or argument is a fault or weakness that it has.

- There were some holes in that theory, some unanswered questions.

5. countable noun

If you refer to a place as a **hole** , you are emphasizing that you think it is very unpleasant .

- Why don't you leave this awful hole and come to live with me?

6. countable noun

A **hole** is also one of the nine or eighteen sections of a golf course.

- I played nine holes with Gary today.

7. countable noun

A **hole** is one of the places on a golf course that the ball must drop into, usually marked by a flag .

8. verb

If you **hole** in a game of golf, you hit the ball so that it goes into the hole.

- He holed from nine feet at the 18th.

- Frost holed a bunker shot from 50 feet to snatch the title by one stroke.

9. verb

If something such as a building or ship **is holed** , holes are made in it by guns or other weapons .

- Blocks of flats have been holed and some shells have fallen within the historic ram-parts.

10. need sth/sb like a hole in the head

11. in a hole

12. a hole in one

13. pick holes

noble

nobles nobler noblest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone is a **noble** person, you admire and respect them because they are unselfish and morally good.

- He was an upright and noble man who was always willing to help in any way he could.
- I wanted so much to believe he was pure and noble.

2. adjective

If you say that something is a **noble** idea , goal , or action, you admire it because it is based on high moral principles .

- He had implicit faith in the noble intentions of the Emperor.

- We'll always justify our actions with noble sounding theories.

- Their cause was noble.

3. adjective

If you describe something as **noble** , you think that its appearance or quality is very impressive , making it superior to other things of its type.

- ...the great parks with their noble trees.

- The horse is the noblest animal.

4. adjective

Noble means belonging to a high social class and having a title.

- ...rich and noble families.

- Although he was of noble birth, he lived as a poor man.

5. countable noun

In former times, people who belonged to a high social class and had titles such as 'Baron' or 'Duke' were referred to as **nobles** .

- More and more nobles made Moscow their home during Catherine's reign.

insight

insights

Explain

1. variable noun

If you gain **insight** or an **insight into** a complex situation or problem, you gain an accurate and deep understanding of it.

- The project would give scientists new insights into what is happening to the Earth's atmosphere.

- I hope that this talk has given you some insight into our work.

2. uncountable noun

If someone has **insight** , they are able to understand complex situations.

- He was a man with considerable insight.

notorious

Explain

1. adjective

To be **notorious** means to be well-known for something bad.

- ...an area notorious for crime and violence.

- She told us the story of one of Britain's most notorious country house murders.

messenger

messengers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **messenger** takes a message to someone, or takes messages regularly as their job .

- There will be a messenger at the airport to collect the photographs from our courier.

- He gave the instruction for the document to be sent by messenger.

painful

Explain

1. adjective

If a part of your body is **painful** , it hurts because it is injured or because there is something wrong with it.

- Her glands were swollen and painful.

- Sampras awaits the results of a bone scan on a painful left shin.

2. adjective

If something such as an illness , injury , or operation is **painful** , it causes you a lot of physical pain.

- ...a painful back injury.
- Sunburn is painful and potentially dangerous.

3. adjective

Situations , memories , or experiences that are **painful** are difficult and unpleasant to deal with, and often make you feel sad and upset .

- Remarks like that brought back painful memories.
- ...the painful transition to democracy.
- She finds it too painful to return there without him.

4. adjective

If a performance or interview is **painful** , it is so bad that it makes you feel embarrassed for the people taking part in it.

- The interview was painful to watch.

monarch

monarchs

Explain

1. countable noun

The **monarch** of a country is the king, queen, emperor, or empress .

partial

Explain

1. adjective

You use **partial** to refer to something that is not complete or whole .

- He managed to reach a partial agreement with both republics.
- ...a partial ban on the use of cars in the city.
- ...partial blindness.

2. adjective

If you are **partial to** something, you like it.

- He's partial to sporty women with blue eyes.
- Mollie confesses she is rather partial to pink.
- I am partial to baking cookies.

3. adjective

Someone who is **partial** supports a particular person or thing, for example in a competition or dispute , instead of being completely fair .

- I might be accused of being partial.

music

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Music is the pattern of sounds produced by people singing or playing instruments.

- ...classical music.
- ...the music of George Gershwin.
- ...a mixture of music, dance, cabaret and children's theatre.
- ...a music critic for the New York Times.

2. uncountable noun

Music is the art of creating or performing music.

- He went on to study music, specialising in the clarinet.
- ...a music lesson.

3. uncountable noun

Music is the symbols written on paper which represent musical sounds.

- He's never been able to read music.

4. music to your ears

5. face the music

passive

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **passive**, you mean that they do not take action but instead let things happen to them.

- His passive attitude made things easier for me.
- Even passive acceptance of the regime was a kind of collaboration.

2. adjective

A **passive** activity involves watching, looking at, or listening to things rather than doing things.

- They want less passive ways of filling their time.
- ...the passive enjoyment one gets from looking at a painting or sculpture.

3. adjective

Passive resistance involves showing opposition to the people in power in your country by not co-operating with them and protesting in non-violent ways.

- When police arrived, the protesters used passive resistance to continue their protest.

singular noun

In grammar, **the passive** or **the passive voice** is formed using 'be' and the past participle of a verb. The subject of a passive clause does not perform the action expressed by the verb but is affected by it. For example, in 'He's been murdered', the verb is in the passive. Compare active.

musician

musicians

Explain

1. countable noun

A **musician** is a person who plays a musical instrument as their job or hobby.

- He was a brilliant musician.
- ...one of Britain's best known rock musicians.

patriotic

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **patriotic** loves their country and feels very loyal towards it.

- Woosnam was fiercely patriotic.
- The crowd sang 'Land of Hope and Glory' and other patriotic songs.

obsession

obsessions

Explain

1. variable noun

If you say that someone has an **obsession** with a person or thing, you think they are spending too much time thinking about them.

- She would try to forget her obsession with Christopher.
- 95

pop

pops popping popped

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Pop is modern music that usually has a strong rhythm and uses electronic equipment.

- ...the perfect combination of Caribbean rhythms, European pop, and American soul.
- We don't want to be a pop band, we want to be a serious group.
- ...a life-size poster of a pop star.
- I know nothing about pop music.

2. uncountable noun

You can refer to fizzy drinks such as lemonade as **pop**.

- He still visits the village shop for buns and fizzy pop.
- ...glass pop bottles.

3. countable noun

Pop is used to represent a short sharp sound, for example the sound made by bursting a balloon or by pulling a cork out of a bottle.

- Each corn kernel will make a loud pop when cooked.
- His back tyre just went pop on a motorway.

4. verb

If something **pops**, it makes a short sharp sound.

- He untwisted the wire off the champagne bottle, and the cork popped and shot to the ceiling.

5. verb

If your eyes **pop**, you look very surprised or excited when you see something.

- My eyes popped at the sight of the rich variety of food on show.

6. verb

If you **pop** something somewhere, you put it there quickly.

- Marianne got a couple of mugs from the dresser and popped a teabag into each of them.
- He plucked a purple grape from the bunch and popped it in his mouth.

7. verb

If you **pop** somewhere, you go there for a short time.

- He does pop down to the pub, but he seldom stays longer than an hour.
- Wendy popped in for a quick bite to eat on Monday night.

8. countable noun

Some people call their father **pop**.

- I looked at Pop and he had big tears in his eyes.
- Yes, Pop, I made a big mistake—you and Mark made me realize that.

pension

pensions pensioning pensioned

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone who has a **pension** receives a regular sum of money from the state or from a former employer because they have retired or because they are widowed or have a disability .

- ...struggling by on a pension.
- ...a company pension scheme.

popular

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **popular** is enjoyed or liked by a lot of people.

- This is the most popular ball game ever devised.
- Chocolate sauce is always popular with youngsters.

2. adjective

Someone who is **popular** is liked by most people, or by most people in a particular group.

- He remained the most popular politician in France.
- He was not only talented but immensely popular with his colleagues.

3. adjective

Popular newspapers, television programmes , or forms of art are aimed at ordinary people and not at experts or intellectuals .

- Once again the popular press in Britain has been rife with stories about their marriage.

- ...one of the classics of modern popular music.

- ...the popular culture of his native Mexico.

4. adjective

Popular ideas , feelings , or attitudes are approved of or held by most people.

- Contrary to popular belief, the oil companies can't control the price of crude.
- The military government has been unable to win popular support.
- Popular anger has been expressed in demonstrations.

5. adjective

Popular is used to describe political activities which involve the ordinary people of a country, and not just members of political parties.

- The late President Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown by a popular uprising in 1986.

posture

postures posturing postured

Explain

1. variable noun

Your **posture** is the position in which you stand or sit .

- You can make your stomach look flatter instantly by improving your posture.
- Exercise, fresh air, and good posture are all helpful.
- Sit in a relaxed upright posture.

2. countable noun

A **posture** is an attitude that you have towards something.

- The military machine is ready to change its defensive posture to one prepared for action.
- None of the banks changed their posture on the deal as a result of the inquiry.

3. verb

You can say that someone **is posturing** when you disapprove of their behaviour because you think they are trying to give a particular impression in order to deceive people.

- She says the President may just be posturing.

prevalent

Explain

1. adjective

A condition, practice, or belief that is **prevalent** is common.

- This condition is more prevalent in women than in men.
- The prevalent view is that interest rates will fall.

predecessor

predecessors

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **predecessor** is the person who had your job before you.

- He maintained that he learned everything he knew from his predecessor.

2. countable noun

The **predecessor** of an object or machine is the object or machine that came before it in a sequence or process of development .

- The car is some 40mm shorter than its predecessor.

premier

premiers

Explain

1. countable noun

The leader of the government of a country is sometimes referred to as the country's **premier** .

- ...Australian premier Malcolm Turnbull.

2. adjective

Premier is used to describe something that is considered to be the best or most important thing of a particular type.

- ...the country's premier opera company.

remarkable

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **remarkable** is unusual or special in a way that makes people notice them and be surprised or impressed .

- He was a remarkable man.
- It was a remarkable achievement.
- It is quite remarkable that doctors have been so wrong about this.

premise

premises

Explain

1. plural noun

The **premises** of a business or an institution are all the buildings and land that it occupies in one place.

- There is a kitchen on the premises.
- The business moved to premises in Brompton Road.

2. countable noun

A **premise** is something that you suppose is true and that you use as a basis for developing an idea .

- The premise is that schools will work harder to improve if they must compete.
- The programme started from the premise that men and women are on equal terms in this society.

romantic

romantics

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **romantic** or does **romantic** things says and does things that make their wife , husband , girlfriend , or boyfriend feel special and loved.

- When we're together, all he talks about is business. I wish he were more romantic.
- They enjoyed a romantic dinner for two at one of their favourite restaurants.

2. adjective

Romantic means connected with sexual love.

- ...his early romantic experiences.

- He was not interested in a romantic relationship with Ingrid.

3. adjective

A **romantic** play, film, or story describes or represents a love affair .

- It is a lovely romantic comedy, well worth seeing.
- ...romantic novels.

4. adjective

If you say that someone has a **romantic** view or idea of something, you are critical of them because their view of it is unrealistic and they think that thing is better or more exciting than it really is. A **romantic** is a person who has romantic views.

- He has a romantic view of rural society.
- I don't have any romantic notions about having a baby. It's a really tough job.
- You're a hopeless romantic.

5. adjective

Something that is **romantic** is beautiful in a way that strongly affects your feelings.

- Seacliff House is one of the most romantic ruins in Scotland.
- ...romantic images from travel brochures.

6. adjective

Romantic means connected with the artistic movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which was concerned with the expression of the individual's feelings and emotions .

- ...the poems and prose of the English romantic poets.

president

presidents

Explain

1. title noun

The **president** of a country that has no king or queen is the person who is the head of state of that country.

- ...President Zuma.
- The White House says the president would veto the bill.

2. countable noun

The **president** of an organization is the person who has the highest position in it.

- Research and marketing operations will the job of the president of the new company.
- ...Alexandre de Merode, the president of the medical commission.

- I didn't want anyone to know about it, it was my secret.

4. singular noun

If you say that a particular way of doing things is **the secret of** achieving something, you mean that it is the best or only way to achieve it.

- The secret of success is honesty and fair dealing.

- I learned something about writing. The secret is to say less than you need.

5. countable noun

Something's **secrets** are the things about it which have never been fully explained .

- We have an opportunity now to really unlock the secrets of the universe.
- The past is riddled with deep dark secrets.

secret

secrets

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **secret** , it is known about by only a small number of people, and is not told or shown to anyone else.

- Soldiers have been training at a secret location.
- The police have been trying to keep the documents secret.

2. See also top secret

3. countable noun

A **secret** is a fact that is known by only a small number of people, and is not told to anyone else.

- I think he enjoyed keeping our love a secret.

6. in secret

7. to keep a secret

8. make no secret

razor

razors

Explain

1. countable noun

A **razor** is a tool that people use for shaving.

sore

sorer sorest sores

Explain

1. adjective

If part of your body is **sore** , it causes you pain and discomfort .

- It's years since I've had a sore throat like I did last night.
- My chest is still sore from the surgery.

2. adjective

If you are **sore** about something, you are angry and upset about it.

- The result is that they are now all feeling very sore at you.
- They are sore about losing to England in the quarter-finals.

3. countable noun

A **sore** is a painful place on the body where the skin is infected .

4. a sore point

rebellion

rebellions

Explain

1. variable noun

A **rebellion** is a violent organized action by a large group of people who are trying to change their country's political system.

- The British soon put down the rebellion.
- ...the ruthless and brutal suppression of rebellion.

2. variable noun

A situation in which politicians show their opposition to their own party's policies can be referred to as a **rebellion** .

- The Prime Minister faced his first Commons rebellion since the election.

streamline

streamlines streamlining streamlined

Explain

1. verb

To **streamline** an organization or process means to make it more efficient by removing unnecessary parts of it.

- They're making efforts to streamline their normally cumbersome bureaucracy.
- They say things should be better now that they have streamlined application procedures.

relish

relishes relishing relished

Explain

1. verb

If you **relish** something, you get a lot of enjoyment from it. **Relish** is also a noun .

- I relish the challenge of doing jobs that others turn down.
- He ate quietly, relishing his meal.
- The three men ate with relish.

2. verb

If you **relish** the idea , thought , or prospect of something, you are looking forward to it very much.

- Jacqueline is not relishing the prospect of another spell in prison.
- He relished the idea of getting some cash.

3. variable noun

Relish is a sauce or pickle that you eat with other food in order to give the other food more flavour.

tired

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **tired** , you feel that you want to rest or sleep .

- Michael is tired and he has to rest after his long trip.

2. adjective

You can describe a part of your body as **tired** if it looks or feels as if you need to rest it or to sleep.

- Cucumber is good for soothing tired eyes.
- My arms are tired, and my back is tense.

3. adjective

If you are **tired of** something, you do not want it to continue because you are bored of it or unhappy with it.

- I am tired of all the speculation.
- I was tired of being a bookkeeper.

4. adjective

If you describe something as **tired** , you are critical of it because you have heard it or seen it many times.

- I didn't want to hear another one of his tired excuses.
- What we see at Westminster is a tired old ritual.

sprinkle

sprinkles sprinkling sprinkled

Explain

1. verb

If you **sprinkle** a thing **with** something such as a liquid or powder, you scatter the liquid or powder over it.

- Sprinkle the meat with salt and place in the pan.
- At the festival, candles are blessed and sprinkled with holy water.
- Cheese can be sprinkled on egg or vegetable dishes.

2. verb

If something **is sprinkled with** particular things, it has a few of them throughout it and they are far apart from each other.

- Unfortunately, the text is sprinkled with errors.
- Men in green army uniforms are sprinkled throughout the huge auditorium.

3. verb

If it **is sprinkling** , it is raining very lightly.

tolerant

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **tolerant** , you approve of the fact that they allow other people to say and do as they like , even if they do not agree with or like it.

- They need to be tolerant of different points of view.
- Other changes include more tolerant attitudes to unmarried couples having children.

2. adjective

If a plant, animal, or machine is **tolerant of** particular conditions or types of treatment , it is able to bear them without being damaged or hurt .

- ...plants which are more tolerant of dry conditions.
- Alpine strawberries are tolerant of most soils.

transparent

Explain

1. adjective

If an object or substance is **transparent** , you can see through it.

- ...a sheet of transparent coloured plastic.
- I looked at his thin face with its almost transparent skin.

2. adjective

If a situation , system, or activity is **transparent** , it is easily understood or recognized.

- We are now striving hard to establish a transparent parliamentary democracy.
- The company has to make its accounts and operations as transparent as possible.

3. adjective

You use **transparent** to describe a statement or action that is obviously dishonest or wrong , and that you think will not deceive people.

- He thought he could fool people with transparent deceptions.

superstition

superstitions

Explain

1. variable noun

Superstition is belief in things that are not real or possible , for example magic .

- Fortune-telling is a very much debased art surrounded by superstition.
- The phantom of the merry-go-round is just a local superstition.

vain

vainer vainest

Explain

1. adjective

A **vain** attempt or action is one that fails to achieve what was intended .

- The drafting committee worked through the night in a vain attempt to finish on schedule.
- I was singing in a vain effort to cheer him up.

2. adjective

If you describe a hope that something will happen as a **vain** hope, you mean that there is no chance of it happening .

- He glanced around in the vain hope that there were no witnesses.

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **vain** , you are critical of their extreme pride in their own beauty, intelligence , or other good qualities.

- I think he is shallow, vain and untrustworthy.

4. in vain

5. in vain

tone

tones toning toned

Explain

1. countable noun

The **tone** of a sound is its particular quality.

- Cross could hear him speaking in low tones to Sarah.
- ...the clear tone of the bell.

2. countable noun

Someone's **tone** is a quality in their voice which shows what they are feeling or thinking .

- I still didn't like his tone of voice.
- Suddenly he laughed again, this time with a cold, sharp tone.
- Her tone implied that her patience was limited.

3. singular noun

The **tone** of a speech or piece of writing is its style and the opinions or ideas expressed in it.

- The spokesman said the tone of the letter was very friendly.
- His comments to reporters were conciliatory in tone.
- The whole tone of the President's speech was one of continuity and stability.

4. singular noun

The **tone** of a place or an event is its general atmosphere .

- The high tone of the occasion was assured by the presence of a dozen wealthy patrons.
- The front desk, with its friendly, helpful staff, sets the tone for the rest of the store.

5. uncountable noun

The **tone** of someone's body, especially their muscles, is its degree of firmness and strength.

- ...stretch exercises that aim to improve muscle tone.
- Keeping your muscles strong and in tone helps you to avoid back problems.

6. verb

Something that **tones** your body makes it firm and strong. **Tone up** means the same as tone .

- This movement lengthens your spine and tones the spinal nerves.
- Try these toning exercises before you start the day.
- ...finely toned muscular bodies.
- Exercise tones up your body.
- Although it's not strenuous exercise, you feel toned-up, supple and relaxed.

7. variable noun

A **tone** is one of the lighter, darker, or brighter shades of the same colour.

- Each brick also varies slightly in tone, texture and size.
- I'm a cheery sort of person, so I like cheerful tones.
- ...two-tone, striped wallpaper.

8. verb

If one thing **tones with** another, the two things look nice together because their colours are similar in quality or brightness . **Tone in** means the same as tone .

- Her sister toned with her in a turquoise print dress.
- The bowls tone in cleverly with the mugs.

9. singular noun

A **tone** is one of the sounds that you hear when you are using a phone , for example the sound that tells you that a number is engaged or busy , or no longer exists.

10. countable noun

A **tone** is a difference in pitch between two musical notes equal to two semitones .

11. lower the tone of sth

weary

wearies wearying wearied wearier weariest

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **weary** , you are very tired.

- Rachel looked pale and weary.
- ...a weary traveller.
- He managed a weary smile.

2. adjective

If you are **weary of** something, you have become tired of it and have lost your enthusiasm for it.

- They're getting awfully weary of this silly war.
- She was weary of being alone.

3. verb

If you **weary** of something or it **wearies** you, you become tired of it and lose your enthusiasm for it.

- The public had wearied of his repeated warnings of a revolution that never seemed to start.
- He had wearied of teaching in state universities.
- The political hysteria soon wearied him and he dropped the newspaper to the floor.

total

totals totalling totalled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **total** is the number that you get when you add several numbers together or when you count how many things there are in a group.

- The companies have a total of 1,776 employees.

2. adjective

The **total** number or cost of something is the number or cost that you get when you add together or count all the parts in it.

- There could begin to be a decline in the total number of babies born each year.

- The total cost of the project would be more than 240million.

3. in total

4. verb

If several numbers or things **total** a certain figure , that figure is the total of all the numbers or all the things.

- The unit's exports will total 85millionthisyear.Theywillcompeteforprizestotallingnearly\$30

5. verb

When you **total** a set of numbers or objects , you add them all together.

- They haven't totalled the exact figures.

6. adjective

You can use **total** to emphasize that something is as great in extent , degree , or amount as it possibly can be.

- You were a total failure if you hadn't married by the time you were about twenty-three.

- *There was an almost total lack of management control.*
- *Why should we trust a total stranger?*
- *I have total confidence that things will change.*

traitor

traitors

Explain

1. countable noun

If you call someone a **traitor** , you mean that they have betrayed beliefs that they used to hold , or that their friends hold, by their words or actions .

- *Some say he's a traitor to the working class.*

2. countable noun

If someone is a **traitor** , they betray their country or a group of which they are a member by helping its enemies , especially during time of war .

- *...rumours that there were traitors among us who were sending messages to the enemy.*

worthwhile

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **worthwhile** , it is enjoyable or useful , and worth the time, money, or effort that is spent on it.

- *The President's trip to Washington this week seems to have been worthwhile.*
- *...a worthwhile movie that was compelling enough to watch again.*
- *It might be worthwhile to consider your attitude to an insurance policy.*

valve

valves

Explain

1. countable noun

A **valve** is a device attached to a pipe or a tube which controls the flow of air or liquid through the pipe or tube.

2. countable noun

A **valve** is a small piece of tissue in your heart or in a vein which controls the flow of blood and keeps it flowing in one direction only.

- *He also has problems with a heart valve.*

auxiliary

auxiliaries

Explain

1. countable noun

An **auxiliary** is a person who is employed to assist other people in their work. Auxiliaries are often medical workers or members of the armed forces .

- *Nursing auxiliaries provide basic care, but are not qualified nurses.*

2. adjective

Auxiliary staff and troops assist other staff and troops.

- *The government's first concern was to augment the army and auxiliary forces.*

3. adjective

Auxiliary equipment is extra equipment that is available for use when necessary .

- *...an auxiliary motor.*

- ...auxiliary fuel tanks.

4. countable noun

An **auxiliary** is an organization that is connected with, but less important than, another organization; for example , an organization for the wives of the members of the main organization.

- The restaurant is operated by the Palo Alto Auxiliary for the benefit of the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital.

5. countable noun

In grammar , an **auxiliary** or **auxiliary verb** is a verb which is used with a main verb, for example to form different tenses or to make the verb passive . In English , the basic auxiliary verbs are 'be', 'have', and 'do'. Modal verbs such as 'can' and 'will' are also sometimes called auxiliaries.

ancestor

ancestors

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **ancestors** are the people from whom you are descended.

- ...our daily lives, so different from those of our ancestors.
- He could trace his ancestors back seven hundred years.

2. countable noun

An **ancestor of** something modern is an earlier thing from which it developed .

- The direct ancestor of the modern cat was the Kaffir cat of ancient Egypt.
- The immediate ancestor of rock 'n' roll is rhythm-and-blues.

awkward

Explain

1. adjective

An **awkward** situation is embarrassing and difficult to deal with.

- I was the first to ask him awkward questions but there'll be harder ones to come.
- There was an awkward moment as couples decided whether to stand next to their partners.

2. adjective

Something that is **awkward to** use or carry is difficult to use or carry because of its design . A job that is **awkward** is difficult to do.

- It was small but heavy enough to make it awkward to carry.
- Full-size tripods can be awkward, especially if you're shooting a low-level subject.

3. adjective

An **awkward** movement or position is uncomfortable or clumsy.

- Amy made an awkward gesture with her hands.

4. adjective

Someone who feels **awkward** behaves in a shy or embarrassed way .

- Women frequently say that they feel awkward taking the initiative in sex.
- He was rather awkward with his godson.

5. adjective

If you say that someone is **awkward** , you are critical of them because you find them unreasonable and difficult to live with or deal with.

- She's got to an age where she is being awkward.

aunt

aunts

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **aunt** is the sister of their mother or father, or the wife of their uncle.

- She wrote to her aunt in America.
- It was a present from Aunt Vera.

basic

Explain

1. adjective

You use **basic** to describe things, activities, and principles that are very important or necessary , and on which others depend .

- One of the most basic requirements for any form of angling is a sharp hook.
- ...the basic skills of reading, writing and communicating.
- ...the basic laws of physics.
- Access to justice is a basic right.

2. adjective

Basic goods and services are very simple ones which every human being needs . You can also refer to people's **basic** needs for such goods and services.

- ...shortages of even the most basic food-stuffs.
- Hospitals lack even basic drugs for surgical operations.
- ...the basic needs of food and water.

3. adjective

If one thing is **basic to** another, it is absolutely necessary to it, and the second thing cannot exist, succeed , or be imagined without it.

- ...an oily liquid, basic to the manufacture of a host of other chemical substances.
- There are certain ethical principles that are basic to all the great religions.

4. adjective

You can use **basic** to emphasize that you are referring to what you consider to be the most important aspect of a situation, and that you are not concerned with less important details .

- There are three basic types of tea.
- The basic design changed little from that patented by Edison more than 100 years ago.
- The basic point is that sanctions cannot be counted on to produce a sure result.

5. adjective

You can use **basic** to describe something that is very simple in style and has only the most necessary features , without any luxuries .

- We provide 2-person tents and basic cooking and camping equipment.
- ...the extremely basic hotel room.

6. adjective

Basic is used to describe a price or someone's income when this does not include any additional amounts.

- ...an increase of more than twenty per cent on the basic pay of a typical worker.
- The basic retirement pension will go up by £1.95 a week.
- The basic price for a 10-minute call is only £2.49.

7. adjective

The **basic** rate of income tax is the lowest or most common rate, which applies to people who earn average incomes.

- All this is to be done without big rises in the basic level of taxation.
- ...a basic-rate taxpayer.

bond

bonds bonding bonded

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bond between** people is a strong feeling of friendship, love, or shared beliefs and experiences that unites them.

- The experience created a very special bond between us.
- ...the bond that linked them.

2. verb

When people **bond with** each other, they form a relationship based on love or shared beliefs and experiences. You can also say that people **bond** or that something **bonds** them.

- Belinda was having difficulty bonding with the baby.
- They all bonded while writing graffiti together.
- What had bonded them instantly and so completely was their similar background.
- The players are bonded by a spirit that is rarely seen in an English team.

3. countable noun

A **bond between** people or groups is a close connection that they have with each other, for example because they have a special agreement.

- ...the strong bond between church and nation.
- ...her political bond with the American president.

4. plural noun

Bonds are feelings, duties, or customs that force you to behave in a particular way.

- Freed from the bonds of convention, the mind responds with new solutions.
- We must, somehow, find a way to loosen the bonds of tradition.

5. countable noun

A **bond** between two things is the way in which they stick to one another or are joined in some way.

- The superglue may not create a bond with some plastics.
- The molecule contains four carbon atoms with a triple bond between two of them.

6. verb

When one thing **bonds with** another, it sticks to it or becomes joined to it in some way. You can also say that two things **bond together**, or that something **bonds** them **together**.

- Diamond may be strong in itself, but it does not bond well with other materials.
- In graphite sheets, carbon atoms bond together in rings.
- Strips of wood are bonded together and moulded by machine.

7. countable noun

When a government or company issues a **bond**, it borrows money from investors. The certificate which is issued to investors who lend money is also called a **bond**.

- Most of it will be financed by government bonds.
- ...the recent sharp decline in bond prices.

clumsy

clumsier clumsiest

Explain

1. adjective

A **clumsy** person moves or handles things in a careless , awkward way, often so that things are knocked over or broken.

- I'd never seen a clumsier, less coordinated boxer.
- Unfortunately, I was still very clumsy behind the wheel of the jeep.

2. adjective

A **clumsy** action or statement is not skilful or is likely to upset people.

- The action seemed a clumsy attempt to topple the Janata Dal government.
- He denied the announcement was clumsy and insensitive.

3. graded adjective

An object that is **clumsy** is not neat in design or appearance , and is often awkward to use.

- The keyboard is a large and clumsy instrument as far as portable computers are concerned.
- It was a clumsy looking aeroplane.

brow

brows

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **brow** is your forehead.

- He wiped his brow with the back of his hand.

- She wrinkled her brow inquisitively.

2. countable noun

Your **brows** are your eyebrows .

- He had thick brown hair and shaggy brows.

3. countable noun

The **brow of** a hill is the top part of it.

- He was on the look-out just below the brow of the hill.

compatible

Explain

1. adjective

If things, for example systems, ideas , and beliefs , are **compatible** , they work well together or can exist together successfully.

- Free enterprise, he argued, was compatible with Russian values and traditions.
- Marriage and the life I live just don't seem compatible.

2. adjective

If you say that you are **compatible** with someone, you mean that you have a good relationship with them because you have similar opinions and interests .

- Mildred and I are very compatible. She's interested in the things that interest me.
- You should find a doctor with whom you are compatible and feel comfortable.

3. adjective

If one make of computer or computer equipment is **compatible with** another make, especially IBM, they can be used together and can use the same software .

bully

bullies bullying bullied

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bully** is someone who often hurts or frightens other people.

- I fell victim to the office bully.
- He's a coward and a bully who confuses physical strength with manhood.

2. verb

If someone **bullies** you, they often do or say things to hurt or frighten you.

- I wasn't going to let him bully me.
- I asked her if she was bullied by the other children.

3. verb

If someone **bullies** you **into** something, they make you do it by using force or threats.

- We think an attempt to bully them into submission would be counterproductive.
- She used to bully me into doing my school-work.
- The government says it will not be bullied by the press.

cabin

cabins

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cabin** is a small room in a ship or boat.

- He showed her to a small cabin.

2. countable noun

A **cabin** is one of the areas inside a plane .

- He sat quietly in the First Class cabin, looking tired.

3. countable noun

A **cabin** is a small wooden house, especially one in an area of forests or mountains .

- ...a log cabin.

eligible

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **eligible to** do something is qualified or able to do it, for example because they are old enough.

- Almost half the population are eligible to vote in today's election.
- You could be eligible for a university scholarship.

2. adjective

An **eligible** man or woman is not yet married and is thought by many people to be a suitable partner .

- He's the most eligible bachelor in Japan.

champion

champions championing championed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **champion** is someone who has won the first prize in a competition, contest , or fight .

- ...a former Commonwealth champion.

- Kasparov became world champion.
- ...a champion boxer and skier.

2. countable noun

If you are a **champion** of a person, a cause, or a principle, you support or defend them.

- He received acclaim as a champion of the oppressed.
- He was once known as a champion of social reform.

3. verb

If you **champion** a person, a cause, or a principle, you support or defend them.

- He passionately championed the poor.
- The amendments had been championed by pro-democracy activists.

extravagant

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **extravagant** spends more money than they can afford or uses more of something than is reasonable.

- We are not extravagant; restaurant meals are a luxury and designer clothes are out.
- I hope you don't think I'm extravagant but I've had the electric fire on for most of the day.

2. adjective

Something that is **extravagant** costs more money than you can afford or uses more of something than is reasonable.

- Her Aunt Sallie gave her an uncharacteristically extravagant gift.

- Baking a whole cheese in pastry may seem extravagant.
- ...her extravagant lifestyle.

3. adjective

Extravagant behaviour is extreme behaviour that is often done for a particular effect.

- He was extravagant in his admiration of Hellas.
- They may make extravagant shows of generosity.

4. adjective

Extravagant claims or ideas are unrealistic or impractical.

- They have to compete by adorning their products with ever more extravagant claims.
- Don't be afraid to consider apparently extravagant ideas.

5. graded adjective

Extravagant entertainments or designs are elaborate and impressive.

- ...the wildest and most extravagant London parties.
- ...painting extravagant and bold designs onto wooden frames.

combination

combinations

Explain

1. countable noun

A **combination** of things is a mixture of them.

- ...a fantastic combination of colours.
- ...the combination of science and art.

famous

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **famous** is very well known.

- New Orleans is famous for its cuisine.
- ...England's most famous landscape artist, John Constable.

2. graded adjective

If you describe someone as **feeble**, you are criticizing them because they are afraid of taking strong action or seem to make no effort.

- He said that the Government had been feeble.
- ...some rather feeble traditionalists.

3. adjective

If you describe something that someone says as **feeble**, you mean that it is not very good or convincing.

- This is a particularly feeble argument.

courage

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Courage is the quality shown by someone who decides to do something difficult or dangerous, even though they may be afraid.

- He has impressed everyone with his authority and personal courage.
- They do not have the courage to apologise for their actions.

2. the courage of your convictions

courtyard

courtyards

Explain

1. countable noun

A **courtyard** is an open area of ground which is surrounded by buildings or walls.

- They walked through the arch and into the cobbled courtyard.

feeble

feebler feeblest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or something as **feeble**, you mean that they are weak.

- He told them he was old and feeble and was not able to walk so far.
- The feeble light of a tin lamp.

fundamental

Explain

1. adjective

You use **fundamental** to describe things, activities, and principles that are very important or essential. They affect the basic nature of other things or are the most important element upon which other things depend.

- Our constitution embodies all the fundamental principles of democracy.
- A fundamental human right is being withheld from these people.

- *Technical skill is a fundamental basis for most, if not all, great art.*

2. adjective

You use **fundamental** to describe something which exists at a deep and basic level , and is therefore likely to continue .

- *But on this question, the two leaders have very fundamental differences.*

3. adjective

If one thing **is fundamental to** another, it is absolutely necessary to it, and the second thing cannot exist, succeed , or be imagined without it.

- *Communication is fundamental to human society.*
- *The method they pioneered remains fundamental to research into the behaviour of nerve cells.*

4. adjective

You can use **fundamental** to show that you are referring to what you consider to be the most important aspect of a situation , and that you are not concerned with less important details .

- *The fundamental problem lies in their inability to distinguish between reality and invention.*
- *It was not simply a practical matter, but a fundamental question of principle.*

5. adjective

Fundamental research into a subject is concerned with gaining knowledge about the subject itself, rather than its practical aspects.

- *Industry leaders want scientists to engage in fundamental research, not applied research.*

declaration

declarations

Explain

1. countable noun

A **declaration** is an official announcement or statement.

- *They will sign the declaration tomorrow.*
- *The opening speeches sounded more like declarations of war than offerings of peace.*
- *...the issues arising from their declaration of independence.*

2. countable noun

A **declaration** is a firm , emphatic statement which shows that you have no doubts about what you are saying .

- *She needed time to adjust to Clive's declaration.*
- *...declarations of undying love.*

3. countable noun

A **declaration** is a written statement about something which you have signed and which can be used as evidence in a court of law.

- *On the customs declaration, the sender labeled the freight as agricultural machinery.*
- *They will ask you to sign a declaration allowing your doctor to disclose your medical details.*

global

Explain

1. adjective

You can use **global** to describe something that happens in all parts of the world or affects all parts of the world.

- *...a global ban on nuclear testing.*

- ...one of the most successful organizations fighting child poverty on a global scale.

2. adjective

A **global** view or vision of a situation is one in which all the different aspects of it are considered.

- They are confident their leader is taking a global view on important issues.
- ...a global vision of contemporary societies.

dye

dyes dyeing dyed

Explain

1. verb

If you **dye** something such as hair or cloth, you change its colour by soaking it in a special liquid.

- The women prepared, spun and dyed the wool.
- She had dyed black hair.

2. variable noun

Dye is a substance made from plants or chemicals which is mixed into a liquid and used to change the colour of something such as cloth or hair.

- ...bottles of hair dye.

energy

energies

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Energy is the ability and strength to do active physical things and the feeling that you are full of physical power and life.

- He was saving his energy for next week's race in Belgium.

- We try to boost our energy by eating.

2. uncountable noun

Energy is determination and enthusiasm about doing things.

- At 54 years old her energy and looks are magnificent.
- You have drive and energy for those things you are interested in.

3. countable noun

Your **energies** are your efforts and attention, which you can direct towards a particular aim.

- She had started to devote her energies to teaching rather than performing.
- We must concentrate our energies on treating addiction first.

4. uncountable noun

Energy is the power from sources such as electricity and coal that makes machines work or provides heat.

- ...those who favour nuclear energy.
- Oil shortages have brought on an energy crisis.
- It doesn't take much to improve the energy efficiency of your home.

ideal

ideals

Explain

1. countable noun

An **ideal** is a principle, idea, or standard that seems very good and worth trying to achieve.

- *The party has drifted too far from its socialist ideals.*

- *I tried to live up to my ideal of myself.*

2. singular noun

Your **ideal of** something is the person or thing that seems to you to be the best possible example of it.

- *...the Japanese ideal of beauty.*
- *Throughout his career she remained his feminine ideal.*

3. adjective

The **ideal** person or thing for a particular task or purpose is the best possible person or thing for it.

- *She decided that I was the ideal person to take over the job.*
- *I really love the area and see it as an ideal place to start my managerial career.*
- *The conditions were ideal for racing.*

4. adjective

An **ideal** society or world is the best possible one that you can imagine .

- *We do not live in an ideal world.*
- *In an ideal world, there would be no such thing as rubbish.*
- *Their ideal society collapsed around them into the Terror and then into the Counter-revolution.*

eyebrow

eyebrows

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **eyebrows** are the lines of hair which grow above your eyes.

2. raise an eyebrow

lofty

loftier loftiest

Explain

1. adjective

A **lofty** ideal or ambition is noble, important , and admirable .

- *It was a bank that started out with grand ideas and lofty ideals.*
- *Amid the chaos, he had lofty aims.*

2. adjective

A **lofty** building or room is very high.

- *...a light, lofty apartment in the suburbs of Salzburg.*
- *Victorian houses can seem cold with their lofty ceilings and rambling rooms.*

3. adjective

If you say that someone behaves in a **lofty** way, you are critical of them for behaving in a proud and rather unpleasant way, as if they think they are very important.

- *...the lofty disdain he often expresses for his profession.*
- *...lofty contempt.*

fee

fees

Explain

1. countable noun

A **fee** is a sum of money that you pay to be allowed to do something.

- He hadn't paid his television licence fee.

2. countable noun

A **fee** is the amount of money that a person or organization is paid for a particular job or service that they provide.

- Find out how much your surveyor's and solicitor's fees will be.

grammar

grammars

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Grammar is the ways that words can be put together in order to make sentences .

- He doesn't have mastery of the basic rules of grammar.
- ...the difference between Sanskrit and English grammar.

2. uncountable noun

Someone's **grammar** is the way in which they obey or do not obey the rules of grammar when they write or speak .

- His vocabulary was sound and his grammar excellent.
- ...a deterioration in spelling and grammar among teenagers.

3. countable noun

A **grammar** is a book that describes the rules of a language.

- ...an advanced English grammar.

4. variable noun

A particular **grammar** is a particular theory that is intended to explain the rules of a language.

- Transformational grammars are more restrictive.

missionary

missionaries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **missionary** is a Christian who has been sent to a foreign country to teach people about Christianity .

2. adjective

Missionary is used to describe the activities of missionaries.

- You should be in missionary work.

3. adjective

If you refer to someone's enthusiasm for an activity or belief as **missionary** zeal , you are emphasizing that they are very enthusiastic about it.

- She had a kind of missionary zeal about bringing culture to the masses.

optical

Explain

1. adjective

Optical devices, processes, and effects involve or relate to vision, light, or images .

- ...optical telescopes.
- ...the optical effects of volcanic dust in the stratosphere.

guest

guests guesting guested

Explain

1. countable noun

A **guest** is someone who is visiting you or is at an event because you have invited them.

- She was a guest at the wedding.
- Their guests sipped drinks on the veranda.

2. countable noun

A **guest** is someone who visits a place or organization or appears on a radio or television show because they have been invited to do so.

- ...a frequent chat show guest.
- Dr Gerald Jeffers is the guest speaker.
- They met when she made a guest appearance in his TV show.

3. countable noun

A **guest** is someone who is staying in a hotel.

- I was the only hotel guest.
- Hotels operate a collection service for their guests from the airports.

4. verb

To **guest** means to take part in a performance or a match as a guest, rather than as a regular member.

- He guested for one or two League sides.
- The band have recently guested on records by other artists.

5. be my guest

overnight

overnights overnighing overnighed

Explain

1. adverb

If something happens **overnight**, it happens throughout the night or at some point during the night. **Overnight** is also an adjective.

- The weather remained calm overnight.
- The decision was reached overnight.
- Travel and overnight accommodation are included.
- Overnight buying also helped the dollar.

2. adverb

You can say that something happens **overnight** when it happens very quickly and unexpectedly. **Overnight** is also an adjective.

- The rules are not going to change overnight.
- He's realistic enough to know he's not going to succeed overnight.
- Almost overnight, she had aged ten years and become fat.
- In 1970 he became an overnight success in America.

3. adjective

Overnight bags or clothes are ones that you take when you go and stay somewhere for one or two nights.

- He realized he'd left his overnight bag at Mary's house.

4. verb

If you **overnight** somewhere, you spend the night there. **Overnight** is also a noun.

- They had told her she would be overnighing in Sydney.
- Overnights can be arranged.

howl

howls howling howled

Explain

1. verb

If an animal such as a wolf or a dog **howls** , it makes a long, loud , crying sound. **Howl** is also a noun .

- Somewhere in the streets beyond a dog suddenly howled, baying at the moon.
- The dog let out a savage howl and, wheeling round, flew at him.

2. verb

If a person **howls** , they make a long, loud cry expressing pain, anger , or unhappiness. **Howl** is also a noun.

- He howled like a wounded animal as blood spurted from the gash.
- The baby was howling for her 3am feed.
- With a howl of rage, he grabbed the neck of a broken bottle and advanced.

3. verb

When the wind **howls** , it blows hard and makes a loud noise.

- The wind howled all night, but I slept a little.
- It sank in a howling gale.

4. verb

If you **howl** something, you say it in a very loud voice .

- 'Get away, get away, get away' he howled.
- The crowd howled its approval.

5. verb

If you **howl with** laughter, you laugh very loudly. **Howl** is also a noun.

- Joe, Pink, and Booker howled with delight.
- The crowd howled, delirious.
- His stories caused howls of laughter.

preliminary

preliminaries

Explain

1. adjective

Preliminary activities or discussions take place at the beginning of an event, often as a form of preparation.

- Preliminary results show the Republican party with 11 percent of the vote.
- ...preliminary talks on the future of the bases.

2. countable noun

A **preliminary** is something that you do at the beginning of an activity, often as a form of preparation.

- It had taken about ten minutes to cover the preliminaries.
- A background check is normally a preliminary to a presidential appointment.

3. countable noun

A **preliminary** is the first part of a competition to see who will go on to the main competition.

- The winner of each preliminary goes through to the final.

illustration

illustrations

Explain

1. countable noun

An **illustration** is an example or a story which is used to make a point clear .

- ...a perfect illustration of the way Britain absorbs and adapts external influences.

2. countable noun

An **illustration** in a book is a picture , design, or diagram .

- She looked like a princess in a nineteenth-century illustration.

professional

professionals

Explain

1. adjective

Professional means relating to a person's work, especially work that requires special training .

- His professional career started at Liverpool University.

2. adjective

Professional people have jobs that require advanced education or training. **Professional** is also a noun .

- ...highly qualified professional people like doctors and engineers.
- My father wanted me to become a professional and have more stability.

3. adjective

You use **professional** to describe people who do a particular thing to earn money rather than as a hobby . **Professional** is also a noun.

- This has been my worst time for injuries since I started as a professional footballer.

- The veteran golfer has played in every Major Championship since he turned professional.

- He had been a professional since March 1985.

4. adjective

Professional sports are played for money rather than as a hobby.

- ...an art student who had played professional football for a short time.

5. adjective

If you say that something that someone does or produces is **professional** , you approve of it because you think that it is of a very high standard . **Professional** is also a noun.

- They run it with a truly professional but personal touch.

- ...a dedicated professional who worked harmoniously with the cast and crew.

language

languages

Explain

1. countable noun

A **language** is a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by the people of a particular country or region for talking or writing.

- ...the English language.

- Students are expected to master a second language.

- Holidays are for seeing the sights, hearing the language and savouring the smells.

2. uncountable noun

Language is the use of a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds or written symbols.

- Students examined how children acquire language.
- Language is not art but both are forms of human behavior.

3. uncountable noun

You can refer to the words used in connection with a particular subject as **the language of** that subject.

- ...the language of business.

4. uncountable noun

You can refer to someone's use of rude words or swearing as **bad language** when you find it offensive .

- Television companies tend to censor bad language in feature films.
- There's a girl gonna be in the club, so you guys watch your language.

5. uncountable noun

The **language** of a piece of writing or speech is the style in which it is written or spoken.

- ...a booklet summarising it in plain language.
- The tone of his language was diplomatic and polite.
- Mr Harris has not been afraid to use language that many in his party despise.

6. variable noun

You can use **language** to refer to various means of communication involving recognizable symbols, non-verbal sounds, or actions.

- Some sign languages are very sophisticated means of communication.
- ...the digital language of computers.

prospective

Explain

1. adjective

You use **prospective** to describe someone who wants to be the thing mentioned or who is likely to be the thing mentioned.

- The story should act as a warning to other prospective buyers.
- When his prospective employers heard his history, they said they wouldn't hire him.

2. adjective

You use **prospective** to describe something that is likely to happen soon .

- ...the terms of the prospective deal.

laundry

laundries

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Laundry is used to refer to clothes, sheets , and towels that are about to be washed, are being washed, or have just been washed.

- I'll do your laundry.
- ...the room where I hang the laundry.
- He'd put his dirty laundry in the clothes basket.

2. countable noun

A **laundry** is a firm that washes and irons clothes, sheets, and towels for people.

- We had to have the washing done at the laundry.

3. countable noun

A **laundry** or a **laundry room** is a room in a house , hotel , or institution where clothes, sheets, and towels are washed.

- He worked in the laundry at Oxford prison.

radical

radicals

Explain

1. adjective

Radical changes and differences are very important and great in degree .

- The country needs a period of calm without more surges of radical change.
- The Football League has announced its proposals for a radical reform of the way football is run in England.

2. adjective

Radical people believe that there should be great changes in society and try to bring about these changes. A **radical** is someone who has radical views.

- ...threats by left-wing radical groups to disrupt the proceedings.
- ...political tension between radical and conservative politicians.

mystery

mysteries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **mystery** is something that is not understood or known about.

- The source of the gunshots still remains a mystery.

- ...the mysteries of mental breakdown.

2. uncountable noun

If you talk about the **mystery** of someone or something, you are talking about how difficult they are to understand or know about, especially when this gives them a rather strange or magical quality.

- She's a lady of mystery.
- It is an elaborate ceremony, shrouded in mystery.

3. adjective

A **mystery** person or thing is one whose identity or nature is not known.

- The mystery hero immediately alerted police after spotting a bomb.
- ...a mystery prize of up to £1,000.

4. countable noun

A **mystery** is a story in which strange things happen that are not explained until the end.

- His fourth novel is a murder mystery set in London.

rational

Explain

1. adjective

Rational decisions and thoughts are based on reason rather than on emotion .

- He's asking you to look at both sides of the case and come to a rational decision.
- Mary was able to short-circuit her stress response by keeping her thoughts calm and rational.

2. adjective

A **rational** person is someone who is sensible and is able to make decisions based on intelligent thinking rather than on emotion.

- Did he come across as a sane rational person?
- Rachel looked calmer and more rational now.

myth

myths

Explain

1. variable noun

A **myth** is a well-known story which was made up in the past to explain natural events or to justify religious beliefs or social customs.

- There is a famous Greek myth in which Icarus flew too near to the Sun.
- ...the world of magic and of myth.

2. variable noun

If you describe a belief or explanation as a **myth**, you mean that many people believe it but it is actually untrue.

- Contrary to the popular myth, women are not reckless spendthrifts.

recipient

recipients

Explain

1. countable noun

The **recipient** of something is the person who receives it.

- ...the largest recipient of American foreign aid.
- A suppressed immune system puts a transplant recipient at risk of other infections.

nerve

nerves nerving nerved

Explain

1. countable noun

Nerves are long thin fibres that transmit messages between your brain and other parts of your body.

- ...spinal nerves.
- ...in cases where the nerve fibres are severed.

2. plural noun

If you refer to someone's **nerves**, you mean their ability to cope with problems such as stress, worry, and danger.

- Jill's nerves are stretched to breaking point.
- I can be very patient, and then I can burst if my nerves are worn out.

3. plural noun

You can refer to someone's feelings of anxiety or tension as **nerves**.

- I just played badly. It wasn't nerves.

4. uncountable noun

Nerve is the courage that you need in order to do something difficult or dangerous.

- The brandy made him choke, but it restored his nerve.
- He never got up enough nerve to meet me.

5. verb

If you **nerve yourself** to do something difficult or frightening , you prepare yourself for it by trying to be brave .

- I nerved myself to face the pain.

6. get on sb's nerves

7. have a nerve

8. hold one's nerve/keep one's nerves

9. live on one's nerves

10. to lose your nerve

11. touch a raw nerve

savage

savages savaging savaged

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **savage** is extremely cruel , violent , and uncontrolled .

- This was a savage attack on a defenceless young girl.
- ...the savage wave of violence that swept the country in November 1987.
- ...a savage dog lunging at the end of a chain.

2. countable noun

If you refer to people as **savages** , you dislike them because you think that they do not have an advanced society and are violent.

- ...their conviction that the area was a frozen desert peopled with uncouth savages.

3. verb

If someone **is savaged** by a dog or other animal, the animal attacks them violently.

- The animal then turned on him and he was savaged to death.

4. verb

If someone or something that they have done **is savaged** by another person, that person criticizes them severely.

- The show had already been savaged by critics.
- Speakers called for clearer direction and savaged the Chancellor.

onion

onions

Explain

1. variable noun

An **onion** is a round vegetable with a brown skin that grows underground . It has many white layers on its inside which have a strong , sharp smell and taste.

- Will you chop an onion up for me?
- It is made with fresh minced meat, cooked with onion and a rich tomato sauce.
- ...onion soup.

successive

Explain

1. adjective

Successive means happening or existing one after another without a break .

- Jackson was the winner for a second successive year.
- ...the failure of successive governments to co-ordinate transport policy.

palace

palaces

Explain

1. countable noun

A **palace** is a very large impressive house, especially one which is the official home of a king , queen , or president .

- ...Buckingham Palace.
- They entered the palace courtyard.

2. singular noun

When the members of a royal palace make an announcement through an official spokesperson, they can be referred to as **the Palace** .

- The Palace will not comment on questions about the family's private life.

3. countable noun

You can refer to any large splendid house or other building as a **palace** .

- They'd bought a huge barn with some land and planned to turn it into a palace.

sweet

sweeter sweetest sweets

Explain

1. adjective

Sweet food and drink contains a lot of sugar.

- ...a mug of sweet tea.
- If the sauce seems too sweet, add a dash of vinegar.
- ...the sweet taste of wild strawberries.

2. countable noun

Sweets are small sweet things such as toffees, chocolates , and mints .

3. variable noun

A **sweet** is something sweet, such as fruit or a pudding, that you eat at the end of a meal , especially in a restaurant .

- The sweet was a mousse flavoured with coffee.

4. adjective

A **sweet** smell is a pleasant one, for example the smell of a flower.

- ...the sweet smell of her shampoo.
- She'd baked some bread which made the air smell sweet.

5. adjective

If you describe something such as air or water as **sweet** , you mean that it smells or tastes pleasantly fresh and clean .

- I gulped a breath of sweet air.
- ...a stream of sweet water.

6. adjective

A **sweet** sound is pleasant, smooth, and gentle.

- Her voice was as soft and sweet as a young girl's.
- ...the sweet sounds of Mozart.

7. adjective

If you describe something as **sweet** , you mean that it gives you great pleasure and satisfaction .

- There are few things quite as sweet as revenge.
- ...the sweet taste of illicit love.
- His success was all the sweeter for being at the expense of Europe's most admired team.

8. adjective

If you describe someone as **sweet** , you mean that they are pleasant, kind, and gentle towards other people.

- *How sweet of you to think of me!*

9. adjective

If you describe a small person or thing as **sweet** , you mean that they are attractive in a simple or unsophisticated way.

- *...a sweet little baby girl.*
- *The house was really sweet.*

10. vocative noun

You can address someone as **sweet** or **my sweet** if you are very fond of them.

- *I am so proud of you, my sweet!*

11. keep sb sweet

persuasion

persuasions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Persuasion is the act of persuading someone to do something or to believe that something is true .

- *Only after much persuasion from Ellis had she agreed to hold a show at all.*
- *She was using all her powers of persuasion to induce the Griffins to remain in Rollway.*

2. countable noun

If you are **of** a particular **persuasion** , you have a particular belief or set of beliefs.

- *It is a national movement and has within it people of all political persuasions.*

terminal

terminals

Explain

1. adjective

A **terminal** illness or disease causes death, often slowly, and cannot be cured .

- *...terminal cancer.*
- *His illness was terminal.*

2. adjective

A **terminal** patient is dying of a terminal illness or disease.

- *They have started a hospice for terminal patients.*

3. countable noun

A **terminal** is a place where vehicles, passengers, or goods begin or end a journey .

- *Plans are underway for a third terminal at the airport.*

4. countable noun

A computer **terminal** is a piece of equipment consisting of a keyboard and a screen that is used for putting information into a computer or getting information from it.

- *Carl sits at a computer terminal 40 hours a week.*

5. countable noun

On a piece of electrical equipment, a **terminal** is one of the points where electricity enters or leaves it.

- *...the positive terminal of the battery.*

piston

pistons

Explain

1. countable noun

A **piston** is a cylinder or metal disc that is part of an engine. Pistons slide up and down inside tubes and cause various parts of the engine to move.

theoretical

Explain

1. adjective

A **theoretical** study or explanation is based on or uses the ideas and abstract principles that relate to a particular subject, rather than the practical aspects or uses of it.

- ...theoretical physics.

2. adjective

If you describe a situation as a **theoretical** one, you mean that although it is supposed to be true or to exist in the way stated, it may not in fact be true or exist in that way.

- This is certainly a theoretical risk but in practice there is seldom a problem.
- These fears are purely theoretical.

propaganda

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Propaganda is information, often inaccurate information, which a political organization publishes or broadcasts in order to influence people.

- The party adopted an aggressive propaganda campaign against its rivals.
- They asked me to help destroy the system and spread propaganda against the government.

trivial

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **trivial**, you think that it is unimportant and not serious.

- The director tried to wave aside these issues as trivial details that could be settled later.
- I don't like to visit the doctor just for something trivial.

roof

roofs

Explain

1. countable noun

The **roof** of a building is the covering on top of it that protects the people and things inside from the weather.

- ...a small stone cottage with a red slate roof.
- A pail stood in one corner of the room to catch the drips where the roof leaked.

2. countable noun

The **roof** of a car or other vehicle is the top part of it, which protects passengers or goods from the weather.

- The car rolled onto its roof, trapping him.

3. countable noun

The **roof of** your mouth is the highest part of the inside of your mouth.

- She clicked her tongue against the roof of her mouth.

4. countable noun

The **roof** of an underground space such as a cave or mine is the highest part of it.

- *The cave roof collapsed.*

5. *go through the roof*

6. *to hit the roof*

7. *roof over one's head*

8. *to raise the roof*

9. *under one roof/under the same roof*

10. *under sb's roof*

unique

Explain

1. *adjective*

*Something that is **unique** is the only one of its kind .*

- *Each person's signature is unique.*
- *The area has its own unique language, Catalan.*

2. *adjective*

*You can use **unique** to describe things that you admire because they are very unusual and special .*

- *Brett's vocals are just unique.*
- *Kauffman was a woman of unique talent and determination.*

3. *adjective*

*If something is **unique to** one thing, person, group, or place, it concerns or belongs only to that thing, person, group, or place.*

- *No one knows for sure why adolescence is unique to humans.*
- *This interesting and charming creature is unique to Borneo.*

screen

screens screening screened

Explain

1. *countable noun*

*A **screen** is a flat vertical surface on which pictures or words are shown. Television sets and computers have screens, and films are shown on a screen in cinemas.*

2. *singular noun*

*You can refer to film or television as **the screen** .*

- *Many viewers have strong opinions about violence on the screen.*
- *She was the ideal American teenager, both on and off screen.*

3. *verb*

*When a film or a television programme **is screened** , it is shown in the cinema or broadcast on television.*

- *The series is likely to be screened in January.*
- *TV firms were later banned from screening any pictures of the demo.*

4. *countable noun*

*A **screen** is a vertical panel which can be moved around. It is used to keep cold air away from part of a room, or to create a smaller area within a room.*

- *They put a screen in front of me so I couldn't see what was going on.*

5. *verb*

*If something **is screened by** another thing, it is behind it and hidden by it.*

- *Most of the road behind the hotel was screened by a block of flats.*

6. verb

To **screen for** a disease means to examine people to make sure that they do not have it.

- ...a quick saliva test that would screen for people at risk of tooth decay.

7. verb

When an organization **screens** people who apply to join it, it investigates them to make sure that they are not likely to cause problems .

- They will screen all their candidates.
- ...screening procedures for the regiment.

8. verb

To **screen** people or luggage means to check them using special equipment to make sure they are not carrying a weapon or a bomb .

- The airline had been screening baggage on X-ray machines.

9. verb

If you **screen** your phone calls, calls made to you are connected to an answering machine or are answered by someone else, so that you can choose whether or not to speak to the people phoning you.

- I employ a secretary to screen my calls.

usual

Explain

1. adjective

Usual is used to describe what happens or what is done most often in a particular situation .
Usual is also a noun .

- It is a neighborhood beset by all the usual inner-city problems.
- She's smiling her usual friendly smile.

- After lunch there was a little more clearing up to do than usual.

- We've had more press coverage in the last three weeks than in the usual three years.

- It is usual to tip waiters, porters, guides and drivers.

- The barman appeared to take their order. 'Good morning, sir. The usual?'

2. as usual

3. as usual

shampoo

shampoos shampooing shampooed

Explain

1. variable noun

Shampoo is a soapy liquid that you use for washing your hair.

- ...a bottle of shampoo.
- ...bubble baths, soaps and shampoos.

2. verb

When you **shampoo** your hair, you wash it using shampoo.

- Shampoo your hair and dry it.

versatile

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that a person is **versatile** , you approve of them because they have many different skills.

- He had been one of the game's most versatile athletes.

2. adjective

A tool , machine , or material that is **versatile** can be used for many different purposes .

- Never before has computing been so versatile.
- ...a versatile blue chambray skirt.

shelf

shelves

Explain

1. countable noun

A **shelf** is a flat piece of wood, metal, or glass which is attached to a wall or to the sides of a cupboard . Shelves are used for keeping things on.

- He took a book from the shelf.
- ...the middle shelf of the oven.

2. countable noun

A **shelf** is a section of rock on a cliff or mountain or underwater that sticks out like a shelf.

- The house stands on a shelf of rock among pines.

3. off the shelf

4. on the shelf

weak

weaker weakest

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **weak** , they are not healthy or do not have good muscles, so that they cannot move quickly or carry heavy things.

- I was too weak to move or think or speak.

- His arms and legs were weak.

2. adjective

If someone has an organ or sense that is **weak** , it is not very effective or powerful , or is likely to fail .

- Until the beating, Cantanco's eyesight had been weak, but adequate.

- She tired easily and had a weak heart.

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **weak** , you mean that they are not very confident or determined, so that they are often frightened or worried , or easily influenced by other people.

- He was a nice doctor, but a weak man who wasn't going to stick his neck out.

- You have been conditioned to believe that it is weak to be scared.

4. adjective

If you describe someone's voice or smile as **weak** , you mean that it not very loud or big , suggesting that the person lacks confidence , enthusiasm , or physical strength.

- His weak voice was almost inaudible.

- He managed a weak smile.

5. adjective

If an object or surface is **weak** , it breaks easily and cannot support a lot of weight or resist a lot of strain .

- The owner said the bird may have escaped through a weak spot in the aviary.

- Swimming is helpful for bones that are porous and weak.

6. adverb

A **weak** physical force does not have much power or intensity.

- The molecules in regular liquids are held together by relatively weak bonds.
- Strong winds can turn boats when the tide is weak.
- ...the weak winter sun.

7. adjective

If individuals or groups are **weak**, they do not have any power or influence. **The weak** are people who are weak.

- The council was too weak to do anything about it.
- He voiced his solidarity with the weak and defenceless.

8. adjective

A **weak** government or leader does not have much control, and is not prepared or able to act firmly or severely.

- The changes come after mounting criticism that the government is weak and indecisive.
- The chief editorial writer also blames weak leadership for the current crisis.

9. adjective

If you describe something such as a country's currency, economy, industry, or government as **weak**, you mean that it is not successful, and may be likely to fail or collapse.

- The weak dollar made American goods relative bargains for foreigners.
- When the economy is weak, it's very hard for suppliers to raise their prices.

10. adjective

If something such as an argument or case is **weak**, it is not convincing or there is little evidence to support it.

- Do you think the prosecution made any particular errors, or did they just have a weak case?

- The claim exposed a weak point in the structure of facts upon which his argument rested.

- The evidence against him was weak and insufficient.

11. adjective

A **weak** drink, chemical, or drug contains very little of a particular substance, for example because a lot of water has been added to it.

- ...a cup of weak tea.
- ...a very weak bleach solution.

12. adjective

Your **weak** points are the qualities or talents you do not possess, or the things you are not very good at.

- You may very well be asked what your weak points are. Don't try to claim you don't have any.
- Geography was my weak subject.
- His short stories tend to be weak on plot.

13. graded adjective

You can say that someone has a **weak** chin to indicate that their chin is not large, especially when you want to suggest that they do not have a strong character.

- She was a plain-looking woman with a weak chin.

speaker

speakers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **speaker** at a meeting , conference , or other gathering is a person who is making a speech or giving a talk .

- Among the speakers at the gathering was the Treasury Secretary.
- Bruce Wyatt will be the guest speaker at next month's meeting.
- He was not a good speaker.

2. countable noun

A **speaker of** a particular language is a person who speaks it, especially one who speaks it as their first language.

- Most viewers are not native English speakers.
- She teaches English to speakers of other languages.

3. proper noun

In the parliament or legislature of many countries, the **Speaker** is the person who is in charge of meetings.

- For twenty minutes, the Speaker tried to keep order.
- ...the Speaker of the Polish Parliament.
- Mr. Speaker, our message to the president is simple.

4. countable noun

A **speaker** is a person who is speaking.

- From a simple gesture or the speaker's tone of voice, the Japanese listener gleans the whole meaning.

5. countable noun

A **speaker** is a piece of electrical equipment , for example part of a radio or set of equipment for playing CDs or tapes , through which sound comes out.

- For a good stereo effect, the speakers should not be too wide apart.

wild

wilds wilder wildest

Explain

1. adjective

Wild animals or plants live or grow in natural surroundings and are not looked after by people.

- We saw two more wild cats creeping towards us in the darkness.
- The lane was lined with wild flowers.

2. adjective

Wild land is natural and is not used by people.

- Elmley is one of the few wild areas remaining in the South East.

3. plural noun

The wilds of a place are the natural areas that are far away from towns.

- They went canoeing in the wilds of Canada.

4. adjective

Wild is used to describe the weather or the sea when it is stormy .

- The wild weather did not deter some people from swimming in the sea.

5. adjective

Wild behaviour is uncontrolled , excited, or energetic .

- The children are wild with joy.
- As George himself came on stage they went wild.

- They marched into town to the wild cheers of the inhabitants.

6. adjective

If you describe someone or their behaviour as **wild**, you mean that they behave in a very uncontrolled way.

- When angry or excited, however, he could be wild, profane, and terrifying.
- She lived a wild and incredible life.
- The house is in a mess after a wild party.

7. adjective

If someone is **wild**, they are very angry.

- For a long time I daren't tell him I knew, and when I did he went wild.

8. graded adjective

If you say that someone has **wild** eyes or a **wild** look, you mean that their eyes are wide open and staring because they are frightened, angry, or insane.

- She could see his face now, his eyes wild and his skin glistening with perspiration.
- I could not forget the wild look in his eyes.

9. adjective

A **wild** idea is unusual or extreme. A **wild** guess is one that you make without much thought.

- I was just a kid and full of all sorts of wild ideas.
- Browning's prediction is no better than a wild guess.

10. be wild about

11. in the wild

12. to run wild

wash

washes washing washed

Explain

1. verb

If you **wash** something, you clean it using water and usually a substance such as soap or detergent. **Wash** is also a noun.

- He got a job washing dishes in a pizza par-lour.
- The colours gently fade each time you wash the shirt.
- It took a long time to wash the mud out of his hair.
- Rub down the door and wash off the dust before applying the varnish.
- That coat could do with a wash.
- The treatment leaves hair glossy and lasts 10 to 16 washes.

2. verb

If you **wash** or if you **wash** part of your body, especially your hands and face, you clean part of your body using soap and water. **Wash** is also a noun.

- They looked as if they hadn't washed in days.
- She washed her face with cold water.
- You are going to have your dinner, get washed, and go to bed.
- She had a wash and changed her clothes.

3. verb

If a sea or river **washes** somewhere, it flows there gently. You can also say that something carried by a sea or river **washes** or **is washed** somewhere.

- The sea washed against the shore.
- The oil washed ashore on roughly 1000 miles of coastline.
- The force of the water washed him back into the cave.

4. singular noun

The wash of a boat is the wave that it causes on either side as it moves through the water.

- ...the wash from large ships.

5. verb

If a feeling **washes over** you, you suddenly feel it very strongly and cannot control it.

- A wave of self-consciousness can wash over her when someone new enters the room.
- The overpowering despair that he'd fought so hard to keep at bay washed through the boy.

6. countable noun

A **wash of** something such as light or colour is a thin layer of it.

- The lights from the truck sent a wash of pale light over the snow.

7. verb

If you say that an excuse or idea will not **wash**, you mean that people will not accept or believe it.

- He said her policies didn't work and the excuses didn't wash.
- If they believe that solution would wash with the Haitian people, they are making a dramatic error.

8. come out in the wash

9. be in the wash

yellow

yellows yellowing yellowed

Explain

1. colour

Something that is **yellow** is the colour of lemons, butter, or the middle part of an egg.

- The walls have been painted bright yellow.
- Kim opted for cooler blues and yellows in the master bedroom.

2. verb

If something **yellows**, it becomes yellow in colour, often because it is old.

- The flesh of his cheeks seemed to have yellowed.
- She sat scanning the yellowing pages.

yard

yards

Explain

1. countable noun

A **yard** is a unit of length equal to thirty-six inches or approximately 91.4 centimetres.

- The incident took place about 500 yards from where he was standing.
- A few yards away, José Vargas stands beside his small home.
- ...a long narrow strip of linen two or three yards long.
- ...a yard of silk.

2. countable noun

A **yard** is a flat area of concrete or stone that is next to a building and often has a wall around it.

- *I saw him standing in the yard.*

3. countable noun

You can refer to a large open area where a particular type of work is done as a **yard** .

- *...a railway yard.*
- *...a ship repair yard.*

4. countable noun

A **yard** is a piece of land next to someone's house , with grass and plants growing in it.

- *He dug a hole in our yard on Edgerton Avenue to plant a maple tree when I was born.*

accidental

Explain

1. adjective

An **accidental** event happens by chance or as the result of an accident , and is not deliberately intended .

- *The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.*
- *His hand brushed against hers; it could have been either accidental or deliberate.*

bundle

bundles bundling bundled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bundle of** things is a number of them that are tied together or wrapped in a cloth or bag so that they can be carried or stored .

- *She produced a bundle of notes and proceeded to count out one hundred and ninety-five pounds.*

- *He gathered the bundles of clothing into his arms.*

- *I have about 20 year's magazines tied up in bundles.*

2. countable noun

You can refer to a tiny baby as a **bundle** .

3. singular noun

If you describe someone as, for example , a **bundle of** fun , you are emphasizing that they are full of fun. If you describe someone as a **bundle of** nerves, you are emphasizing that they are very nervous .

- *I remember Mickey as a bundle of fun, great to have around.*
- *Life at high school wasn't a bundle of laughs, either.*
- *He confessed to having been a bundle of nerves.*

4. countable noun

If you refer to a **bundle of** things, you are emphasizing that there is a wide range of them.

- *The profession offers a bundle of benefits, not least of which is extensive training.*

5. verb

If someone **is bundled** somewhere , someone pushes them there in a rough and hurried way.

- *He was bundled into a car and driven 50 miles to a police station.*
- *He was bundled in and arrested as soon as he was airborne.*

6. verb

To **bundle** software means to sell it together with a computer, or with other hardware or software, as part of a set.

- *It's cheaper to buy software bundled with a PC than separately.*

7. cost a bundle

accustomed

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **accustomed to** something, you know it so well or have experienced it so often that it seems natural , unsurprising , or easy to deal with.

- I was accustomed to being the only child at a table full of adults.
- She had not yet become accustomed to the fact that she was a rich woman.

2. adjective

When your eyes become **accustomed to** darkness or bright light, they adjust so that you start to be able to see things, after not being able to see properly at first.

- My eyes were becoming accustomed to the gloom.

3. adjective

You can use **accustomed** to describe an action that someone usually does, a quality that they usually show , or an object that they usually use.

- He took up his accustomed position with his back to the fire.
- Fred acted with his accustomed shrewdness.
- His cap was missing from its accustomed peg.

camel

camels

Explain

1. countable noun

A **camel** is a large animal that lives in deserts and is used for carrying goods and people. Camels have long necks and one or two lumps on their backs called humps.

ashamed

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **ashamed** , they feel embarrassed or guilty because of something they do or they have done , or because of their appearance .

- I felt incredibly ashamed of myself for getting so angry.
- She was ashamed that she looked so shabby.

2. adjective

If you are **ashamed of** someone, you feel embarrassed to be connected with them, often because of their appearance or because you disapprove of something they have done.

- I've never told this to anyone, but it's true, I was terribly ashamed of my mum.

3. adjective

If someone is **ashamed to** do something, they do not want to do it because they feel embarrassed about it.

- Women are often ashamed to admit they are being abused.

class

classes classing classed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **class** is a group of pupils or students who are taught together.

- He had to spend about six months in a class with younger students.
- Reducing class sizes should be a top priority.

2. countable noun

A **class** is a course of teaching in a particular subject.

- He acquired a law degree by taking classes at night.
- I go to dance classes here in New York.

3. uncountable noun

If you do something **in class**, you do it during a lesson in school.

- There is lots of reading in class.

4. singular noun

The students in a school or university who finish their course in a particular year are often referred to as the **class of** that year.

- These two members of Yale's Class of 2002 never miss a reunion.

5. variable noun

Class refers to the division of people in a society into groups according to their social status.

- ...the relationship between social classes.
- What it will do is create a whole new ruling class.
- ...the characteristics of the British class structure.

6. countable noun

A **class of** things is a group of them with similar characteristics.

- Harbour staff noticed that measurements given for the same class of boats often varied.
- ...the division of the stars into six classes of brightness.

7. verb

If someone or something **is classed as** a particular thing, they are regarded as belonging to that group of things.

- Since the birds inter-breed they cannot be classed as different species.
- I class myself as an ordinary working person.
- I would class my garden as medium in size.
- He was not an explorer but can certainly be classed as a pioneer.

8. uncountable noun

If you say that someone or something has **class**, you mean that they are elegant and sophisticated.

- He's got the same style off the pitch as he has on it—sheer class.

9. adjective

If you describe someone or something as a **class** person or thing, you mean that they are very good.

- Kite is undoubtedly a class player.

10. a class act

11. in a class of one's own

coalition

coalitions

Explain

1. countable noun

A **coalition** is a government consisting of people from two or more political parties.

- Since June the country has had a coalition government.

- *It took five months for the coalition to agree on and publish a medium-term economic programme.*

2. countable noun

A **coalition** is a group consisting of people from different political or social groups who are co-operating to achieve a particular aim .

- *He had been opposed by a coalition of about 50 civil rights, women's and Latino organizations.*

blunt

blunter bluntest blunts blunting blunted

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **blunt** , you say exactly what you think without trying to be polite .

- *She is blunt about her personal life.*
- *She told the industry in blunt terms that such discrimination is totally unacceptable.*

2. adjective

A **blunt** object has a rounded or flat end rather than a sharp one.

- *One of them had been struck 13 times over the head with a blunt object.*

3. adjective

A **blunt** knife or blade is no longer sharp and does not cut well .

4. verb

If something **blunts** an emotion , a feeling or a need , it weakens it.

- *The constant repetition of violence has blunted the human response to it.*
- *The passing of time will blunt the pain.*

conclusion

conclusions

Explain

1. countable noun

When you come to a **conclusion** , you decide that something is true after you have thought about it carefully and have considered all the relevant facts .

- *Over the years I've come to the conclusion that she's a very great musician.*
- *I know I'm doing the right thing but other people will draw their own conclusions.*

2. singular noun

The **conclusion** of something is its ending .

- *At the conclusion of the programme, I asked the children if they had any questions.*

3. singular noun

The **conclusion** of a treaty or a business deal is the act of arranging it or agreeing it.

- *...the expected conclusion of a free-trade agreement between the two countries.*

4. a foregone conclusion

5. in conclusion

6. to jump to a conclusion

casual

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **casual** , you are, or you pretend to be, relaxed and not very concerned about what is happening or what you are doing.

- *It's difficult for me to be casual about anything.*
- *He's an easy-going, friendly young man with a casual sort of attitude towards money.*

2. adjective

A **casual** event or situation happens by chance or without planning .

- *What you mean as a casual remark could be misinterpreted.*
- *Even a casual observer could notice the tense atmosphere.*

3. adjective

Casual clothes are ones that you normally wear at home or on holiday , and not on formal occasions .

- *I also bought some casual clothes for the weekend.*

4. adjective

Casual work is done for short periods and not on a permanent or regular basis .

- *...establishments which employ people on a casual basis, such as pubs and restaurants.*
- *It became increasingly expensive to hire casual workers.*

consequence

consequences

Explain

1. countable noun

The **consequences of** something are the results or effects of it.

- *Her lawyer said she understood the consequences of her actions and was prepared to go to jail.*

- *An economic crisis may have tremendous consequences for our global security.*

2. in consequence, as a consequence

3. of (...) consequence

4. take the consequences/face the consequences

clean

cleaner cleanest cleans cleaning cleaned

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **clean** is free from dirt or unwanted marks.

- *He wore his cleanest slacks, a clean shirt and a navy blazer.*
- *Disease has not been a problem because clean water is available.*
- *The metro is efficient and spotlessly clean.*
- *Tiled kitchen floors are easy to keep clean.*

2. adjective

You say that people or animals are **clean** when they keep themselves or their surroundings clean.

3. adjective

A **clean** fuel or chemical process does not create many harmful or polluting substances.

- *Fans of electric cars say they are clean, quiet and economical.*

4. verb

If you **clean** something or **clean** dirt off it, you make it free from dirt and unwanted marks, for example by washing or wiping it. If something **cleans** easily, it is easy to clean. **Clean** is also a noun .

- Her father cleaned his glasses with a paper napkin.
 - It took half an hour to clean the orange powder off the bath.
 - He cleaned the flakes away with his coat sleeve.
 - Wood flooring not only cleans easily, but it's environmentally friendly into the bargain.
 - Give the cooker a good clean.
5. verb
If you **clean** a room or house, you make the inside of it and the furniture in it free from dirt and dust .
- My parents cooked and cleaned.
 - She got up early and cleaned the flat.
6. adjective
If you describe something such as a book, joke , or lifestyle as **clean** , you think that they are not sexually immoral or offensive .
- They're trying to show clean, wholesome, decent movies.
 - Flirting is good clean fun.
 - He became a model of clean living and Bible Belt virtues.
7. adjective
If someone has a **clean** reputation or record, they have never done anything illegal or wrong .
- Accusations of tax evasion have tarnished his clean image.
 - You can hire these from most car hire firms, provided you have a clean driving licence.
8. adjective
A **clean** game or fight is carried out fairly, according to the rules.
- He called for a clean fight in the election and an end to 'negative campaigning'.
 - It was a clean match, well refereed.
9. graded adjective
If you describe a flavour , smell , or colour as **clean** , you like it because it is light and fresh.
- ...the fresh, clean smell of the sea.
 - Soft tones of blue and grey create a clean, bright look.
10. adjective
A **clean** sheet of paper has no writing or drawing on it.
- Take a clean sheet of paper and down the left-hand side make a list.
11. adjective
If you make a **clean** break or start , you end a situation completely and start again in a different way.
- She wanted to make a clean break from her mother and father.
12. adverb
Clean is used to emphasize that something was done completely.
- It burned clean through the seat of my overalls.
 - The thief got clean away with the money.
 - I clean forgot everything I had prepared.
13. graded adjective
A **clean** shape is simple and regular , with definite , smooth edges .
- He admires the clean lines of Shaker furniture.
 - The drill should be slowly rotated to ensure a clean hole.

14. adjective

You can describe an action as **clean** to indicate that it is carried out simply and quickly without mistakes .

- They were more concerned about the dogs' welfare than a clean getaway.
- Paul had arrested countless men like this one before and was expecting a clean, quick job.

15. to come clean

crane

cranes craning craned

Explain

1. countable noun

A **crane** is a large machine that moves heavy things by lifting them in the air .

- The little prefabricated hut was lifted away by a huge crane.

2. countable noun

A **crane** is a kind of large bird with a long neck and long legs .

3. verb

If you **crane** your neck or head, you stretch your neck in a particular direction in order to see or hear something better .

- She craned her neck to get a better view.
- Children craned to get close to him.
- She craned forward to look at me.

coarse

coarser coarsest

Explain

1. adjective

Coarse things have a rough texture because they consist of thick threads or large pieces.

- ...a jacket made of very coarse cloth.
- ...a beach of coarse sand.

2. adjective

If you describe someone as **coarse** , you mean that he or she talks and behaves in a rude and offensive way .

- The soldiers did not bother to moderate their coarse humour in her presence.

despair

despairs despairing despaired

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Despair is the feeling that everything is wrong and that nothing will improve .

- I looked at my wife in despair.
- ...feelings of despair or inadequacy.

2. verb

If you **despair** , you feel that everything is wrong and that nothing will improve.

- 'Oh, I despair sometimes,' he says in mock sorrow.
- He does despair at much of the press criticism.

3. verb

If you **despair of** something, you feel that there is no hope that it will happen or improve. If you **despair of** someone, you feel that there is no hope that they will improve.

- *He wished to earn a living through writing but despaired of doing so.*
- *...efforts to find homes for people despairing of ever having a roof over their heads.*
- *There are signs that many voters have already despaired of politicians.*

cohesive

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **cohesive** consists of parts that fit together well and form a united whole .

- *It takes an enormous amount of work to make a cohesive album.*
- *Huston had assembled a remarkably cohesive and sympathetic cast.*

drawing

drawings

Explain

1. countable noun

A **drawing** is a picture made with a pencil or pen.

- *She did a drawing of me.*

commercial

commercials

Explain

1. adjective

Commercial means involving or relating to the buying and selling of goods.

- *Docklands in its heyday was a major centre of industrial and commercial activity.*
- *Attacks were reported on police, vehicles and commercial premises.*

2. adjective

Commercial organizations and activities are concerned with making money or profits, rather than, for example , with scientific research or providing a public service.

- *The NHS adopted a more commercial and businesslike financial framework.*
- *Conservationists are concerned over the effect of commercial exploitation of forests.*
- *Whether the project will be a commercial success is still uncertain.*

3. adjective

A **commercial** product is made to be sold to the public.

- *They are the leading manufacturer in both defence and commercial products.*

4. adjective

A **commercial** vehicle is a vehicle used for carrying goods, or passengers who pay.

- *Commercial vehicles, coaches and lorries are required by law to be fitted with tachographs.*
- *...the fastest crossing of the Atlantic by a commercial passenger vessel.*

5. adjective

Commercial television and radio are paid for by the broadcasting of advertisements, rather than by the government.

- *He got a job as a programme controller for the local commercial radio station.*

6. adjective

Commercial is used to describe something such as a film or a type of music that it is intended to be popular with the public, and is not very original or of high quality.

- There's a feeling among a lot of people that music has become too commercial.

7. countable noun

A **commercial** is an advertisement that is broadcast on television or radio.

- The government has launched a campaign of television commercials and leaflets.

effect

effects effecting effected

Explain

1. variable noun

The **effect of** one thing **on** another is the change that the first thing causes in the second thing.

- Parents worry about the effect of music on their adolescent's behavior.
- The austerity measures will have little immediate effect on the average citizen.
- Even minor head injuries can cause long-lasting psychological effects.

2. countable noun

An **effect** is an impression that someone creates deliberately, for example in a place or in a piece of writing .

- The whole effect is cool, light and airy.

3. plural noun

A person's **effects** are the things that they have with them at a particular time, for example when they are arrested or admitted to hospital , or the things that they owned when they died .

- His daughters were collecting his effects.

4. plural noun

The **effects** in a film are the specially created sounds and scenery .

5. verb

If you **effect** something that you are trying to achieve , you succeed in causing it to happen .

- Prospects for effecting real political change have taken a step backwards.

6. for effect

7. in effect

8. (put/bring/carry) sth into effect

9. take/come into effect

10. take effect

11. to (good) effect

12. to this/that effect

13. with (immediate) effect/effect from

composite

composites

Explain

1. adjective

A **composite** object or item is made up of several different things, parts, or substances. **Composite** is also a noun .

- ...composite pictures with different faces superimposed over one another.
- Spain is a composite of diverse traditions and people.

ending

endings

Explain

1. countable noun

You can refer to the last part of a book, story , play , or film as the **ending** , especially when you are considering the way that the story ends.

- The film has a Hollywood happy ending.

2. countable noun

The **ending** of a word is the last part of it.

- ...common word endings, like 'ing' in walking.

conventional

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **conventional** has behaviour or opinions that are ordinary and normal .

- ...a respectable married woman with conventional opinions.

2. adjective

A **conventional** method or product is one that is usually used or that has been in use for a long time.

- ...the risks and drawbacks of conventional family planning methods.
- This new memory stick holds twice as much information as a conventional pen drive.

3. adjective

Conventional weapons and wars do not involve nuclear explosives .

- We must reduce the danger of war by controlling nuclear, chemical and conventional arms.

enthusiasm

enthusiasms

Explain

1. variable noun

Enthusiasm is great eagerness to be involved in a particular activity which you like and enjoy or which you think is important .

- His enthusiasm for the game is infectious.
- Their skill, enthusiasm and running has got them in the team.

2. countable noun

An **enthusiasm** is an activity or subject that interests you very much and that you spend a lot of time on.

- Draw him out about his current enthusiasms and future plans.

fright

frights

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Fright is a sudden feeling of fear, especially the fear that you feel when something unpleasant surprises you.

- The steam pipes rattled suddenly, and Franklin uttered a shriek and jumped with fright.
- The birds smashed into the top of their cages in fright.
- To hide my fright I asked a question.

2. countable noun

A **fright** is an experience which makes you suddenly afraid .

- The snake picked up its head and stuck out its tongue which gave everyone a fright.
- The last time you had a real fright, you nearly crashed the car.

3. take fright

governor

governors

Explain

1. countable noun

In some systems of government, a **governor** is a person who is in charge of the political administration of a region or state.

- He was governor of the province in the late 1970s.
- The governor addressed the New Jersey Assembly.

2. countable noun

A **governor** is a member of a committee which controls an organization such as a school or a hospital .

- Governors are using the increased powers given to them to act against incompetent headteachers.
- ...the chairman of the BBC board of governors.

3. countable noun

In some British institutions , the **governor** is the most senior official , who is in charge of the institution.

- The incident was reported to the prison governor.

deliberate

deliberates deliberating deliberated

Explain

1. adjective

If you do something that is **deliberate** , you planned or decided to do it beforehand , and so it happens on purpose rather than by chance .

- It has a deliberate policy to introduce world art to Britain.
- Witnesses say the firing was deliberate and sustained.

2. adjective

If a movement or action is **deliberate** , it is done slowly and carefully.

- His movements were gentle and deliberate.
- ...stepping with deliberate slowness up the steep paths.

3. verb

If you **deliberate** , you think about something carefully, especially before making a very important decision .

- She deliberated over the decision for a long time before she made up her mind.
- The six-person jury deliberated about two hours before returning with the verdict.
- The Court of Criminal Appeals has been deliberating his case for almost two weeks.

heat

heats heating heated

Explain

1. verb

When you **heat** something, you raise its temperature, for example by using a flame or a special piece of equipment .

- Meanwhile, heat the tomatoes and oil in a pan.
- ...a gas that absorbs the sun's energy and heats the air above it.
- ...heated swimming pools.

2. uncountable noun

Heat is warmth or the quality of being hot.

- The seas store heat and release it gradually during cold periods.
- Its leaves drooped a little in the fierce heat of the sun.

3. uncountable noun

The heat is very hot weather.

- As an asthmatic, he cannot cope with the heat and humidity.
- This heat is killing me.

4. uncountable noun

The **heat** of something is the temperature of something that is warm or that is being heated.

- Warm the milk to blood heat.
- Adjust the heat of the barbecue by opening and closing the air vents.

5. singular noun

You use **heat** to refer to a source of heat, for example a cooking ring or the heating system of a house.

- Immediately remove the pan from the heat.

- Some apartment buildings don't have their heat turned on till the end of this week.

6. uncountable noun

You use **heat** to refer to a state of strong emotion , especially of anger or excitement.

- It was all done in the heat of the moment and I have certainly learned by my mistake.
- 'Look here,' I said, without heat, 'all I did was to walk down a street and sit down.'

7. singular noun

The heat of a particular activity is the point when there is the greatest activity or excitement.

- Last week, in the heat of the election campaign, the Prime Minister left for America.

8. countable noun

A **heat** is one of a series of races or competitions. The winners of a heat take part in another race or competition, against the winners of other heats.

- ...the heats of the men's 100m breaststroke.

9. on heat/in heat

distinct

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **distinct from** something else of the same type, it is different or separate from it.

- Engineering and technology are disciplines distinct from one another and from science.
- This book is divided into two distinct parts.

2. adjective

If something is **distinct** , you can hear , see , or taste it clearly .

- ...to impart a distinct flavor with a minimum of cooking fat.

3. adjective

If an idea , thought , or intention is **distinct** , it is clear and definite.

- Now that Tony was no longer present, there was a distinct change in her attitude.
- I have distinct memories of him in his last years.

4. adjective

You can use **distinct** to emphasize that something is great enough in amount or degree to be noticeable or important .

- Being 6ft 3in tall has some distinct disadvantages!
- Another Cup marathon between the two sides is now a distinct possibility.

5. as distinct from

3. singular noun

The **horror of** something, especially something that hurts people, is its very great unpleasantness.

- ...the horror of this most bloody of civil wars.

4. countable noun

You can refer to extremely unpleasant or frightening experiences as **horrors** .

- Can you possibly imagine all the horrors we have undergone since I last wrote you?

5. countable noun

If you refer to someone or something as a **horror** , you mean that you think they are very unpleasant or ugly .

- I didn't want to listen. I was a horror. He did well to put up with me.

6. adjective

A **horror** film or story is intended to be very frightening.

- ...a psychological horror film.

7. adjective

You can refer to an account of a very unpleasant experience or event as a **horror** story.

- ...a horror story about lost luggage while flying.

8. horror of horrors

horror

horrors

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Horror is a feeling of great shock , fear, and worry caused by something extremely unpleasant .

- I felt numb with horror.
- As I watched in horror the boat began to power away from me.

2. singular noun

If you have a **horror of** something, you are afraid of it or dislike it very much.

- ...his horror of death.

elastic

elastics

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Elastic is a rubber material that stretches when you pull it and returns to its original size and shape when you let it go . Elastic is often used in clothes to make them fit tightly, for example round the waist .

- ...a piece of elastic.
- ...my plaid Bermuda shorts with the elastic waist.

2. adjective

Something that is **elastic** is able to stretch easily and then return to its original size and shape.

- Beat it until the dough is slightly elastic.
- ...an elastic rope.

3. adjective

If ideas , plans , or policies are **elastic** , they are able to change to suit new circumstances or conditions as they occur.

- ...an elastic interpretation of the rules of boxing.
- The period of conversion was elastic, in some cases lasting over twenty years

4. countable noun

An **elastic** is a rubber band .

liners

liners

Explain

1. countable noun

A **liner** is a large ship in which people travel long distances , especially on holiday .

- ...luxury ocean liners.
- ...the cruise liner, the QE2.

green

greens greener greenest

Explain

1. colour

Green is the colour of grass or leaves.

- ...shiny red and green apples.
- Yellow and green together make a pale green.

2. adjective

A place that is **green** is covered with grass, plants, and trees and not with houses or factories .

- Cairo has only thirteen square centimetres of green space for each inhabitant.

3. adjective

Green issues and political movements relate to or are concerned with the protection of the environment.

- The power of the Green movement in Germany has made that country a leader in the drive to recycle more waste materials.

4. adjective

If you say that someone or something is **green** , you mean they harm the environment as little as possible.

- ...trying to persuade governments to adopt greener policies.
- Our children are being educated to be green in everything they do.

5. countable noun

Greens are members of green political movements.

- The Greens won a seat.

6. countable noun

A **green** is a smooth, flat area of grass around a hole on a golf course.

- ...the 18th green.

7. countable noun

A **green** is an area of land covered with grass, especially in a town or in the middle of a village.

- ...the village green.

8. countable noun

Green is used in the names of places that contain or used to contain an area of grass.

- ...Bethnal Green.

9. plural noun

You can refer to the cooked leaves of vegetables such as spinach or cabbage as **greens**.

- Eat your greens.

10. graded adjective

You can describe fruit and vegetables as **green** when they are unripe and not ready to be eaten.

- Pick and ripen any green fruits in a warm dark place.

11. adjective

If you say that someone is **green**, you mean that they have had very little experience of life or a particular job.

- He was a young lad, very green, very immature.

12. green with envy

13. to have green fingers

Explain

1. adjective

Harsh climates or conditions are very difficult for people, animals, and plants to live in.

- The weather grew harsh, chilly and unpredictable.
- ...the harsh desert environment.
- ...after the harsh experience of the war.

2. adjective

Harsh actions or speech are unkind and show no understanding or sympathy.

- He said many harsh and unkind things about his opponents.

3. adjective

Something that is **harsh** is so hard, bright, or rough that it seems unpleasant or harmful.

- Tropical colours may look rather harsh in our dull northern light.
- ...harsher detergents that can leave hair brittle.

4. adjective

Harsh voices and sounds are ones that are rough and unpleasant to listen to.

- It's a pity she has such a loud harsh voice.

5. adjective

If you talk about **harsh** realities or facts, or the **harsh** truth, you are emphasizing that they are true or real, although they are unpleasant and people try to avoid thinking about them.

- The harsh truth is that luck plays a big part in who will live or die.

harsh

harsher harshest

marriage

marriages

Explain

1. countable noun

A **marriage** is the relationship between two people who are married .

- In a good marriage, both partners work hard to solve any problems that arise.
- When I was 35 my marriage broke up.
- His son by his second marriage lives in Paris.

2. variable noun

A **marriage** is the act of marrying someone, or the ceremony at which this is done.

- I opposed her marriage to Darryl.

3. uncountable noun

Marriage is the state of being married.

- Marriage might not suit you.
- In twenty years of marriage he has only taken two proper vacations.

hysterical

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **hysterical** is in a state of uncontrolled excitement , anger , or panic .

- The singer had to leave by a side exit to flee 200 hysterical fans.
- He made headlines and received hysterical hate mail.

2. adjective

Someone who is **hysterical** is in a state of violent and disturbed emotion that is usually a result of shock .

- I suffered bouts of really hysterical depression.

3. adjective

Hysterical laughter is loud and uncontrolled.

- I had to rush to the loo to avoid an attack of hysterical giggles.

4. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **hysterical** , you think that they are very funny and they make you laugh a lot .

- Paul Mazursky was Master of Ceremonies, and he was pretty hysterical.

mischief

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Mischief is playing harmless tricks on people or doing things you are not supposed to do. It can also refer to the desire to do this.

- The little lad was a real handful. He was always up to mischief.
- Boys at that age should be able to explore and get into mischief.
- His eyes were full of mischief.

2. uncountable noun

Mischief is behaviour that is intended to cause trouble for people. It can also refer to the trouble that is caused.

- Angry MPs have continued to make mischief.

leading

Explain

1. adjective

The **leading** person or thing in a particular area is the one which is most important or successful .

- ...a leading member of Bristol's Sikh community.
- Britain's future as a leading industrial nation depends on investment.

2. adjective

The **leading** role in a play or film is the main role. A **leading** lady or man is an actor who plays this role.

3. adjective

The **leading** group, vehicle , or person in a race or procession is the one that is at the front .

3. countable noun

A **monitor** is a machine that is used to check or record things, for example processes or substances inside a person's body.

- The heart monitor shows low levels of consciousness.

4. countable noun

A **monitor** is a screen which is used to display certain kinds of information, for example in airports or television studios.

- He was watching a game of tennis on a television monitor.

5. countable noun

A **monitor** is the screen on a computer.

- Last night you went home without switching off your computer monitor.

6. countable noun

You can refer to a person who checks that something is done correctly, or that it is fair , as a **monitor** .

- Government monitors will continue to accompany reporters.

monitor

monitors monitoring monitored

Explain

1. verb

If you **monitor** something, you regularly check its development or progress , and sometimes comment on it.

- Officials had not been allowed to monitor the voting.
- You need feedback to monitor progress.

2. verb

If someone **monitors** radio broadcasts from other countries, they record them or listen carefully to them in order to obtain information.

- Peter Murray is in London and has been monitoring reports out of Monrovia.

marital

Explain

1. adjective

Marital is used to describe things relating to marriage.

- Caroline was keen to make her marital home in London.
- Her son had no marital problems.

nightmare

nightmares

Explain

1. countable noun

A **nightmare** is a very frightening dream.

- All the victims still suffered nightmares.
- Jane did not eat cheese because it gives her nightmares.

2. countable noun

If you refer to a situation as a **nightmare** , you mean that it is very frightening and unpleasant .

- The years in prison were a nightmare.

3. countable noun

If you refer to a situation as a **nightmare** , you are saying in a very emphatic way that it is irritating because it causes you a lot of trouble .

- Taking my son Peter to a restaurant was a nightmare.
- In practice a graduate tax is an administrative nightmare.

numb

numbs numbing numbed

Explain

1. adjective

If a part of your body is **numb** , you cannot feel anything there.

- He could feel his fingers growing numb at their tips.
- My legs felt numb and my toes ached.

2. adjective

If you are **numb with** shock, fear , or grief , you are so shocked, frightened , or upset that you cannot think clearly or feel any emotion .

- The mother, numb with grief, has trouble speaking.

- I was so shocked I went numb.

3. verb

If an event or experience **numbs** you, you can no longer think clearly or feel any emotion.

- For a while the shock of Philippe's letter numbed her.
- The horror of my experience has numbed my senses.

4. See also mind-numbing

5. verb

If cold weather , a drug , or a blow **numbs** a part of your body, you can no longer feel anything in it.

- The cold numbed my fingers.
- An injection of local anaesthetic is usually given first to numb the area.
- She awoke with a numbed feeling in her left leg.

origin

origins

Explain

1. variable noun

You can refer to the beginning, cause, or source of something as its **origin** or **origins** .

- ...theories about the origin of life.
- The disorder in military policy had its origins in Truman's first term.
- Their medical problems are basically physical in origin.

- *Most of the thickeners are of plant origin.*

2. countable noun

When you talk about a person's **origin** or **origins**, you are referring to the country, race, or social class of their parents or ancestors.

- *Thomas has not forgotten his humble origins.*
- *...people of Asian origin.*
- *They are forced to return to their country of origin.*

occasional

Explain

1. adjective

Occasional means happening sometimes, but not regularly or often.

- *I've had occasional mild headaches all my life.*
- *Esther used to visit him for the occasional days and weekends.*

outcome

outcomes

Explain

1. countable noun

The **outcome** of an activity, process, or situation is the situation that exists at the end of it.

- *Mr. Singh said he was pleased with the outcome.*
- *It's too early to know the outcome of her illness.*
- *...a successful outcome.*

profound

profounder profoundest

Explain

1. adjective

You use **profound** to emphasize that something is very great or intense.

- *...discoveries which had a profound effect on many areas of medicine.*
- *...profound disagreement.*
- *The overwhelming feeling is just deep, profound shock and anger.*
- *Anna's patriotism was profound.*

2. adjective

A **profound** idea, work, or person shows great intellectual depth and understanding.

- *This is a book full of profound, original and challenging insights.*
- *...one of the country's most profound minds.*

passion

passions

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Passion is strong sexual feelings towards someone.

- *...my passion for a dark-haired, slender boy named James.*
- *...the expression of love and passion.*
- *...Maggy, the object of his passions.*

2. uncountable noun

Passion is a very strong feeling about something or a strong belief in something.

- *He spoke with great passion.*
- *...the passion and commitment of the Republican candidate.*

3. countable noun

If you have a **passion for** something, you have a very strong interest in it and like it very much.

- *She had a passion for gardening.*
- *His other great passion was Italy.*

prompt

prompts prompting prompted

Explain

1. verb

To **prompt** someone **to** do something means to make them decide to do it.

- *Japan's recession has prompted consumers to cut back on buying cars.*
- *The need for villagers to control their own destinies has prompted a new plan.*

2. verb

If you **prompt** someone when they stop speaking, you encourage or help them to continue. If you **prompt** an actor, you tell them what their next line is when they have forgotten what comes next. **Prompt** is also a noun.

- *'Go on,' the therapist prompted him.*
- *How exactly did he prompt her, Mr Markham?*
- *Her blushes were saved by a prompt from one of her hosts.*

3. adjective

A **prompt** action is done without any delay.

- *It is not too late, but prompt action is needed.*

- *...an inflammation of the eyeball which needs prompt treatment.*

4. adjective

If you are **prompt** to do something, you do it without delay or you are not late.

- *You have been so prompt in carrying out all these commissions.*
- *We didn't worry because they were always so prompt with their rental payment.*

philosopher

philosophers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **philosopher** is a person who studies or writes about philosophy.

- *...the Greek philosopher Plato.*

2. countable noun

If you refer to someone as a **philosopher**, you mean that they think deeply and seriously about life and other basic matters.

random

Explain

1. adjective

A **random** sample or method is one in which all the people or things involved have an equal chance of being chosen.

- *The survey used a random sample of two thousand people across England and Wales.*

- The competitors will be subject to random drug testing.

2. adjective

If you describe events as **random** , you mean that they do not seem to follow a definite plan or pattern .

- ...random violence against innocent victims.
- Children's words and actions are often fairly random.
- ...random variations of the wind.

3. at random

4. at random

philosophy

philosophies

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Philosophy is the study or creation of theories about basic things such as the nature of existence , knowledge, and thought, or about how people should live .

- He studied philosophy and psychology at Cambridge.
- ...traditional Chinese philosophy.

2. countable noun

A **philosophy** is a particular set of ideas that a philosopher has.

- ...the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.
- ...a whole spectrum of political philosophies.

3. countable noun

A **philosophy** is a particular theory that someone has about how to live or how to deal with a particular situation.

- The best philosophy is to change your food habits to a low-sugar, high-fibre diet.

- When I interviewed Shakira I felt in tune with her philosophy of life.

- Annie's work reflects her philosophy that life is full of mysteries.

restless

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **restless** , you are bored , impatient , or dissatisfied , and you want to do something else.

- By 1982, she was restless and needed a new impetus for her talent.
- ...a major new initiative to placate the country's restless intellectuals.

2. adjective

If someone is **restless** , they keep moving around because they find it difficult to keep still.

- My father seemed very restless and excited.

3. adjective

If you have a **restless** night , you do not sleep properly and when you wake up you feel tired and uncomfortable .

- The shocking revelations of the 700-page report had caused him several restless nights.
- Hurt had spent a restless few hours on the plane from Paris.

rake

rakes raking raked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **rake** is a garden tool consisting of a row of metal or wooden teeth attached to a long handle . You can use a rake to make the earth smooth and level before you put plants in, or to gather leaves together.

2. verb

If you **rake** a surface, you move a rake across it in order to make it smooth and level.

- Rake the soil, press the seed into it, then cover it lightly.
- The beach is raked and cleaned daily.

3. verb

If you **rake** leaves or ashes, you move them somewhere using a rake or a similar tool.

- I watched the men rake leaves into heaps.
- She raked out the ashes from the boiler.

4. verb

If someone **rakes** an area **with** gunfire or **with** light, they cover it thoroughly by moving the gun or the light across from one side of the area to another.

- Planes dropped bombs and raked the beach with machine gun fire.
- The caravan was raked with bullets.
- The headlights raked across a painted sign.

5. verb

If branches or someone's finger nails **rake** your skin, they scrape across it.

- Ragged fingernails raked her skin.
- He found the man's cheeks and raked them with his nails.

6. verb

If you **rake through** a pile of objects or rubbish , you search through it thoroughly with your hands

- Many can survive only by raking through dustbins.

7. countable noun

If you call a man a **rake** , you mean that he is rather immoral , for example because he gambles , drinks, or has sexual relationships with many women.

rotary

Explain

1. adjective

Rotary means turning or able to turn round a fixed point.

- ...turning linear into rotary motion.
- ...heavy-duty rotary blades.

2. adjective

Rotary is used in the names of some machines that have parts that turn round a fixed point.

- ...a rotary engine.

result

results resulting resulted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **result** is something that happens or exists because of something else that has happened.

- Compensation is available for people who developed asthma as a direct result of their work.

- A real pizza oven gives better results than an ordinary home oven.

rough

rougher roughest roughs roughing roughed

2. verb

If something **results in** a particular situation or event, it causes that situation or event to happen.

- Fifty per cent of road accidents result in head injuries.
- One in five hip fractures results in death.

3. verb

If something **results from** a particular event or action, it is caused by that event or action.

- Many hair problems result from what you eat.
- Ignore the early warnings and illness could result.

4. countable noun

A **result** is the situation that exists at the end of a contest.

- 'What was the result?'—'One-nil to Leeds.'
- The final election results will be announced on Friday.
- ...the football results.

5. countable noun

A **result** is the number that you get when you do a calculation .

- They found their computers producing different results from exactly the same calculation.

6. countable noun

Your **results** are the marks or grades that you get for examinations you have taken .

- Kate's exam results were excellent.

Explain

1. adjective

If a surface is **rough** , it is uneven and not smooth.

- His hands were rough and calloused, from years of karate practice.
- Grace made her way slowly across the rough ground.

2. adjective

You say that people or their actions are **rough** when they use too much force and not enough care or gentleness .

- Rugby's a rough game at the best of times.
- They have complained of discrimination and occasional rough treatment.

3. adjective

A **rough** area, city, school, or other place is unpleasant and dangerous because there is a lot of violence or crime there.

- It was quite a rough part of our town.

4. adjective

If you say that someone has had a **rough** time, you mean that they have had some difficult or unpleasant experiences.

- All women have a rough time in our society.
- Tomorrow, he knew, would be a rough day.

5. adjective

If you feel **rough** , you feel ill.

- The virus won't go away and the lad is still feeling a bit rough.

6. adjective

A **rough** calculation or guess is approximately correct, but not exact .

- We were only able to make a rough estimate of how much fuel would be required.
- As a rough guide, a horse needs 2.5 per cent of his body weight in food every day.

7. adjective

If you give someone a **rough** idea, description , or drawing of something, you indicate only the most important features, without much detail.

- I've got a rough idea of what he looks like.
- It often helps to make a rough sketch showing where the vehicles were.

8. adjective

You can say that something is **rough** when it is not neat and well made.

- ...a rough wooden table.
- ...chairs set in a rough circle in the middle of the room.

9. adjective

If the sea or the weather at sea is **rough** , the weather is windy or stormy and there are very big waves.

- A fishing vessel and a cargo ship collided in rough seas.

10. to sleep rough

11. verb

If you have to **rough** it, you have to live without the possessions and comforts that you normally have.

- You won't be roughing it; each room comes equipped with a telephone and a 3-channel radio.

ruler

rulers

Explain

1. countable noun

The **ruler** of a country is the person who rules the country.

- ...the former military ruler of Lesotho.
- He was a weak-willed and indecisive ruler.

2. countable noun

A **ruler** is a long flat piece of wood, metal, or plastic with straight edges marked in centimetres or inches. Rulers are used to measure things and to draw straight lines.

rude

ruder rudest

Explain

1. adjective

When people are **rude** , they act in an impolite way towards other people or say impolite things about them.

- He's rude to her friends and obsessively jealous.
- People were quite often rude about him, often the people he had helped.
- Unfair bosses and rude customers make us unhappy on the job.

2. adjective

Rude is used to describe words and behaviour that are likely to embarrass or offend people, because they relate to sex or to body functions.

- Fred keeps cracking rude jokes with the guests.

- Luke made a rude gesture with his finger.

3. adjective

If someone receives a **rude** shock , something unpleasant happens unexpectedly.

- It will come as a rude shock when their salary or income-tax refund cannot be cashed.

4. adjective

Objects can be described as **rude** when they are very simply and roughly made.

- Roden had already constructed a rude cabin for himself and his family in case of necessity.

5. rude health

salt

salts salting salted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Salt is a strong-tasting substance, in the form of white powder or crystals , which is used to improve the flavour of food or to preserve it. Salt occurs naturally in sea water.

- Season lightly with salt and pepper.
- ...a pinch of salt.

2. verb

When you **salt** food, you add salt to it.

- Salt the stock to your taste and leave it simmering very gently.

3. countable noun

Salts are substances that are formed when an acid reacts with an alkali .

- The rock is rich in mineral salts.

4. salt of the earth

5. to take something with a pinch of salt

6. worth one's salt

7. to rub salt into the wound

second

seconds

Explain

1. countable noun

A **second** is one of the sixty parts that a minute is divided into. People often say ' a second ' or ' seconds ' when they simply mean a very short time.

- For a few seconds nobody said anything.
- It only takes forty seconds.
- Her orbital speed must be a few hundred meters per second.
- Within seconds the other soldiers began firing too.
- Seconds later, firemen reached his door.

saving

savings

Explain

1. countable noun

A **saving** is a reduction in the amount of time or money that is used or needed .

- Fill in the form below and you will be making a saving of £6.60 on a one-year subscription .

- ...a program of household savings on energy use.

2. plural noun

Your **savings** are the money that you have saved, especially in a bank or a building society .

- Her savings were in the Post Office Savings Bank.
- ...a savings account.

silent

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **silent** is not speaking.

- Trish was silent because she was reluctant to put her thoughts into words.
- He spoke no English and was completely silent during the visit.
- They both fell silent.

2. adjective

If you describe someone as a **silent** person, you mean that they do not talk to people very much, and sometimes give the impression of being unfriendly .

- He was a serious, silent man.

3. adjective

A place that is **silent** is completely quiet , with no sound at all. Something that is **silent** makes no sound at all.

- The room was silent except for John's crunching.
- The heavy guns have again fallen silent.

4. graded adjective

If someone is **silent about** something, they do not tell people anything about it, because they think it is a private matter or because they want to keep the information secret .

- Douglas was noticeably silent about his feelings for his father.

5. adjective

A **silent** emotion or action is not expressed in speech .

- The attacker still stood there, watching her with silent contempt.
- She offered a silent prayer of thanks.

6. adjective

A **silent** film has pictures usually accompanied by music but does not have the actors ' voices or any other sounds.

- ...one of the famous silent films of Charlie Chaplin.
- ...comedy stars of the silent era.

7. adjective

A **silent** letter in a word is written but not pronounced. For example , the ' k ' in the word ' know ' is silent.

setback

setbacks

Explain

1. countable noun

A **setback** is an event that delays your progress or reverses some of the progress that you have made.

- The move represents a setback for the peace process.
- He has suffered a serious setback in his political career.

sober

sobers sobering sobered

Explain

1. adjective

When you are **sober** , you are not drunk.

- When Dad was sober he was a good father.

2. adjective

A **sober** person is serious and thoughtful .

- We are now far more sober and realistic.
- It was a room filled with sad, sober faces.
- The euphoria is giving way to a more sober assessment of the situation.

3. adjective

Sober colours and clothes are plain and rather dull.

- He dresses in sober grey suits.
- ...sober-suited middle-aged men.

sketch

sketches sketching sketched

Explain

1. countable noun

A **sketch** is a drawing that is done quickly without a lot of details . Artists often use sketches as a preparation for a more detailed painting or drawing.

- ...a sketch of a soldier by Orpen.

2. verb

If you **sketch** something, you make a quick , rough drawing of it.

- Clare and David Astor are sketching a view of far Spanish hills.
- I always sketch with pen and paper.
- ...balconies and gates sketched on holidays in Spain and Italy.
- Her hobbies were playing the guitar and sketching.

3. countable noun

A **sketch** of a situation , person, or incident is a brief description of it without many details.

- ...thumbnail sketches of heads of state and political figures.
- I had a basic sketch of a plan.

4. verb

If you **sketch** a situation or incident, you give a short description of it, including only the most important facts . **Sketch out** means the same as sketch .

- Cross sketched the story briefly, telling the facts just as they had happened.
- Initially you only need to submit a proposal which briefly sketches out your ideas.

5. countable noun

A **sketch** is a short humorous piece of acting, usually forming part of a comedy show .

- ...a five-minute sketch about a folk singer.

sticky

stickier stickiest

Explain

1. adjective

A **sticky** substance is soft , or thick and liquid , and can stick to other things. **Sticky** things are covered with a sticky substance.

- ...sticky toffee.
- If the dough is sticky, add more flour.
- Peel away the sticky paper.

2. adjective

A **sticky** situation involves problems or is embarrassing .

- Inevitably the transition will yield some sticky moments.
- Her research was going through a sticky patch.

3. adjective

Sticky weather is unpleasantly hot and damp .

- ...four desperately hot, sticky days in the middle of August.

4. to come to a sticky end

structure

structures structuring structured

Explain

1. variable noun

The **structure of** something is the way in which it is made, built , or organized .

- The typical family structure of Freud's patients involved two parents and two children.
- The chemical structure of this particular molecule is very unusual.

2. countable noun

A **structure** is something that consists of parts connected together in an ordered way.

- The feet are highly specialised structures made up of 26 small delicate bones.

3. countable noun

A **structure** is something that has been built.

- About half of those funds has gone to repair public roads, structures and bridges.
- The house was a handsome four-story brick structure.

4. verb

If you **structure** something, you arrange it in a careful , organized pattern or system.

- By structuring the course this way, we produce something companies think is valuable.

subsequent

Explain

1. adjective

You use **subsequent** to describe something that happened or existed after the time or event that has just been referred to.

- ...the increase of population in subsequent years.
- Those concerns were overshadowed by subsequent events.

2. subsequent to

terror

terrors

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Terror is very great fear.

- I shook with terror whenever I was about to fly in an aeroplane.
- The day of terror ended after police used teargas and stormed the house.

2. uncountable noun

Terror is violence or the threat of violence, especially when it is used for political reasons .

- The bomb attack on the capital could signal the start of a pre-election terror campaign.

3. countable noun

A **terror** is something that makes you very frightened .

- As a boy, he had a real terror of facing people.
- ...the terrors of violence.

4. countable noun

If someone describes a child as a **terror** , they think that he or she is naughty and difficult to control.

- He was a terror. He had been a difficult child for as long as his parents could remember.

5. hold no terrors for

violent

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **violent** , or if they do something which is **violent** , they use physical force or weapons to hurt , injure, or kill other people.

- A quarter of current inmates have committed violent crimes.
- ...violent anti-government demonstrations.
- When I first came here, I was very violent.
- Sometimes the men get violent.

2. adjective

A **violent** event happens suddenly and with great force.

- A violent impact hurtled her forward.

- A violent explosion seemed to jolt the whole ground.

3. adjective

If you describe something as **violent** , you mean that it is said , done , or felt very strongly.

- Violent opposition to the plan continues.
- He had violent stomach pains.
- ...an outburst of violent emotion.

4. graded adjective

Violent changes are extreme changes from one state to another.

- Larry began suffering severe headaches and violent mood swings.

5. adjective

A **violent** death is painful and unexpected , usually because the person who dies has been murdered .

- ...an innocent man who had met a violent death.

6. adjective

A **violent** film or television programme contains a lot of scenes which show violence.

- It was the most violent film that I have ever seen.

7. graded adjective

If you describe a colour as **violent** , you mean that it is extremely , and often unpleasantly, bright .

- ...the violent red of dying sunset.

8. graded adjective

Violent weather is extremely stormy and windy .

- A violent storm had struck the area.

threat

threats

Explain

1. variable noun

A **threat to** a person or thing is a danger that something unpleasant might happen to them. A **threat** is also the cause of this danger.

- Some couples see single women as a threat to their relationships.
- The Hurricane Center warns people not to take the threat of tropical storms lightly.
- All countries in the region had the right to protect themselves against external threat.

2. countable noun

A **threat** is a statement by someone that they will do something unpleasant, especially if you do not do what they want .

- He may be forced to carry out his threat to resign.
- The writer remains in hiding after threats by former officials of the ousted dictatorship.
- The last journalist to interview him received a death threat.

3. under threat

wonderful

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **wonderful** , you think they are extremely good.

- The cold, misty air felt wonderful on his face.
- It's wonderful to see you.

- I've always thought he was a wonderful actor.

zeal

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Zeal is great enthusiasm , especially in connection with work, religion , or politics .

- ...his zeal for teaching.
- Mr Lopez approached his task with a religious zeal.

best

Explain

1. **Best** is the superlative of well2 .

- What's the best thing to do when I get a cold sore?
- It's not the best place to live if you wish to develop your knowledge and love of mountains.

2. **Best** is the superlative of good .

- He was best known as a writer on mystical subjects.

3. singular noun

The best is used to refer to things of the highest quality or standard .

- We offer only the best to our clients.
- He'll have the best of care.

4. singular noun

Someone's **best** is the greatest effort or highest achievement or standard that they are capable of.

- Miss Blockey was at her best when she played the piano.
- One needs to be a first-class driver to get the best out of that sort of machinery.

5. singular noun

If you say that something is **the best** that can be done or hoped for, you think it is the most pleasant, successful, or useful thing that can be done or hoped for.

- A draw seems the best they can hope for.
- The best we can do is try to stay cool and muddle through.

6. adverb

If you like something **best** or like it **the best**, you prefer it.

- The thing I liked best about the show was the music.
- Mother liked it best when Daniel got money.
- What was the role you loved the best?

7. **Best** is used to form the superlative of compound adjectives beginning with 'good' and 'well'. For example, the superlative of 'well-known' is 'best-known'.

8. all the best

9. best of all

10. as best one can

11. at best

12. to do one's best

13. for the best

14. the best of friends

15. had best

16. to know best

17. to look one's best

18. to make the best of sth

atom

atoms

Explain

1. countable noun

An **atom** is the smallest amount of a substance that can take part in a chemical reaction.

- A methane molecule is composed of one carbon atom attached to four hydrogens.

black

blacker blackest blacks blacking blacked

Explain

1. colour

Something that is **black** is of the darkest colour that there is, the colour of the sky at night when there is no light at all.

- She was wearing a black coat with a white collar.
- He had thick black hair.
- I wear a lot of black.
- He was dressed all in black.

2. adjective

A **black** person belongs to a race of people with dark skins, especially a race from Africa.

- He worked for the rights of black people.
- Sherry is black, tall, slender and soft-spoken.
- ...the traditions of the black community.

3. countable noun

Black people are sometimes referred to as **blacks**. This use could cause offence.

- There are about thirty-one million blacks in the U.S..
4. adjective
Black coffee or tea has no milk or cream added to it.
- A cup of black tea or black coffee contains no calories.
 - I drink coffee black.
5. adjective
 If you describe a situation as **black** , you are emphasizing that it is very bad indeed.
- It was, he said later, one of the blackest days of his political career.
 - The future for the industry looks even blacker.
6. adjective
 If someone is in a **black** mood , they feel very miserable and depressed .
- In late 1975, she fell into a black depression.
 - Her mood was blacker than ever.
7. graded adjective
 You use **black** to describe things that you consider to be very cruel or wicked.
- I think their crime is a blacker one than mere exploitation.
 - ...the blackest laws in the country's history.
8. adjective
Black humour involves jokes about sad or difficult situations.
- 'So you can all go over there and get shot,' he said, with the sort of black humour common among British troops here.
 - It's a black comedy of racial prejudice, mistaken identity and thwarted expectations.
9. adjective
 People who believe in **black** magic believe that it is possible to communicate with evil spirits .
- He was also alleged to have conducted black magic ceremonies.
 - The King was unjustly accused of practising the black arts.
10. verb
 If someone **blacks** another person's eye, they punch or hit that person in the eye, causing it to bruise and look black.
- Her brother blacked her eye.
 - He was trying to hide his two blacked eyes.
11. be black and blue
12. be in the black
13. black look
14. the new black
15. the new black
- ## bang
- bangs banging banged
- ### Explain
1. countable noun
 A **bang** is a sudden loud noise such as the noise of an explosion.
- I heard four or five loud bangs.
 - She slammed the door with a bang.
 - The television went bang.
2. verb
 If something **bangs** , it makes a sudden loud noise, once or several times.

- *The engine spat and banged.*
3. verb
If you **bang** a door or if it **bangs** , it closes suddenly with a loud noise.
- *...the sound of doors banging.*
 - *All up and down the street the windows bang shut.*
 - *The wind banged a door somewhere.*
4. verb
If you **bang on** something or if you **bang** it, you hit it hard, making a loud noise.
- *We could bang on the desks and shout till they let us out.*
 - *There is no point in shouting or banging the table.*
5. verb
If you **bang** something on something or if you **bang** it down, you quickly and violently put it on a surface , because you are angry .
- *She banged his dinner on the table.*
 - *He banged down the telephone.*
6. verb
If you **bang** a part of your body, you accidentally knock it against something and hurt yourself. **Bang** is also a noun .
- *She'd fainted and banged her head.*
 - *He hurried into the hall, banging his shin against a chair in the darkness.*
 - *...a nasty bang on the head.*
7. verb
If you **bang into** something or someone, you bump or knock them hard, usually because you are not looking where you are going .

- *I didn't mean to bang into you.*
 - *Various men kept banging into me in the narrow corridor.*
8. plural noun
Bangs are hair which is cut so that it hangs over your forehead.
- *My bangs were cut short, but the rest of my hair was long.*
9. adverb
You can use **bang** to emphasize expressions that indicate an exact position or an exact time.
- *...bang in the middle of the track.*
 - *For once you leave bang on time for work.*
10. bang goes sth
11. with a bang

colonial

colonials

Explain

1. adjective
Colonial means relating to countries that are colonies, or to colonialism .
- *...the 31st anniversary of Jamaica's independence from British colonial rule.*
 - *...the colonial civil service.*
2. countable noun
People who have lived for a long time in a colony but who belong to the colonizing country are sometimes referred to as **colonials** .
- *...a group of ex-colonials.*

3. adjective

A **Colonial** building or piece of furniture was built or made in a style that was popular in America in the 17th and 18th centuries.

- ...the white colonial houses on the north side of the campus.
- I sat on the Colonial bench that was just to the left of the office doorway.

bridge

bridges bridging bridged

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bridge** is a structure that is built over a railway, river, or road so that people or vehicles can cross from one side to the other.

- He walked back over the railway bridge.
- ...the Golden Gate Bridge.

2. countable noun

A **bridge** between two places is a piece of land that joins or connects them.

- ...a land bridge linking Serbian territories.

3. verb

To **bridge** the gap between two people or things means to reduce it or get rid of it.

- It is unlikely that the two sides will be able to bridge their differences.

4. verb

Something that **bridges** the gap between two very different things has some of the qualities of each of these things.

- ...the singer who bridged the gap between pop music and opera.

5. countable noun

If something or someone acts as a **bridge** between two people, groups, or things, they connect them.

- We hope this book will act as a bridge between doctor and patient.
- They saw themselves as a bridge to peace.

6. countable noun

The **bridge** is the place on a ship from which it is steered .

7. countable noun

The **bridge** of your nose is the thin top part of it, between your eyes.

- On the bridge of his hooked nose was a pair of gold rimless spectacles.

8. countable noun

The **bridge** of a pair of glasses is the part that rests on your nose.

9. countable noun

The **bridge** of a violin, guitar, or other stringed instrument is the small piece of wood under the strings that holds them up.

10. countable noun

A **bridge** is a piece of metal or plastic that holds false teeth in place by connecting them to natural teeth.

11. uncountable noun

Bridge is a card game for four players in which the players begin by declaring how many tricks they expect to win.

12. burn one's bridges

comic

comics

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **comic** , you mean that it makes you laugh , and is often intended to make you laugh.

- The novel is comic and tragic.
- Most of these trips had exciting or comic moments.

2. adjective

Comic is used to describe comedy as a form of entertainment , and the actors and entertainers who perform it.

- Grodin is a fine comic actor.
- ...a comic opera.

3. countable noun

A **comic** is an entertainer who tells jokes in order to make people laugh.

4. countable noun

A **comic** is a magazine that contains stories told in pictures .

- Joe loved to read 'Superman' comics.

5. plural noun

The comics is the part of a newspaper that contains the comic strips.

cause

causes causing caused

Explain

1. countable noun

The **cause of** an event, usually a bad event, is the thing that makes it happen .

- Smoking is the biggest preventable cause of death and disease.

- The causes are a complex blend of local and national tensions.

2. verb

To **cause** something, usually something bad, means to make it happen.

- Attempts to limit family size among some minorities are likely to cause problems.
- This was a genuine mistake, but it did cause me some worry.
- ...a protein that gets into animal cells and attacks other proteins, causing disease to spread.
- Experts are assessing the damage caused by a fire at the aircraft factory.

3. uncountable noun

If you have **cause for** a particular feeling or action, you have good reasons for feeling it or doing it.

- Only a few people can find any cause for celebration.
- Both had much cause to be grateful.

4. countable noun

A **cause** is an aim or principle which a group of people supports or is fighting for.

- Refusing to have one leader has not helped the cause.

5. cause and effect

6. to make common cause with someone

7. in a good cause/for a good cause

dark

darker darkest

Explain

1. adjective

When it is **dark** , there is not enough light to see properly, for example because it is night.

- *When she awoke it was evening and already dark.*
- *It was too dark inside to see much.*
- *People usually draw the curtains once it gets dark.*
- *She snapped off the light and made her way back through the dark kitchen.*

2. singular noun

The dark is the lack of light in a place.

- *Her mother was sitting in the dark by the stove in her rocking chair.*
- *I've always been afraid of the dark.*

3. adjective

If you describe something as **dark** , you mean that it is black in colour, or a shade that is close to black.

- *He wore a dark suit and carried a black attaché case.*
- *The heavy dark table is inlaid with lighter wood.*

4. adjective

When you use **dark** to describe a colour, you are referring to a shade of that colour which is close to black, or seems to have some black in it.

- *She was wearing a dark blue dress.*

5. adjective

If someone has **dark** hair, eyes , or skin, they have brown or black hair, eyes, or skin.

- *He had dark, curly hair.*

- *Leo went on, his dark eyes wide with pity and concern.*

6. adjective

If you describe a white person as **dark** , you mean that they have brown or black hair, and often a brownish skin.

- *He's gorgeous – tall and dark.*

7. adjective

A **dark** period of time is unpleasant or frightening .

- *Once again there's talk of very dark days ahead.*
- *This was the darkest period of the war.*

8. adjective

A **dark** place or area is mysterious and not fully known about.

- *The spacecraft is set to throw new light on to a dark corner of the solar system.*
- *...the dark recesses of the mind.*

9. adjective

Dark thoughts are sad , and show that you are expecting something unpleasant to happen .

- *Troy's chatter kept me from thinking dark thoughts.*

10. adjective

Dark looks or remarks make you think that the person giving them wants to harm you or that something horrible is going to happen.

- *Garin shot him a dark glance, as if in warning.*
- *...dark threats.*

11. adjective

If you describe something as **dark** , you mean that it is related to things that are serious or unpleasant, rather than light-hearted .

- *Their dark humor never failed to astound him.*
- *Nina took a dark pleasure in being the cause of tension.*

12. *after dark*

13. *before dark*

14. *in the dark*

15. *a shot in the dark*

circle

circles circling circled

Explain

1. *countable noun*

A **circle** is a shape consisting of a curved line completely surrounding an area. Every part of the line is the same distance from the centre of the area.

- *The flag was red, with a large white circle in the centre.*
- *I wrote down the number 46 and drew a circle around it.*

2. *countable noun*

A **circle of** something is a round flat piece or area of it.

- *Cut out 4 circles of pastry.*
- *...a circle of yellow light.*

3. *countable noun*

A **circle of** objects or people is a group of them arranged in the shape of a circle.

- *The monument consists of a circle of gigantic stones.*

- *We stood in a circle holding hands.*

4. *verb*

If something **circles** an object or a place, or **circles around** it, it forms a circle around it.

- *This is the ring road that circles the city.*
- *...the long curving driveway that circled around the vast clipped lawn.*

5. *verb*

If an aircraft or a bird **circles** or **circles** something, it moves round in a circle in the air.

- *The plane circled, awaiting permission to land.*
- *There were two helicopters circling around.*
- *...like a hawk circling prey.*

6. *verb*

To **circle around** someone or something, or to **circle** them, means to move around them.

- *Emily kept circling around her mother.*
- *The silent wolves would track and circle them.*

7. *verb*

If you **circle** something on a piece of paper, you draw a circle around it.

- *Circle the correct answers on the coupon below.*

8. *countable noun*

You can refer to a group of people as a **circle** when they meet each other regularly because they are friends or because they belong to the same profession or share the same interests.

- *He has a small circle of friends.*
- *Alton has made himself fiercely unpopular in certain circles.*

9. singular noun

In a theatre or cinema , **the circle** is an area of seats on the upper floor .

10. to come full circle

11. go round in circles/go around in circles

exact

exacts exacting exacted

Explain

1. adjective

Exact means correct in every detail. For example , an **exact** copy is the same in every detail as the thing it is copied from.

- I don't remember the exact words.
- The exact number of protest calls has not been revealed.
- It's an exact copy of the one which was found in Ann Alice's room.

2. adjective

You use **exact** before a noun to emphasize that you are referring to that particular thing and no other, especially something that has a particular significance .

- I hadn't really thought about it until this exact moment.
- Do you really think I could get the exact thing I want?
- It may be that you will feel the exact opposite of what you expected.

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **exact** , you mean that they are very careful and detailed in their work, thinking , or methods.

- Formal, exact and obstinate, he was also cold, suspicious, touchy and tactless.

4. verb

When someone **exacts** something, they demand and obtain it from another person, especially because they are in a superior or more powerful position.

- Already he has exacted a written apology from the chairman of the commission.
- They, too, would be likely to exact a high price for their cooperation.

5. verb

If someone **exacts** revenge **on** a person, they have their revenge on them.

- She uses the media to help her exact a terrible revenge.

6. verb

If something **exacts** a high price, it has a bad effect on a person or situation.

- The sheer physical effort had exacted a heavy price.
- The strain of a violent ground campaign will exact a toll on troops.

7. to be exact

federal

federals

Explain

1. adjective

A **federal** country or system of government is one in which the different states or provinces of the country have important powers to make their own laws and decisions .

- The provinces are to become autonomous regions in the new federal system.

2. adjective

Some people use **federal** to describe a system of government which they disapprove of, in which the different states or provinces are controlled by a strong central government.

- He does not believe in a federal Europe with centralising powers.

3. adjective

Federal also means belonging or relating to the national government of a federal country rather than to one of the states within it.

- The federal government controls just 6
- ...a federal judge.

4. countable noun

Federals are the same as feds .

duck

ducks ducking ducked

Explain

1. variable noun

A **duck** is a very common water bird with short legs, a short neck , and a large flat beak . **Duck** is the flesh of this bird when it is eaten as food.

- Chickens and ducks scratch around the out-buildings.
- ...honey roasted duck.

2. countable noun

A **duck** is a female duck. The male is called a drake.

- I brought in one drake and three ducks.

3. verb

If you **duck** , you move your head or the top half of your body quickly downwards to avoid something that might hit you, or to avoid being seen .

- He ducked in time to save his head from a blow from the poker.
- He ducked his head to hide his admiration.
- I wanted to duck down and slip past but they saw me.

4. verb

If you **duck** something such as a blow, you avoid it by moving your head or body quickly downwards.

- Hans deftly ducked their blows.

5. verb

If you **duck** into a place, you move there quickly, often in an attempt to avoid danger or to avoid being seen.

- Matt ducked into his office.
- He ducked through the door and looked about frantically.

6. verb

You say that someone **ducks** a duty or responsibility when you disapprove of the fact that they avoid it.

- The Opposition reckons the Health Secretary has ducked all the difficult decisions.
- He had ducked the confrontation with United Nations inspectors last summer.

7. verb

If someone **ducks** someone else, they force them or their head under water for a short time.

- She splashed around in the pool with Mark, rowdily trying to duck him.

8. vocative noun

Some people call other people **duck** or **ducks** as a sign of affection .

- Oh, I am glad to see you, duck.

9. like water off a duck's back

10. to take to something like a duck to water

final

finals

Explain

1. adjective

In a series of events , things, or people, the **final** one is the last one.

- They will hold a meeting in a final attempt to agree a common position.
- This is the fifth and probably final day of testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.
- On the last Saturday in September, I received a final letter from Clive.

2. adjective

Final means happening at the end of an event or series of events.

- You must have been on stage until the final curtain.
- The countdown to the Notting Hill Carnival is in its final hours.

3. adjective

You can use **final** to emphasize that a situation has a particular quality to a very great or severe degree .

- Only a few go through the final humiliation of meeting the bailiff at the door.

4. adjective

If a decision or someone's authority is **final** , it cannot be changed or questioned .

- The judges' decision is final.
- The White House has the final say.
- I'm not going, and that's final.

5. countable noun

The **final** is the last game or contest in a series and decides who is the winner.

- ...the Scottish Cup Final.
- He won the men's final at the Singapore Open.

6. plural noun

The finals of a sporting tournament consist of a smaller tournament that includes only players or teams that have won earlier games. The finals decide the winner of the whole tournament.

- They have a chance of qualifying for the World Cup Finals.

7. plural noun

When a student takes his or her **finals** , he or she takes the last and most important examinations in a university or college course .

- Anna sat her finals in the summer.

emergency

emergencies

Explain

1. countable noun

An **emergency** is an unexpected and difficult or dangerous situation , especially an accident , which happens suddenly and which requires quick action to deal with it.

- *He deals with emergencies promptly.*
- *The hospital will cater only for emergencies.*

2. adjective

An **emergency** action is one that is done or arranged quickly and not in the normal way, because an emergency has occurred.

- *The Prime Minister has called an emergency meeting of parliament.*
- *She made an emergency appointment.*

3. adjective

Emergency equipment or supplies are those intended for use in an emergency.

- *The plane is carrying emergency supplies for refugees.*
- *They escaped through an emergency exit and called the police.*

fine

finer finest

Explain

1. adjective

You use **fine** to describe something that you admire and think is very good.

- *There is a fine view of the countryside.*
- *This is a fine book.*
- *...London's finest art deco cinema.*

2. adjective

If you say that you are **fine**, you mean that you are in good health or reasonably happy.

- *Lina is fine and sends you her love and best wishes.*

3. adjective

If you say that something is **fine**, you mean that it is satisfactory or acceptable. **Fine** is also an adverb.

- *The skiing is fine.*
- *Everything was going to be just fine.*
- *It's fine to ask questions as we go along, but it's better if you wait until we have finished.*
- *All the instruments are working fine.*

4. convention

You say '**fine**' or '**that's fine**' to show that you do not object to an arrangement, action, or situation that has been suggested.

- *If competition is the best way to achieve it, then, fine.*
- *If you don't want to give it to me, that's fine, I don't mind.*
- *'It'll take me a couple of days.'*—'*That's fine with me.*'

5. adjective

Something that is **fine** is very delicate, narrow, or small.

- *The heat scorched the fine hairs on her arms.*
- *The ship has come to rest on the fine sand.*

6. adjective

Fine objects or clothing are of good quality, delicate, and expensive.

- *We waited in our fine clothes.*
- *She'll wear fine jewellery wherever she goes.*

7. adjective

A **fine** detail or distinction is very delicate, small, or exact.

- The market likes the broad outline but is reserving judgment on the fine detail.

8. adjective

A **fine** person is someone you consider good, moral, and worth admiring.

- I was with fine people doing a good job.
- He was an excellent journalist and a very fine man.

9. adjective

When the weather is **fine** , the sun is shining and it is not raining .

- He might be doing a spot of gardening if the weather is fine.

frame

frames framing framed

Explain

1. countable noun

The **frame** of a picture or mirror is the wood, metal, or plastic that is fitted around it, especially when it is displayed or hung on a wall.

- Estelle kept a photograph of her mother in a silver frame on the kitchen mantelpiece.
- ...a pair of picture frames.

2. countable noun

The **frame** of an object such as a building, chair , or window is the arrangement of wooden, metal, or plastic bars between which other material is fitted, and which give the object its strength and shape.

- He supplied housebuilders with modern timber frames.
- With difficulty he released the mattress from the metal frame, and groped beneath it.

- We painted our table to match the window frame in the bedroom.

3. countable noun

The **frames** of a pair of glasses are all the metal or plastic parts of it, but not the lenses .

- He was wearing new spectacles with gold wire frames.

4. countable noun

You can refer to someone's body as their **frame** , especially when you are describing the general shape of their body.

- Their belts are pulled tight against their bony frames.

5. countable noun

A **frame** of cinema film is one of the many separate photographs that it consists of.

- Standard 8mm projects at 16 frames per second.

6. adjective

A **frame** building is one in which pieces of wood form the most important part of the structure, rather than bricks or stone.

- He lives in a white-painted frame house behind a picket fence up in Connecticut.

7. verb

When a picture or photograph **is framed** , it is put in a frame.

- The picture is now ready to be mounted and framed.
- On the wall is a large framed photograph.

8. verb

If an object **is framed** by a particular thing, it is surrounded by that thing in a way that makes the object more striking or attractive to look at.

- The swimming pool is framed by tropical gardens.

- An elegant occasional table is framed in the window.

9. verb

If someone **frames** something such as a set of rules, a plan, or a system, they create and develop it.

- After the war, a convention was set up to frame a constitution.

10. verb

If someone **frames** something in a particular style or kind of language, they express it in that way.

- The story is framed in a format that is part thriller, part love story.
- He framed this question three different ways in search of an answer.

11. verb

If someone **frames** an innocent person, they make other people think that that person is guilty of a crime, by lying or inventing evidence .

- I need to find out who tried to frame me.
- He claimed that he had been framed by the police.

12. in the frame

foremost

Explain

1. adjective

The **foremost** thing or person in a group is the most important or best .

- He was one of the world's foremost scholars of ancient Indian culture.

- Foremost among the military government's enemies are the foreign media.

2. first and foremost

headmaster

headmasters

Explain

1. countable noun

A **headmaster** is a man who is the head teacher of a school.

genetic

Explain

1. adjective

You use **genetic** to describe something that is concerned with genetics or with genes.

- Cystic fibrosis is the most common fatal genetic disease in the United States.

initial

initials initialling initialised

Explain

1. adjective

You use **initial** to describe something that happens at the beginning of a process.

- The initial reaction has been excellent.
- The aim of this initial meeting is to clarify the issues.

2. countable noun

Initials are the capital letters which begin each word of a name. For example , if your full name is Michael Dennis Stocks , your initials will be M . D .S.

- ...a silver Porsche car with her initials JB on the side.

3. verb

If someone **initials** an official document , they write their initials on it, for example to show that they have seen it or that they accept or agree with it.

- Would you mind initialing this voucher?
- The agreement was initialled in June.

mammal

mammals

Explain

1. countable noun

Mammals are animals such as humans, dogs , lions , and whales. In general, female mammals give birth to babies rather than laying eggs , and feed their young with milk .

keen

keener keenest keens keening keened

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **keen on** doing something, you very much want to do it. If you are **keen that** something should happen , you very much want it to happen.

- You're not keen on going, are you?
- Both companies were keen on a merger.
- I'm very keen that the European Union should be as open as possible to trade from Russia.
- She's still keen to keep in touch.

- I am not keen for her to have a bicycle.

2. adjective

If you are **keen on** something, you like it a lot and are very enthusiastic about it.

- I got quite keen on the idea.
- I wasn't too keen on physics and chemistry.

3. adjective

You use **keen** to indicate that someone has a lot of enthusiasm for a particular activity and spends a lot of time doing it.

- She was a keen amateur photographer.

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **keen** , you mean that they have an enthusiastic nature and are interested in everything that they do.

- He's a very keen student and works very hard.
- You're all very keen.

5. adjective

A **keen** interest or emotion is one that is very intense.

- He had retained a keen interest in the progress of the work.
- ...his keen sense of loyalty.

6. adjective

If you are a **keen** supporter of a cause, movement, or idea , you support it enthusiastically.

- He's been a keen supporter of the Labour Party all his life.
- He is a keen advocate of park-and-ride schemes.

7. adjective

If you say that someone has a **keen** mind , you mean that they are very clever and aware of what is happening around them.

- They described him as a man of keen intellect.
- Mr Walsh has a keen appreciation of the priorities of the electorate.
- I can see you have a keen sense of humour.

8. adjective

If you have a **keen** eye or ear , you are able to notice things that are difficult to detect .

- ...an amateur artist with a keen eye for detail.
- Brand's keen ear caught the trace of an accent.

9. graded adjective

If you are **keen on** someone, you find them sexually attractive and want to get to know them better .

- Mick has always been very keen on Carla.

10. adjective

A **keen** fight or competition is one in which the competitors are all trying very hard to win , and it is not easy to predict who will win.

- There is expected to be a keen fight in the local elections.

11. adjective

Keen prices are low and competitive.

- The company negotiates very keen prices with their suppliers.

12. verb

If someone **keens** , they cry out or make sounds to express their sorrow at someone's death .

- He tossed back his head and keened.
- Someone was making a low, keening noise.

13. mad keen

model

models modelling modelled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **model** of an object is a physical representation that shows what it looks like or how it works. The model is often smaller than the object it represents. **Model** is also an adjective .

- ...an architect's model of a wooden house.
- ...a working scale model of the whole Bay Area.
- I made a model out of paper and glue.
- I had made a model aeroplane.
- ...a model railway.

2. countable noun

A **model** is a system that is being used and that people might want to copy in order to achieve similar results.

- We believe that this is a general model of managerial activity.
- He wants companies to follow the European model of social responsibility.

3. countable noun

A **model** of a system or process is a theoretical description that can help you understand how the system or process works, or how it might work.

- Darwin eventually put forward a model of biological evolution.
- He proposed a model of stress reaction in the body.

4. verb

If someone such as a scientist **models** a system or process, they make an accurate theoretical description of it in order to understand or explain how it works.

- ...the mathematics needed to model a non-linear system like an atmosphere.
5. countable noun
If you say that someone or something is **a model of** a particular quality, you are showing approval of them because they have that quality to a large degree.
- A model of good manners, he has conquered any inward fury.
 - His marriage and family life is a model of propriety.
6. adjective
You use **model** to express approval of someone when you think that they perform their role or duties extremely well .
- As a girl she had been a model pupil.
 - Hospital staff say he is a model patient.
7. verb
If one thing **is modelled on** another, the first thing is made so that it is like the second thing in some way.
- The quota system was modelled on those operated in America and continental Europe.
 - The program will be modeled after a popular BBC series called 'The Archers'.
 - She asked the author if she had modelled her hero on anybody in particular.
8. verb
If you **model** yourself **on** someone, you copy the way that they do things, because you admire them and want to be like them.
- There's absolutely nothing wrong in modelling yourself on an older woman.
 - They will tend to model their behaviour on the teacher's behaviour.
9. countable noun
A particular **model** of a machine is a particular version of it.
- To keep the cost down, opt for a basic model.
 - The model number is 1870/285.
10. countable noun
An artist's **model** is a person who stays still in a particular position so that the artist can make a picture or sculpture of them.
11. verb
If someone **models** for an artist, they stay still in a particular position so that the artist can make a picture or sculpture of them.
- Tullio has been modelling for Sandra for eleven years.
12. countable noun
A fashion **model** is a person whose job is to display clothes by wearing them.
- ...Paris's top photographic fashion model.
13. verb
If someone **models** clothes, they display them by wearing them.
- I wasn't here to model clothes.
 - She began modelling in Paris aged 15.
14. verb
If you **model** shapes or figures , you make them out of a substance such as clay or wood.
- There she began to model in clay.
 - Sometimes she carved wood and sometimes stone; sometimes she modelled clay.
 - The artist modelled an appropriate animal for each voice.

lame

lamer lamest

Explain

1. adjective

If someone is **lame** , they are unable to walk properly because of damage to one or both of their legs. **The lame** are people who are lame. This use could cause offence .

- He was aware that she was lame in one leg.
- David had to pull out of the Championships when his horse went lame.
- ... the wounded and the lame of the last war.

2. adjective

If you describe something, for example an excuse , argument , or remark , as **lame** , you mean that it is poor or weak.

- He mumbled some lame excuse about having gone to sleep.
- All our theories sound pretty lame.

mosquito

mosquitoes mosquitos

Explain

1. countable noun

Mosquitos are small flying insects which bite people and animals in order to suck their blood.

last

lasts lasting lasted

Explain

1. determiner

You use **last** in expressions such as **last Friday**, **last night** , and **last year** to refer , for example , to the most recent Friday, night, or year.

- I got married last July.
- He never made it home at all last night.
- It is not surprising they did so badly in last year's elections.

2. adjective

The **last** event, person, thing, or period of time is the most recent one. **Last** is also a pronoun .

- Much has changed since my last visit.
- At the last count inflation was 10.9 per cent.
- I split up with my last boyfriend three years ago.
- The last few weeks have been hectic.
- The next tide, it was announced, would be even higher than the last.

3. adverb

If something **last** happened on a particular occasion , that is the most recent occasion on which it happened.

- When were you there last?
- The house is a little more dilapidated than when I last saw it.
- Hunting on the trust's 625,000 acres was last debated two years ago.

4. ordinal number

The **last** thing, person, event, or period of time is the one that happens or comes after all the others of the same kind . **Last** is also a pronoun.

5. The trickiest bits are the last on the list.

- *This is his last chance as prime minister.*
- *...the last three pages of the chapter.*
- *She said it was the very last house on the road.*
- *They didn't come last in their league.*
- *I'm not the first employee she has done this to and I probably won't be the last.*
- *The trickiest bits are the last on the list.*

adverb

If you do something **last**, you do it after everyone else does, or after you do everything else.

- *I testified last.*
- *I was always picked last for the football team at school.*
- *The foreground, nearest the viewer, is painted last.*

pronoun

If you are **the last to** do or know something, everyone else does or knows it before you.

- *She was the last to go to bed.*
- *Riccardo and I are always the last to know what's going on.*

adjective

Last is used to refer to the only thing, person, or part of something that remains. **Last** is also a noun.

- *Jed nodded, finishing off the last piece of pizza.*
- *...the freeing of the last hostage.*
- *He finished off the last of the coffee.*
- *The last of the ten inmates gave themselves up after twenty eight hours.*

adjective

You use **last** before numbers to refer to a position that someone has reached in a competition after other competitors have been knocked out.

- *He reached the last four at Wimbledon.*
- *...the only woman among the authors making it through to the last six.*

adjective

You can use **last** to indicate that something is extremely undesirable or unlikely. **Last** is also a pronoun.

- *The last thing I wanted to do was teach.*
- *He would be the last person who would do such a thing.*
- *I would be the last to say that science has explained everything.*

pronoun

The last you see of someone or **the last** you hear of them is the final time that you see them or talk to them.

- *She disappeared shouting, 'To the river, to the river!' And that was the last we saw of her.*
- *I had a feeling it would be the last I heard of him.*

verb

If an event, situation, or problem **lasts** for a particular length of time, it continues to exist or happen for that length of time.

- *The marriage had lasted for less than two years.*
- *The games lasted only half the normal time.*
- *Enjoy it because it won't last.*

verb

If something **lasts** for a particular length of time, it continues to be able to be used for that time, for example because there is some of it left or because it is in good enough condition.

- *You only need a very small blob of glue, so one tube lasts for ages.*
- *The repaired sail lasted less than 24 hours.*
- *The implication is that this battery lasts twice as long as other batteries.*

- *If you build more plastics into cars, the car lasts longer.*

verb

You can use **last** in expressions such as **last the game** , **last the course** , and **last the week** , to indicate that someone manages to take part in an event or situation right to the end, especially when this is very difficult for them. To **last out** means the same as to last .

- *They wouldn't have lasted the full game.*
- *I almost lasted the two weeks. I only had a couple of days to do.*
- *It'll be a miracle if the band lasts out the tour.*
- *A breakfast will be served to those who last out till dawn!*

at last

the sb/sth before last

breathe one's last

last but one/last but three etc

every last

last in, first out

the last sb heard

leave sth until last

see the last of sb

to the last

to the last

to the last detail/to the last man

ounce

ounces

Explain

1. countable noun

An **ounce** is a unit of weight used in Britain and the USA. There are sixteen ounces in a pound and one ounce is equal to 28.35 grams.

- *...four ounces of sugar.*

2. singular noun

You can refer to a very small amount of something, such as a quality or characteristic , as an **ounce** .

- *If only my father had possessed an ounce of business sense.*
- *I spent every ounce of energy trying to hide.*

learned

Explain

1. adjective

A **learned** person has gained a lot of knowledge by studying.

- *He is a serious scholar, a genuinely learned man.*

2. adjective

Learned books or papers have been written by someone who has gained a lot of knowledge by studying.

- *This learned book should start a real debate on Western policy towards the Baltics.*

3. adjective

A **learned** reaction , response , or ability is one that you acquire from experience or from your environment , not one that you were born with.

- *Your anxiety is a learned reaction, conditioned by the events of your life.*

pardon

pardons pardoning pardoned

Explain

1. *I beg your pardon*

2. *convention*

People say '**I beg your pardon?**' when they are surprised or offended by something that someone has just said .

- 'Would you get undressed, please?'—'I beg your pardon?'—'Will you get undressed?'

3. *convention*

You say '**I beg your pardon**' or '**I do beg your pardon**' as a way of apologizing for accidentally doing something wrong , such as disturbing someone or making a mistake.

- *I was impolite and I do beg your pardon.*
- 'We're meant to do it quarterly actually.'—'Oh, I beg your pardon, I thought it was monthly.'

4. *convention*

Some people say '**Pardon me**' instead of 'Excuse me' when they want to politely get someone's attention or interrupt them.

- *Pardon me, are you finished, madam?*

5. *convention*

You can say things like '**Pardon me for asking**' or '**Pardon my frankness**' as a way of showing you understand that what you are going to say may sound rude .

- *That, if you'll pardon my saying so, is neither here nor there.*

6. *convention*

Some people say things like '**If you'll pardon the expression**' or '**Pardon my French**' just before or after saying something which they think might offend people.

- *It's enough to make you wet yourself, if you'll pardon the expression.*

7. *verb*

If someone who has been found guilty of a crime **is pardoned** , they are officially allowed to go free and are not punished . **Pardon** is also a noun .

- *Hundreds of political prisoners were pardoned and released.*
- *He was granted a presidential pardon.*

least

Explain

1. *at least*

2. *at least*

3. *at least*

4. *at least*

5. *adjective*

You use **the least** to mean a smaller amount than anyone or anything else, or the smallest amount possible . **Least** is also a pronoun . **Least** is also an adverb .

- *I try to offend the least amount of people possible.*
- *If you like cheese, go for the ones with the least fat.*
- *On education funding, Japan performs best but spends the least per student.*
- *Damming the river may end up benefitting those who need it the least.*

6. *adverb*

You use **least** to indicate that someone or something has less of a particular quality than most other things of its kind .

- *He is the youngest and least experienced player in the team.*
- *He was one of the least warm human beings I had ever met.*
- *...the least technically accomplished car in Europe.*

7. adjective

You use **the least** to emphasize the smallness of something, especially when it hardly exists at all.

- *I don't have the least idea of what you're talking about.*
- *They neglect their duty at the least hint of fun elsewhere.*
- *The bosses paid less than they had promised and at the least complaint went to the police.*

8. adverb

You use **least** to indicate that something is true or happens to a smaller degree or extent than anything else or at any other time.

- *He had a way of throwing her off guard with his charm when she least expected it.*

9. adjective

You use **least** in structures where you are emphasizing that a particular situation or event is much less important or serious than other possible or actual ones.

- *Having to get up at three o'clock every morning was the least of her worries.*
- *Although three days isn't very long, shortage of time was the least of his problems.*
- *At that moment, they were among the least of the concerns of the government.*

10. pronoun

You use **the least** in structures where you are stating the minimum that should be done in a situation, and suggesting that more should really be done.

- *Well, the least you can do, if you won't help me yourself, is to tell me where to go instead.*
- *The least they could have given me was half a day to rest.*
- *The least his hotel could do is provide a little privacy.*

11. in the least

12. last but not least

13. least of all

14. not least

15. to say the least

peach

peaches

Explain

1. countable noun

A **peach** is a soft, round, slightly furry fruit with sweet yellow flesh and pinky-orange skin. Peaches grow in warm countries.

2. colour

Something that is **peach** is pale pinky-orange in colour.

- *...the romantic Tower Suite, decorated throughout in peach and ivory.*
- *...a peach silk blouse.*

3. singular noun

If you describe someone or something as a **peach**, you find them very pleasing or attractive.

- *Frank was there and he is a perfect peach.*
- *...a peach of a goal from the team's captain.*

principle

principles

Explain

1. variable noun

A **principle** is a general belief that you have about the way you should behave , which influences your behaviour.

- Buck never allowed himself to be bullied into doing anything that went against his principles.
- ...moral principles.
- It's not just a matter of principle.
- ...a man of principle.

2. countable noun

The **principles** of a particular theory or philosophy are its basic rules or laws.

- ...a violation of the basic principles of Marxism.
- The doctrine was based on three fundamental principles.

3. countable noun

Scientific **principles** are general scientific laws which explain how something happens or works.

- These people lack all understanding of scientific principles.
- ...the principles of quantum theory.

4. in principle

5. in principle

6. on principle

optimum

Explain

1. adjective

The **optimum** or **optimal** level or state of something is the best level or state that it could achieve .

- Aim to do some physical activity three times a week for optimum health.
- ...regions in which optimal conditions for farming can be created.

prison

prisons

Explain

1. variable noun

A **prison** is a building where criminals are kept as punishment or where people accused of a crime are kept before their trial.

- The prison's inmates are being kept in their cells.
- He was sentenced to life in prison.
- They released Mr Mandela from prison in 1990.

original

originals

Explain

1. adjective

You use **original** when referring to something that existed at the beginning of a process or activity, or the characteristics that something had when it began or was made.

- The original plan was to hold an indefinite stoppage.
- He was unable to identify the original name of the site.

2. countable noun

If something such as a document , a work of art, or a piece of writing is an **original** , it is not a copy or a later version .

- When you have filled in the questionnaire, copy it and send the original to your employer.
- For once the sequel is as good as the original.

3. adjective

An **original** document or work of art is not a copy.

- ...an original movie poster.

4. adjective

An **original** piece of writing or music was written recently and has not been published or performed before.

- ...its policy of commissioning original work.
- ...with catchy original songs by Richard Warner.

5. adjective

If you describe someone or their work as **original** , you mean that they are very imaginative and have new ideas.

- It is one of the most original works of imagination in the language.
- ...an original writer.
- ...a chef with an original touch and a measure of inspiration.

6. in the original/in the original French/etc

prototype

prototypes

Explain

1. countable noun

A **prototype** is a new type of machine or device which is not yet ready to be made in large numbers and sold .

- He built a prototype of a machine called the wave rotor.
- ...the first prototype aircraft.

2. countable noun

If you say that someone or something is a **prototype of** a type of person or thing, you mean that they are the first or most typical one of that type.

- He was the prototype of the elder statesman.

overtime

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Overtime is time that you spend doing your job in addition to your normal working hours.

- He would work overtime, without pay, to finish a job.
- Union leaders had urged miners to vote in favour of an overtime ban.

2. work overtime

3. uncountable noun

Overtime is an additional period of time that is added to the end of a sports match in which the two teams are level , as a way of allowing one of the teams to win .

- They won the championship by defeating their opponents 3–2 in overtime.

rate

rates rating rated

Explain

1. countable noun

The **rate** at which something happens is the speed with which it happens.

- The rate at which hair grows can be agonisingly slow.
- The world's tropical forests are disappearing at an even faster rate than experts had thought.

2. countable noun

The **rate** at which something happens is the number of times it happens over a period of time or in a particular group.

- New diet books appear at a rate of nearly one a week.
- His heart rate was 30 beats per minute slower.
- The country has the world's sixth highest unemployment rate.

3. countable noun

A **rate** is the amount of money that is charged for goods or services.

- Calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p at all other times.
- ...specially reduced rates for travellers using Gatwick Airport.
- After the age of 35, we start losing muscle at the rate of half a pound a year.

4. countable noun

The **rate** of taxation or interest is the amount of tax or interest that needs to be paid . It is expressed as a percentage of the amount that is earned , gained as profit , or borrowed .

- The government insisted that it would not be panicked into interest rate cuts.

5. verb

If you **rate** someone or something as good or bad , you consider them to be good or bad. You can also say that someone or something **rates** as good or bad.

- Of all the men in the survey, they rate themselves the most responsible.
- The film was rated excellent by 90 per cent of children.
- Most rated it a hit.
- We rate him as one of the best.
- She rated the course highly.
- Reading books does not rate highly among Britons as a leisure activity.
- ...the most highly rated player in English football.

6. verb

If you **rate** someone or something, you think that they are good.

- It's flattering to know that other clubs have shown interest and seem to rate me.
- Its artistic value failed to move Paddy Clegg. 'I don't know what all the fuss is about. I didn't rate it at all,' he said.

7. passive verb

If someone or something **is rated** at a particular position or rank, they are calculated or considered to be in that position on a list .

- He is generally rated Italy's No. 3 industrialist.
- He came here rated 100th on the tennis computer.

8. verb

If you say that someone or something **rates** a particular reaction , you mean that this is the reaction you consider to be appropriate .

- Their national golf championship barely rated a mention.
- In those crowded streets her attire did not rate a second glance.

9. at any rate

10. at any rate

11. at this rate

pessimistic

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **pessimistic** thinks that bad things are going to happen .

- Not everyone is so pessimistic about the future.
- Hardy has often been criticised for an excessively pessimistic view of life.
- ...one of the most pessimistic forecasts of the year.

reason

reasons reasoning reasoned

Explain

1. countable noun

The **reason for** something is a fact or situation which explains why it happens or what causes it to happen.

- There is a reason for every important thing that happens.

- Who would have a reason to want to kill her?

- ...the reason why Italian tomatoes have so much flavour.

- The only reason I went was because I was told to.

- My parents came to Germany for business reasons.

- The exact locations are being kept secret for reasons of security.

2. uncountable noun

If you say that you have **reason to** believe something or **to** have a particular emotion , you mean that you have evidence for your belief or there is a definite cause of your feeling .

- They had reason to believe there could be trouble.

- He had every reason to be upset.

- He doesn't trust me. With good reason.

3. uncountable noun

The ability that people have to think and to make sensible judgments can be referred to as **reason** .

- ...a conflict between emotion and reason.

- Mike is my voice of reason. He thinks logically and points out where I'm going wrong.

4. verb

If you **reason that** something is true , you decide that it is true after thinking carefully about all the facts.

- I reasoned that changing my diet would lower my cholesterol level.

- 'Listen,' I reasoned, 'it doesn't take a genius to figure out what Adam's up to.'

5. *for reasons best known to oneself*
6. *by reason of*
7. *listen to reason*
8. *for no reason/ for no reason at all*
9. *reason for living/reason for being*
10. *for some reason*
11. *within reason*

primary

primaries

Explain

1. adjective

You use **primary** to describe something that is very important.

- *That's the primary reason the company's share price has held up so well.*
- *His misunderstanding of language was the primary cause of his other problems.*
- *The family continues to be the primary source of care for people as they grow older.*

2. adjective

Primary education is given to pupils between the ages of 5 and 11.

- *Britain did not introduce compulsory primary education until 1880.*
- *Ninety-nine per cent of primary pupils now have hands-on experience of computers.*
- *...primary teachers.*

3. adjective

Primary is used to describe something that occurs first.

- *It is not the primary tumour that kills, but secondary growths elsewhere in the body.*
- *They have been barred from primary bidding for clients.*

4. countable noun

A **primary** or a **primary election** is an election in an American state in which people vote for someone to become a candidate for a political office. Compare *general election*.

- *...the 1968 New Hampshire primary.*
- *She won the Democratic primary.*
- *New York holds its primary election on Tuesday.*

root

roots rooting rooted

Explain

1. countable noun

The **roots** of a plant are the parts of it that grow under the ground.

- *...the twisted roots of an apple tree.*

2. verb

If you **root** a plant or cutting or if it **roots**, roots form on the bottom of its stem and it starts to grow.

- *Most plants will root in about six to eight weeks.*
- *Root the cuttings in a heated propagator.*

3. adjective

Root vegetables or **root** crops are grown for their roots which are large and can be eaten.

- *...root crops such as carrots and potatoes.*

4. countable noun

The **root** of a hair or tooth is the part of it that is underneath the skin .

- ...decay around the roots of teeth.
- ...wax strips which remove hairs cleanly from the root.

5. plural noun

You can refer to the place or culture that a person or their family comes from as their **roots** .

- I am proud of my Brazilian roots.
- It's 21 years since she first moved to Britain from the Lebanon, but she hasn't forgotten her roots.

6. uncountable noun

Roots is used to refer to pop music , especially reggae , that is strongly influenced by the traditional music of the culture that it originally came from.

- ...mixing older Jamaican styles such as blue-beat and ska with roots reggae and dub.

7. countable noun

You can refer to the cause of a problem or of an unpleasant situation as **the root of** it or **the roots of** it.

- We got to the root of the problem.
- This lack of recognition was at the root of the dispute.
- His sense of guilt had its roots in his childhood loss of his younger sister.
- They were treating symptoms and not the root cause.

8. countable noun

The **root** of a word is the part that contains its meaning and to which other parts can be added .

- The word 'secretary' comes from the same Latin root as the word 'secret'.

9. verb

If you **root through** or **in** something, you search for something by moving other things around.

- She rooted through the bag, found what she wanted, and headed toward the door.
- Dogs root in the debris at the roadside.

10. root and branch

11. put down roots

12. take root

principal

principals

Explain

1. adjective

Principal means first in order of importance.

- The principal reason for my change of mind is this.
- ...the country's principal source of foreign exchange earnings.
- Their principal concern is bound to be that of winning the next general election.

2. countable noun

The **principal** of a school, or in Britain the **principal** of a college , is the person in charge of the school or college.

- Donald King is the principal of Dartmouth High School.

sample

samples sampling sampled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **sample** of a substance or product is a small quantity of it that shows you what it is like .

- You'll receive samples of paint, curtains and upholstery.
- We're giving away 2000 free samples.
- They asked me to do some sample drawings.

2. countable noun

A **sample** of a substance is a small amount of it that is examined and analysed scientifically.

- They took samples of my blood.
- ...urine samples.

3. countable noun

A **sample** of people or things is a number of them chosen out of a larger group and then used in tests or used to provide information about the whole group.

- We based our analysis on a random sample of more than 200 males.

4. verb

If you **sample** food or drink , you taste a small amount of it in order to find out if you like it.

- We sampled a selection of different bottled waters.

5. verb

If you **sample** a place or situation , you experience it for a short time in order to find out about it.

- ...the chance to sample a different way of life.

6. verb

When musicians or pieces of their music **are sampled** , parts of their music are used by other musicians in their own work.

- I don't actually mind being sampled as long as people give credit where it's due.

purple

purples

Explain

1. colour

Something that is **purple** is of a reddish-blue colour.

- She wore purple and green silk.
- ...sinister dark greens and purples.

2. adjective

Purple prose or a **purple patch** is a piece of writing that contains very elaborate language or images .

- ...passages of purple prose describing intense experiences.

3. purple patch

shorthand

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Shorthand is a quick way of writing and uses signs to represent words or syllables . Shorthand is used by secretaries and journalists to write down what someone is saying .

- Ben took notes in shorthand.

2. uncountable noun

You can use **shorthand** to mean a quick or simple way of referring to something.

- We've been friends so long we have a kind of shorthand. We don't really need to speak.
- The fiction that 'he' is a neutral shorthand for 'he or she' is no longer acceptable to many.

rare

rarer rarest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **rare** is not common and is therefore interesting or valuable .

- ...the black-necked crane, one of the rarest species in the world.
- She collects rare plants.
- Do you want to know about a particular rare stamp or rare stamps in general?

2. adjective

An event or situation that is **rare** does not occur very often.

- ...on those rare occasions when he did eat alone.
- Heart attacks were extremely rare in babies, he said.
- It's apparently rare for anyone to have two legs the same length.
- I think it's very rare to have big families nowadays.

3. adjective

You use **rare** to emphasize an extremely good or remarkable quality.

- Ferris has a rare ability to record her observations on paper.
- It was a rare pleasure to see him in action.
- ...a leader of rare strength and instinct.

4. adjective

Meat that is **rare** is cooked very lightly so that the inside is still red.

- Thick tuna steaks are eaten rare, like beef.
- Waiter, I specifically asked for this steak rare.

sad

sadder saddest

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **sad** , you feel unhappy, usually because something has happened that you do not like.

- The relationship had been important to me and its loss left me feeling sad and empty.
- I'm sad that Julie's marriage is on the verge of splitting up.
- I'd grown fond of our little house and felt sad to leave it.
- I'm sad about my toys getting burned in the fire.

2. adjective

Sad stories and **sad** news make you feel sad.

- ...a desperately humorous, impossibly sad novel.
- I received the sad news that he had been killed in a motor-cycle accident.

3. adjective

A **sad** event or situation is unfortunate or undesirable .

- It's a sad truth that children are the biggest victims of passive smoking.

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **sad** , you do not have any respect for them and think their behaviour or ideas are ridiculous .

- ...the obsessive rantings of sad old petrol-heads.

5. sad to say

spite

Explain

1. *in spite of sth*

2. *phrase*

If you do something **in spite of yourself** , you do it although you did not really intend to or expect to.

- The blunt comment made Richard laugh in spite of himself.
- She was deeply moved and in spite of herself could not help showing it.

3. *uncountable noun*

If you do something cruel out of **spite** , you do it because you want to hurt or upset someone.

- He thinks Dan has vandalised the car out of spite.
- Never had she met such spite and pettiness.

4. *verb*

If you do something cruel **to spite** someone, you do it in order to hurt or upset them.

- You don't want to come because you want to spite me in front of my neighbours.

- Using a sharp knife, cut away the pith and peel from both fruits.

- The ground was strewn with sharp-edged pebbles.

2. *adjective*

You can describe a shape or an object as **sharp** if part of it or one end of it comes to a point or forms an angle.

- His nose was thin and sharp.
- ...black sharp-toed cowboy boots.

3. *adjective*

A **sharp** bend or turn is one that changes direction suddenly . **Sharp** is also an adverb .

- I was approaching a fairly sharp bend that swept downhill to the left.
- Do not cross the bridge but turn sharp left to go down on to the towpath.

4. *adjective*

If you describe someone as **sharp** , you are praising them because they are quick to notice , hear , understand , or react to things.

- He is very sharp, a quick thinker and swift with repartee.
- Gates is known to be a superb analyst with a sharp eye and an excellent memory.

5. *adjective*

If someone says something in a **sharp** way, they say it suddenly and rather firmly or angrily, for example because they are warning or criticizing you.

- 'Don't contradict your mother,' was Charles's sharp reprimand.
- That ruling had drawn sharp criticism from civil rights groups.

sharp

sharps sharper sharpest

Explain

1. *adjective*

A **sharp** point or edge is very thin and can cut through things very easily. A **sharp** knife , tool, or other object has a point or edge of this kind.

- The other end of the twig is sharpened into a sharp point to use as a toothpick.

6. adjective

A **sharp** change, movement, or feeling occurs suddenly, and is great in amount, force, or degree.

- There's been a sharp rise in the rate of inflation.
- Tennis requires a lot of short sharp movements.
- He felt a sharp pain in the abductor muscle in his right thigh.

7. adjective

A **sharp** difference, image, or sound is very easy to see, hear, or distinguish.

- Many people make a sharp distinction between humans and other animals.
- Her reticence was in sharp contrast to the glamour and star status of her predecessors.
- All the footmarks are quite sharp and clear.
- We heard a voice sing out in a clear, sharp tone.

8. adjective

A **sharp** taste or smell is rather strong or bitter, but is often also clear and fresh.

- ...a colourless, almost odourless liquid with a sharp, sweetish taste.
- In the hot sun the rain-washed herbs smelled sharp and spicy and sweet all at once.

9. graded adjective

A **sharp** wind, or **sharp** cold, is so strong or intense that it almost hurts you when you are exposed to it.

- The wind was not as sharp and cruel as it had been.

10. graded adjective

Sharp clothes are neat, elegant, and fashionable.

- Now politics is all about the right haircut and a sharp suit.

- A sharp dresser, Wyatt is never seen in casual clothes.

11. adverb

Sharp is used after stating a particular time to show that something happens at exactly the time stated.

- She planned to unlock the store at 8.00 sharp this morning.

12. countable noun

Sharp is used after a letter representing a musical note to show that the note should be played or sung half a tone higher. **Sharp** is often represented by the symbol ♯.

- A solitary viola plucks a lonely, soft F sharp.

13. at the sharp end

spouse

spouses

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **spouse** is the person they are married to.

short

shorter shortest

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **short** or lasts for a **short** time, it does not last very long.

- The announcement was made a short time ago.

- *How could you do it in such a short period of time?*
 - *Mr Annan took a short break before resuming his schedule.*
 - *Kemp gave a short laugh.*
 - *We had a short meeting.*
2. adjective
If you talk about a **short** hour , day, or year, you mean that it seems to have passed very quickly or will seem to pass very quickly.
- *For a few short weeks there was peace.*
 - *Only five short years later, your money will have grown by 94,000.*
3. adjective
A **short** speech, letter, or book does not have many words or pages in it.
- *...short extracts from the Bible.*
 - *This is a short note to say thank you.*
4. adjective
Someone who is **short** is not as tall as most people are.
- *I'm tall and thin and he's short and fat.*
 - *...a short, elderly woman with grey hair.*
 - *He's the shortest of four brothers.*
5. adjective
Something that is **short** measures only a small amount from one end to the other.
- *The city centre and shops are only a short distance away.*
 - *A short flight of steps led to a grand doorway.*
 - *His black hair was very short.*
6. adjective
If you are **short of** something or if it is **short** , you do not have enough of it. If you are running **short of** something or if it is running **short** , you do not have much of it left.
- *Her father's illness left the family short of money.*
 - *Government forces are running short of ammunition and fuel.*
 - *Supplies of everything are unreliable; food is short.*
 - *Time is running short.*
7. to fall short
8. phrase
Short of a particular thing means except for that thing or without actually doing that thing.
- *Short of climbing railings four metres high, there was no way into the garden from this road.*
 - *They have no means, short of civil war, to enforce their will upon the minorities.*
9. adverb
If something is **cut short** or **stops short** , it is stopped before people expect it to or before it has finished.
- *His glittering career was cut short by a heart attack.*
 - *Jackson cut short his trip to Africa.*
10. adjective
If a name or abbreviation is **short for** another name, it is the short version of that name.
- *Her friend Kes (short for Kesewa) was in tears.*
 - *'O.O.B.E.' is short for 'Out Of Body Experience'.*

11. adjective

If you have a **short** temper , you get angry very easily.

- ...an awkward, self-conscious woman with a short temper.

12. adjective

If you are **short with** someone, you speak briefly and rather rudely to them, because you are impatient or angry.

- She seemed nervous or tense, and she was definitely short with me.

13. to be caught short

14. for short

15. go short

16. in short

17. nothing short of

18. X short of a Y

19. be short on sth

20. to stop short of

21. short time

22. pull/bring sb up short

23. make short work of sb/sth

stake

stakes staking staked

Explain

1. at stake

2. plural noun

The **stakes** involved in a contest or a risky action are the things that can be gained or lost .

- The game was usually played for high stakes between two large groups.
- By arresting the organisation's leaders the government has raised the stakes.
- For the president the political stakes could hardly have been higher.

3. verb

If you **stake** something such as your money or your reputation **on** the result of something, you risk your money or reputation on it.

- He has staked his political future on an election victory.
- He has staked his reputation on the outcome.

4. countable noun

If you have a **stake in** something such as a business , it matters to you, for example because you own part of it or because its success or failure will affect you.

- He enjoyed an entrepreneurial role where he had a big financial stake in his own efforts.

5. plural noun

You can use **stakes** to refer to something that is like a contest. For example, you can refer to the choosing of a leader as **the** leadership **stakes** .

- She won hands down in the glamour stakes.

6. countable noun

A **stake** is a pointed wooden post which is pushed into the ground, for example in order to support a young tree.

7. to stake a claim

stiff

stiffer stiffest

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **stiff** is firm or does not bend easily.

- The furniture was stiff, uncomfortable, too delicate, and too neat.
- His waterproof trousers were brand new and stiff.
- Her fingers were stiff with cold inside her leather gloves.
- Clean the mussels with a stiff brush under cold running water.

2. adjective

Something such as a door or drawer that is **stiff** does not move as easily as it should.

- Train door handles are stiff so that they cannot be opened accidentally.

3. adjective

If you are **stiff**, your muscles or joints hurt when you move, because of illness or because of too much exercise.

- Massage will relieve tension and stiff muscles.
- I'm stiff all over right now—I hope I can recover for tomorrow's race.

4. adjective

Stiff behaviour is rather formal and not very friendly or relaxed.

- She looked at him with a stiff smile.
- They always seemed a little awkward with each other, a bit stiff and formal.

5. adjective

Stiff can be used to mean difficult or severe.

- The film faces stiff competition for the Best Film nomination.
- Under the country's stiff anti-corruption laws they could face twenty years in jail.

6. adjective

A **stiff** drink is a large amount of a strong alcoholic drink.

- ...a stiff whisky.

7. graded adjective

A **stiff** wind is blowing quite strongly.

- Next morning dawned clear and sunny, with a stiff breeze rustling the trees.

8. adverb

If you are bored **stiff**, worried **stiff**, or scared **stiff**, you are extremely bored, worried, or scared. **Stiff** is also an adjective.

- Anna tried to look interested. Actually, she was bored stiff.
- I was scared stiff when I realized what I'd done.
- Even if he bores you stiff, it is good manners not to let him know it.

stuff

stuffs stuffing stuffed

Explain

1. uncountable noun

You can use **stuff** to refer to things such as a substance, a collection of things, events, or ideas, or the contents of something in a general way without mentioning the thing itself by name.

- *I'd like some coffee, and I don't object to the powdered stuff if it's all you've got.*
 - *I don't know anything about this antique stuff.*
 - *'What do you want to know?'—'About life and stuff.'*
 - *Don't tell me you still believe in all that stuff?*
 - *He pointed to a duffle bag. 'That's my stuff.'*
2. verb
If you **stuff** something somewhere , you push it there quickly and roughly .
- *I stuffed my hands in my pockets.*
 - *He stuffed the newspapers into a litter bin and headed down the street.*
 - *His pants were stuffed inside the tops of his boots.*
3. verb
If you **stuff** a container or space **with** something, you fill it with something or with a quantity of things until it is full.
- *He grabbed my purse, opened it and stuffed it full, then gave it back to me.*
 - *He still stood behind his cash register stuffing his mouth with popcorn.*
 - *...wallets stuffed with dollars.*
4. verb
If you **stuff yourself** , you eat a lot of food.
- *I could stuff myself with ten chocolate bars and half an hour later eat a big meal.*
5. verb
If you **stuff** a bird such as a chicken or a vegetable such as a pepper , you put a mixture of food inside it before cooking it.
- *Will you stuff the turkey and shove it in the oven for me?*
 - *...stuffed tomatoes.*
6. verb
If a dead animal **is stuffed** , it is filled with a substance so that it can be preserved and displayed.
- *A pike weighing 29 lb 8 oz taken in 1878 was stuffed and is on display at the estate office.*
 - *He didn't much care for the stuffed animal heads that hung on the walls.*
7. singular noun
If you say that one thing is **the stuff of** another, you mean that the first thing is a very important feature or characteristic of the second thing, or that the second thing can be based or built on the first thing.
- *The idea that we can be whatever we want has become the stuff of television commercials.*
8. exclamation
If you are angry with someone for something that they have said or done, you might say ' **Get stuffed!** ' to them.
9. verb
Stuff is used in front of nouns to emphasize that you do not care about something, or do not want it.
- *Ultimately my attitude was: stuff them.*
 - *Stuff your money. We don't want a hand-out.*
10. do one's stuff
11. know one's stuff

supersonic

Explain

1. adjective

Supersonic aircraft travel faster than the speed of sound.

- *There was a huge bang; it sounded like a supersonic jet.*

suite

suites

Explain

1. countable noun

A **suite** is a set of rooms in a hotel or other building .

- *They had a fabulous time during their week in a suite at the Paris Hilton.*
- *...a new suite of offices.*

2. countable noun

A **suite** is a set of matching armchairs and a sofa .

- *...a three-piece suite.*

3. countable noun

A bathroom **suite** is a matching bath , washbasin , and toilet .

temporary

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **temporary** lasts for only a limited time.

- *His job here is only temporary.*
- *Most adolescent problems are temporary.*
- *...a temporary loss of memory.*

summer

summers

Explain

1. variable noun

Summer is the season between spring and autumn when the weather is usually warm or hot.

- *In summer I like to go sailing in Long Island.*
- *I escaped the heatwave in London earlier this summer and flew to Cork.*
- *It was a perfect summer's day.*
- *...in the summer of 1987.*
- *...the summer holidays.*
- *He used to spend childhood summers with his grandparents.*

tragic

Explain

1. adjective

A **tragic** event or situation is extremely sad , usually because it involves death or suffering .

- *It was just a tragic accident.*
- *...the tragic loss of so many lives.*
- *The circumstances are tragic but we have to act within the law.*

2. adjective

Tragic is used to refer to tragedy as a type of literature .

- *...Michael Henchard, the tragic hero of 'The Mayor of Casterbridge'.*

table

tables tabling tabled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **table** is a piece of furniture with a flat top that you put things on or sit at.

- She was sitting at the kitchen table eating a currant bun.
- I placed his drink on the small table at his elbow.

2. countable noun

If you ask for a **table** in a restaurant, you want to have a meal there.

- I'd like a table for two at about 8.30, please.
- I booked a table at the Savoy Grill.
- You will join us at our table, won't you?

3. verb

If someone **tables** a proposal, they say formally that they want it to be discussed at a meeting.

- They've tabled a motion criticising the Government for doing nothing about the problem.

4. verb

If someone **tables** a proposal or plan which has been put forward, they decide to discuss it or deal with it at a later date, rather than straight away.

- We will table that for later.

5. countable noun

A **table** is a written set of facts and figures arranged in columns and rows.

- Consult the table on page 104.

- Other research supports the figures in Table 3.3.

6. countable noun

A **table** is a list of the multiplications of numbers between one and twelve. Children often have to learn tables at school.

- He didn't know his eleven-times table.
- I attempted to learn my tables.

7. on the table

8. turn the tables

transient

transients

Explain

1. adjective

Transient is used to describe a situation that lasts only a short time or is constantly changing.

- ...the transient nature of high fashion.
- In most cases, pain is transient.

2. countable noun

Transients are people who stay in a place for only a short time and then move somewhere else.

- ...a hotel for transients.

truth

truths

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The truth about something is all the facts about it, rather than things that are imagined or invented .

- Is it possible to separate truth from fiction?
- I must tell you the truth about this business.
- The truth of the matter is that we had no other choice.
- In the town very few know the whole truth.
- ...judgements of truth or falsity.

2. uncountable noun

If you say that there is some **truth in** a statement or story , you mean that it is true, or at least partly true.

- There is no truth in this story.
- Is there any truth to the rumors?
- The criticisms have at least an element of truth and validity.

3. countable noun

A **truth** is something that is believed to be true.

- It is still a basic truth that women have to work harder than men to get to the same level.

4. in truth

5. to tell you the truth

ultimate

Explain

1. adjective

You use **ultimate** to describe the final result or aim of a long series of events .

- He said it is still not possible to predict the ultimate outcome.
- The ultimate aim is to expand the network further.

2. adjective

You use **ultimate** to describe the original source or cause of something.

- Plants are the ultimate source of all food-stuffs.
- The ultimate cause of what's happened seems to have been the advertising campaign.

3. adjective

You use **ultimate** to describe the most important or powerful thing of a particular kind .

- ...the ultimate power of the central government.
- Of course, the ultimate authority remained the presidency.
- My experience as player, coach and manager has prepared me for this ultimate challenge.

4. adjective

You use **ultimate** to describe the most extreme and unpleasant example of a particular thing.

- Bringing back the death penalty would be the ultimate abuse of human rights.
- Treachery was the ultimate sin.
- Coleman lives in fear of the ultimate disgrace.

5. adjective

You use **ultimate** to describe the best possible example of a particular thing.

- He is the ultimate English gentleman.
- Caviar and oysters on ice are generally considered the ultimate luxury foods.

6. the ultimate in

vacuum

vacuums vacuuming vacuumed

Explain

1. countable noun

If someone or something creates a **vacuum**, they leave a place or position which then needs to be filled by another person or thing.

- The collapse of the army left a vacuum in the area.
- His presence should fill the power vacuum which has been developing over the past few days.

2. in a vacuum

3. verb

If you **vacuum** something, you clean it using a vacuum cleaner.

- I vacuumed the carpets today.
- It's important to vacuum regularly.

4. countable noun

A **vacuum** is a space that contains no air or other gas.

- Wind is a current of air caused by a vacuum caused by hot air rising.
- The spinning turbine creates a vacuum.

utmost

Explain

1. adjective

You can use **utmost** to emphasize the importance or seriousness of something or to emphasize the way that it is done.

- It is a matter of the utmost urgency to find out what has happened to these people.

- Security matters are treated with the utmost seriousness.
- You should proceed with the utmost caution.
- Utmost care must be taken not to spill any of the contents.

2. singular noun

If you say that you are doing your **utmost** to do something, you are emphasizing that you are trying as hard as you can to do it.

- He would have done his utmost to help her, of that she was certain.
- He will try his utmost to help them by means of his conventional medical knowledge.

3. to the utmost

velocity

velocities

Explain

1. variable noun

Velocity is the speed at which something moves in a particular direction.

- ...the velocity of light.
- ...the velocities at which the stars orbit.
- ...high velocity rifles.

vigorous

Explain

1. adjective

Vigorous physical activities involve using a lot of energy, usually to do short and repeated actions.

- *Very vigorous exercise can increase the risk of heart attacks.*
- *African dance is vigorous, but full of subtlety.*

2. adjective

A **vigorous** person does things with great energy and enthusiasm . A **vigorous** campaign or activity is done with great energy and enthusiasm.

- *Sir Robert was a strong and vigorous politician.*
- *...the most vigorous critics of the government.*
- *They will take vigorous action to recover the debts.*
- *...a vigorous campaign against GM food.*

3. graded adjective

A **vigorous** person is strong and healthy and full of energy.

- *He was a vigorous, handsome young man.*

wing

wings winging winged

Explain

1. countable noun

The **wings** of a bird or insect are the two parts of its body that it uses for flying.

- *The bird flapped its wings furiously.*
- *She saw the occasional glimmer of a moth's wings.*

2. countable noun

The **wings** of an aeroplane are the long flat parts sticking out of its side which support it while it is flying.

3. countable noun

A **wing** of a building is a part of it which sticks out from the main part.

- *We were given an office in the empty west wing.*
- *...in the Child Psychiatry wing of London's Royal Free Hospital.*

4. countable noun

A **wing** of an organization, especially a political organization, is a group within it which has a particular function or particular beliefs.

- *The military wing of the organisation was banned.*
- *...the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.*

5. plural noun

In a theatre, **the wings** are the sides of the stage which are hidden from the audience by curtains or scenery .

- *Most nights I watched the start of the play from the wings.*

6. countable noun

In a game such as football or hockey , **the left wing** and **the right wing** are the areas on the far left and the far right of the pitch. You can also refer to the players who play in these positions as **the left wing** and **the right wing** .

7. countable noun

A **wing** of a car is a part of it on the outside which is over one of the wheels.

8. plural noun

When pilots get their **wings** , they become qualified to fly aeroplanes.

- *He had no sooner got his wings than the Korean conflict broke out.*

9. verb

If you say that something or someone **wings** their way somewhere or **wings** somewhere, you mean that they go there quickly, especially by plane.

- A few moments later they were airborne and winging their way south.
- A cash bonanza will be winging its way to the 600,000 members of the scheme.
- The first of the airliners winged westwards and home.

10. to clip someone's wings

11. in the wings

12. to spread your wings

13. take sb under one's wing

affluent

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **affluent**, you have a lot of money. **The affluent** are people who are affluent.

- Today's affluent Indian tourists are also big spenders.
- ...the affluent neighborhoods of Malibu.
- The diet of the affluent has not changed much over the decades.

absence

absences

Explain

1. variable noun

Someone's **absence** from a place is the fact that they are not there.

- ...a bundle of letters which had arrived for me in my absence.
- Eleanor would later blame her mother-in-law for her husband's frequent absences.

2. singular noun

The **absence** of something from a place is the fact that it is not there or does not exist.

- The presence or absence of clouds can have an important impact on heat transfer.
- In the absence of a will the courts decide who the guardian is.

anxious

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **anxious to** do something or **anxious that** something should happen, you very much want to do it or very much want it to happen.

- The miners were anxious to avoid a strike.
- He is anxious that there should be no delay.
- Those anxious for reform say that the present system is too narrow.

2. adjective

If you are **anxious**, you are nervous or worried about something.

- The foreign minister admitted he was still anxious about the situation in the country.
- A friend of mine is a very anxious person.

3. adjective

An **anxious** time or situation is one during which you feel nervous and worried.

- He told last night of the anxious hours waiting to discover whether his girlfriend was safe from the earthquake.

acrobat

acrobats

Explain

1. countable noun

An **acrobat** is an entertainer who performs difficult physical acts such as jumping and balancing, especially in a circus.

arrogant

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **arrogant** behaves in a proud, unpleasant way towards other people because they believe that they are more important than others.

- He was so arrogant.
- That sounds arrogant, doesn't it?
- ...an air of arrogant indifference.

bribe

bribes bribing bribed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **bribe** is a sum of money or something valuable that one person offers or gives to another in order to persuade him or her to do something.

- He was being investigated for receiving bribes.

2. verb

If one person **bribes** another, they give them a bribe.

- He was accused of bribing a senior bank official.
- The government bribed the workers to be quiet.

articulate

articulates articulating articulated

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone as **articulate**, you mean that they are able to express their thoughts and ideas easily and well.

- She is an articulate young woman.
- The child was unable to offer an articulate description of what she had witnessed.

2. verb

When you **articulate** your ideas or feelings, you express them clearly in words.

- The president has been accused of failing to articulate an overall vision in foreign affairs.

3. verb

If you **articulate** something, you say it very clearly, so that each word or syllable can be heard.

- He articulated each syllable carefully.

candidate

candidates

Explain

1. countable noun

A **candidate** is someone who is being considered for a position, for example someone who is running in an election or applying for a job.

- The Democratic candidate is still leading in the polls.
- He is a candidate for the office of Governor.
- We all spoke to them and John emerged as the best candidate.

2. countable noun

A **candidate** is someone who is taking an examination.

3. countable noun

A **candidate** is someone who is studying for a degree at a college .

4. countable noun

A **candidate** is a person or thing that is regarded as being suitable for a particular purpose or as being likely to do or be a particular thing.

- Investment banking looks a prime candidate for further job losses.
- Those who are overweight or indulge in high-salt diets are candidates for hypertension.

asleep

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **asleep** is sleeping.

- My four-year-old daughter was asleep on the sofa.

2. fall asleep

3. fast asleep

club

clubs clubbing clubbed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **club** is an organization of people interested in a particular activity or subject who usually meet on a regular basis .

- ...the Chorlton Conservative Club.
- ...a youth club.
- He was club secretary.

2. countable noun

A **club** is a place where the members of a club meet.

- I stopped in at the club for a drink.

3. countable noun

A **club** is a team which competes in sporting competitions .

- ...the New York Yankees baseball club.
- ...Liverpool football club.

4. countable noun

A **club** is the same as a nightclub .

- It's a big dance hit in the clubs.
- ...the London club scene.

5. countable noun

A **club** is a long, thin, metal stick with a piece of wood or metal at one end that you use to hit the ball in golf.

- ...a six-iron club.

6. countable noun

A **club** is a thick heavy stick that can be used as a weapon.

- *Men armed with knives and clubs attacked his home.*

7. verb

To **club** a person or animal means to hit them hard with a thick heavy stick or a similar weapon.

- *Two thugs clubbed him with baseball bats.*
- *Clubbing baby seals to death for their pelts is wrong.*

8. uncountable noun

Clubs is one of the four suits in a pack of playing cards. Each card in the suit is marked with one or more black symbols: . A **club** is a playing card of this suit.

- *...the ace of clubs.*
- *The next player discarded a club.*

blue

bluer bluest blues

Explain

1. colour

Something that is **blue** is the colour of the sky on a sunny day.

- *There were swallows in the cloudless blue sky.*
- *She fixed her pale blue eyes on her father's.*
- *...colourful blues and reds.*

2. plural noun

The blues is a type of music which was developed by African American musicians in the southern United States. It is characterized by a slow tempo and a strong rhythm .

- *His singing really does have the depth and the emotional range of the blues.*

- *...the blues bars of Chicago.*

3. plural noun

If you have got **the blues** , you feel sad and depressed.

- *He's been suffering from the blues since losing his job.*

4. adjective

If you are feeling **blue** , you are feeling sad or depressed, often when there is no particular reason .

- *There's no earthly reason for me to feel so blue.*

5. countable noun

A Cambridge **blue** or an Oxford **blue** is a man or woman who has played for Cambridge or Oxford University in a particular sport.

6. adjective

Blue films, stories , or jokes are about sex .

- *...a secret stash of porn mags and blue movies.*

7. out of the blue

column

columns

Explain

1. countable noun

A **column** is a tall , often decorated cylinder of stone which is built to honour someone or forms part of a building.

- *...a London landmark, Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square.*

2. countable noun

A **column** is something that has a tall narrow shape.

- The explosion sent a column of smoke thousands of feet into the air.
3. countable noun
A **column** is a group of people or animals which moves in a long line.
- There were reports of columns of military vehicles appearing on the streets.
4. countable noun
On a printed page such as a page of a dictionary, newspaper, or printed chart, a **column** is one of two or more vertical sections which are read downwards.
- We had stupidly been looking at the wrong column of figures.
 - In The Dictionary of Quotations, there are no fewer than one and a half columns devoted to 'kiss'.
5. countable noun
In a newspaper or magazine, a **column** is a section that is always written by the same person or is always about the same topic.
- His name features frequently in the social columns of the tabloid newspapers.
 - She also writes a regular column for the Times Educational Supplement.

comfortable

Explain

1. adjective
If a piece of furniture or an item of clothing is **comfortable**, it makes you feel physically relaxed when you use it, for example because it is soft.
 - ...a comfortable fireside chair.
 - Trainers are so comfortable to wear.
2. adjective
If a building or room is **comfortable**, it makes you feel physically relaxed when you spend time in it, for example because it is warm and has nice furniture.
 - A home should be comfortable and friendly.
 - ...somewhere warm and comfortable.
3. adjective
If you are **comfortable**, you are physically relaxed because of the place or position you are sitting or lying in.
 - Lie down on your bed and make yourself comfortable.
 - She tried to manoeuvre her body into a more comfortable position.
4. adjective
If you say that someone is **comfortable**, you mean that they have enough money to be able to live without financial problems.
 - 'Is he rich?'—'He's comfortable.'
 - She came from a stable, comfortable, middle-class family.
5. adjective
In a race, competition, or election, if you have a **comfortable** lead, you are likely to win it easily. If you gain a **comfortable** victory or majority, you win easily.
 - By half distance we held a comfortable two-lap lead.
 - He appeared to be heading for a comfortable victory.
6. adjective
If you feel **comfortable with** a particular situation or person, you feel confident and relaxed with them.

- Nervous politicians might well feel more comfortable with a step-by-step approach.
- He liked me and I felt comfortable with him.
- I'll talk to them, but I won't feel comfortable about it.

7. adjective

When a sick or injured person is said to be **comfortable** , they are in a stable physical condition .

- He was described as comfortable in hospital last night.

8. adjective

A **comfortable** life , job , or situation does not cause you any problems or worries .

- ...a comfortable teaching job at a university.
- Kohl's retirement looks far from comfortable.

cylinder

cylinders

Explain

1. countable noun

A **cylinder** is an object with flat circular ends and long straight sides.

- ...a cylinder of foam.
- It was recorded on a wax cylinder.

2. countable noun

A gas **cylinder** is a cylinder-shaped container in which gas is kept under pressure .

- ...oxygen cylinders.

3. countable noun

In an engine, a **cylinder** is a cylinder-shaped part in which a piston moves backwards and forwards .

- ...a 2.5 litre, four-cylinder engine.

common

commoner commonest commons

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **common** , it is found in large numbers or it happens often.

- His name was Hansen, a common name in Norway.
- Oil pollution is the commonest cause of death for seabirds.
- Earthquakes are not common in this part of the world.
- It was common practice for prisoners to carve objects from animal bones to pass the time.

2. adjective

If something is **common to** two or more people or groups, it is done , possessed , or used by them all.

- Moldavians and Romanians share a common language.
- Such behaviour is common to all young people.

3. adjective

When there are more animals or plants of a particular species than there are of related species, then the first species is called **common** .

- ...the common house fly.

4. adjective

Common is used to indicate that someone or something is of the ordinary kind and not special in any way .

- Common salt is made up of 40

5. adjective

Common decency or **common** courtesy is the decency or courtesy which most people have. You usually talk about this when someone has not shown these characteristics in their behaviour to show your disapproval of them.

- It is common decency to give your seat to anyone in greater need.
- He didn't have the common courtesy to ask permission.

6. adjective

You can use **common** to describe knowledge, an opinion, or a feeling that is shared by people in general.

- It is common knowledge that swimming is one of the best forms of exercise.
- ...the common view that acupuncture is only a fringe area of medicine.

7. adjective

If you describe someone or their behaviour as **common**, you mean that they show a lack of taste, education, and good manners.

- She might be a little common at times, but she was certainly not boring.

8. countable noun

A **common** is an area of grassy land, usually in or near a village or small town, where the public is allowed to go. In American English, **the commons** is also used.

- We are warning women not to go out on to the common alone.
- ...Wimbledon Common.
- ...people who have the greatest need for the use of the commons, the public space.

9. proper noun

The Commons is the same as the House of Commons. The members of the House of Commons can also be referred to as **the Commons**.

- The Prime Minister is to make a statement in the Commons this afternoon.
- The Commons has spent over three months on the bill.

10. in common

11. in common

debt

debts

Explain

1. variable noun

A **debt** is a sum of money that you owe someone.

- Three years later, he is still paying off his debts.
- Shrinking economies mean falling tax revenues and more government debt.
- ...reducing the country's 18 billion foreign debt.

2. uncountable noun

Debt is the state of owing money.

- Stress is a main reason for debt.

3. countable noun

You use **debt** in expressions such as **I owe you a debt** or **I am in your debt** when you are expressing gratitude for something that someone has done for you.

- He was so good to me that I can never repay the debt I owe him.

- *I owe a debt of thanks to Joyce Thompson, whose careful and able research was of great help.*
- *I know I shall feel for ever in her debt.*

deficiency

deficiencies

Explain

1. variable noun

Deficiency in something, especially something that your body needs, is not having enough of it.

- *They did blood tests on him for signs of vitamin deficiency.*
- *There are serious deficiencies in the numbers of suitable aircraft.*

2. variable noun

A **deficiency** that someone or something has is a weakness or imperfection in them.

- *...a serious deficiency in our air defence.*

cosy

cosier cosiest

Explain

1. adjective

A house or room that is **cosy** is comfortable and warm.

- *Downstairs there's a breakfast room and guests can relax in the cosy bar.*

2. adjective

If you are **cosy**, you are comfortable and warm.

- *They like to make sure their guests are comfortable and cosy.*

3. adjective

You use **cosy** to describe activities that are pleasant and friendly, and involve people who know each other well.

- *...a cosy chat between friends.*
- *My mood this year is for a cosy, nice and thoroughly wholesome Christmas.*

uncomfortable

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **uncomfortable**, you are slightly worried or embarrassed, and not relaxed and confident.

- *The request for money made them feel uncomfortable.*
- *If you are uncomfortable with your counsellor or therapist, you must discuss it.*
- *I feel uncomfortable lying.*

2. adjective

Something that is **uncomfortable** makes you feel slight pain or physical discomfort when you experience it or use it.

- *Wigs are hot and uncomfortable to wear constantly.*
- *The Metro journey back to the centre of the town was hot and uncomfortable.*
- *...an uncomfortable chair.*

3. adjective

If you are **uncomfortable**, you are not physically content and relaxed, and feel slight pain or discomfort.

- *I sometimes feel uncomfortable after eating in the evening.*

- You may find it uncomfortable to look at bright lights.

4. adjective

You can describe a situation or fact as **uncomfortable** when it is difficult to deal with and causes problems and worries.

- It is uncomfortable to think of our own death, but we need to.
- Such questions are uncomfortable to answer.
- The decree put the president in an uncomfortable position.

dome

domes

Explain

1. countable noun

A **dome** is a round roof.

- ...the dome of St Paul's cathedral.

2. countable noun

A **dome** is any object that has a similar shape to a dome.

- ...the dome of the hill.

diligent

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **diligent** works hard in a careful and thorough way.

- Meyers is a diligent and prolific worker.
- The historical research was impressively diligent.

enemy

enemies

Explain

1. countable noun

If someone is your **enemy**, they hate you or want to harm you.

2. countable noun

If someone is your **enemy**, they are opposed to you and to what you think or do.

- The Government's political enemies were quick to pick up on this series of disasters.

3. singular noun

The enemy is an army or other force that is opposed to you in a war, or a country with which your country is at war.

- The enemy were pursued for two miles.
- He searched the skies for enemy bombers.

4. countable noun

If one thing is the **enemy of** another thing, the second thing cannot happen or succeed because of the first thing.

- Reform, as we know, is the enemy of revolution.

foolish

Explain

1. adjective

If someone's behaviour or action is **foolish**, it is not sensible and shows a lack of good judgment.

- It would be foolish to raise hopes unnecessarily.
- It is foolish to risk skin cancer.

2. adjective

If you look or feel **foolish** , you look or feel so silly or ridiculous that people are likely to laugh at you.

- I just stood there feeling foolish and watching him.
- I didn't want him to look foolish and be laughed at.

feature

features featuring featured

Explain

1. countable noun

A **feature** of something is an interesting or important part or characteristic of it.

- Patriotic songs have long been a feature of Kuwaiti life.
- The spacious gardens are a special feature of this property.
- Perhaps the most unusual feature in the room is an extraordinary pair of candles.

2. plural noun

Your **features** are your eyes , nose, mouth, and other parts of your face.

- His features seemed to change.
- Her features were strongly defined.

3. verb

When something such as a film or exhibition **features** a particular person or thing, they are an important part of it.

- It's a great movie and it features a Spanish actor who is going to be a world star within a year.

- The hour-long programme will be updated each week and feature highlights from recent games.

- This spectacular event, now in its 5th year, features a stunning catwalk show.

4. verb

If someone or something **features in** something such as a show , exhibition, or magazine, they are an important part of it.

- Jon featured in one of the show's most thrilling episodes.

5. countable noun

A **feature** is a special article in a newspaper or magazine, or a special programme on radio or television.

- We are delighted to see the Sunday Times running a long feature on breast cancer.
- ...a special feature on the fund-raising project.

6. countable noun

A **feature** or a **feature** film or movie is a full-length film about a fictional situation , as opposed to a short film or a documentary .

- ...the first feature-length cartoon, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

7. countable noun

A geographical **feature** is something noticeable in a particular area of country, for example a hill , river, or valley .

formidable

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something or someone as **formidable** , you mean that you feel slightly frightened by them because they are very great or impressive .

- *We have a formidable task ahead of us.*
- *Marsalis has a formidable reputation in both jazz and classical music.*
- *She looked every bit as formidable as her mother.*

gap

gaps

Explain

1. countable noun

A **gap** is a space between two things or a hole in the middle of something solid .

- *He pulled the thick curtains together, leaving just a narrow gap.*
- *...the wind tearing through gaps in the window frames.*

2. countable noun

A **gap** is a period of time when you are not busy or when you stop doing something that you normally do.

- *There followed a gap of four years, during which William joined the Army.*

3. countable noun

If there is something missing from a situation that prevents it being complete or satisfactory , you can say that there is a **gap** .

- *Hunt has filled the gap left by the departure of Nick Batram.*
- *Like a good businessman, Stewart identified a gap in the market.*

4. countable noun

A **gap between** two groups of people, things, or sets of ideas is a big difference between them.

- *...the gap between rich and poor.*
- *America's trade gap widened.*
- *Britain needs to bridge the technology gap between academia and industry.*

funny

funnier funniest funnies

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **funny** is amusing and likely to make you smile or laugh .

- *Wade was smart and not bad-looking, and he could be funny when he wanted to.*
- *I'll tell you a funny story.*

2. adjective

If you describe something as **funny** , you think it is strange , surprising , or puzzling .

- *Children get some very funny ideas sometimes!*
- *There's something funny about him.*
- *It's funny how love can come and go.*

3. adjective

If you feel **funny** , you feel slightly ill.

- *My head had begun to ache and my stomach felt funny.*

4. plural noun

The funnies are humorous drawings or a series of humorous drawings in a newspaper or magazine .

5. funny business

hammer

hammers hammering hammered

Explain

1. countable noun

A **hammer** is a tool that consists of a heavy piece of metal at the end of a handle. It is used, for example, to hit nails into a piece of wood or a wall, or to break things into pieces.

- He used a hammer and chisel to chip away at the wall.

2. verb

If you **hammer** an object such as a nail, you hit it with a hammer. **Hammer in** means the same as hammer .

- To avoid damaging the tree, hammer a wooden peg into the hole.
- Builders were still hammering outside the window.
- The workers kneel on the ground and hammer the small stones in.

3. verb

If you **hammer on** a surface, you hit it several times in order to make a noise , or to emphasize something you are saying when you are angry .

- We had to hammer and shout before they would open up.
- A crowd of reporters was hammering on the door.
- He hammered his two clenched fists on the table.

4. verb

If you **hammer** something such as an idea **into** people or you **hammer at** it, you keep repeating it forcefully so that it will have an effect on people.

- He hammered it into me that I had not suddenly become a rotten goalkeeper.
- Recent advertising campaigns from the industry have hammered at these themes.

5. verb

If you say that someone **hammers** another person, you mean that they attack, criticize, or punish the other person severely.

- The report hammers the private motorist.
- If we turned up late we would be hammered by everybody.

6. passive verb

If you say that businesses **are being hammered** , you mean that they are being unfairly harmed , for example by a change in taxes or by bad economic conditions.

- Look at the numbers of small businesses that are being hammered unmercifully.
- The company has been hammered by the downturn in the construction and motor industries.

7. verb

In sports, if you say that one player or team **hammered** another, you mean that the first player or team defeated the second completely and easily.

- He hammered the young Austrian player in four straight sets.

8. verb

If someone's heart **is hammering** , it is beating very fast , usually because they are frightened .

- My heart was hammering. The footsteps had stopped outside my door.

9. countable noun

In machines and instruments, a **hammer** is a

part that hits another part. For example, in a gun the hammer causes the explosion which makes the bullet shoot out of it, and in a piano the hammers hit the strings and cause the sounds.

10. countable noun

In athletics , a **hammer** is a heavy weight on a piece of wire, which the athlete throws as far as possible . **The hammer** also refers to the sport of throwing the hammer.

- Events like the hammer and the discus are not traditional crowd-pullers in the West.

11. hammer and tongs

12. go/come/be under the hammer

humble

humbler humblest humbles humbling humbled

Explain

1. adjective

A **humble** person is not proud and does not believe that they are better than other people.

- He gave a great performance, but he was very humble.
- Andy was a humble, courteous and gentle man.
- ...a humble apology.

2. adjective

People with low social status are sometimes described as **humble** .

- Spyros Latsis started his career as a humble fisherman in the Aegean.
- He came from a fairly humble, poor background.

3. adjective

A **humble** place or thing is ordinary and not special in any way.

- There are restaurants, both humble and expensive, that specialize in them.
- Varndell made his own reflector for these shots from a strip of humble kitchen foil.

4. adjective

People use **humble** in a phrase such as **in my humble opinion** as a polite way of emphasizing what they think , even though they do not feel humble about it.

- It is, in my humble opinion, perhaps the best steak restaurant in Great Britain.

5. to eat humble pie

6. verb

If you **humble** someone who is more important or powerful than you, you defeat them easily .

- ...the little car company that humbled the industry giants.
- The fans could have cried as their team were humbled and humiliated in the first half.

7. verb

If something or someone **humbles** you, they make you realize that you are not as important or good as you thought you were.

- Ted's words humbled me.
- I am sure millions of viewers were humbled by this story.

handwriting

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Your **handwriting** is your style of writing with a pen or pencil .

- The address was in Anna's handwriting.
- I have to admit that I have bad handwriting.

humid

Explain

1. adjective

You use **humid** to describe an atmosphere or climate that is very damp, and usually very hot .

- Visitors can expect hot and humid conditions.
- The day is overcast and humid.

iron

irons ironing ironed

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Iron is an element which usually takes the form of a hard, dark-grey metal. It is used to make steel, and also forms part of many tools, buildings, and vehicles. Very small amounts of iron occur in your blood and in food.

- The huge, iron gate was locked.
- ...the highest-grade iron ore deposits in the world.
- Some would call these odd pieces of iron and wood 'antiques'.
- He was a tall, lanky man with iron-grey hair.

2. countable noun

An **iron** is an electrical device with a flat metal base. You heat it until the base is hot, then rub it over clothes to remove creases.

3. verb

If you **iron** clothes, you remove the creases from them using an iron.

- She used to iron his shirts.
- ...a freshly ironed shirt.

4. adjective

You can use **iron** to describe the character or behaviour of someone who is very firm in their decisions and actions, or who can control their feelings well .

- ...a man of icy nerve and iron will.
- She delighted in the nickname, the 'iron lady'.

5. adjective

Iron is used in expressions such as **an iron hand** and **iron discipline** to describe strong, harsh , or unfair methods of control which do not allow people much freedom .

- He died in 1985 after ruling Albania with an iron fist for 40 years.
- ...a people living permanently in the iron grip of poverty.

6. irons in the fire

7. to pump iron

humorous

Explain

1. adjective

If someone or something is **humorous** , they are amusing, especially in a clever or witty way.

- He was quite humorous, and I liked that about him.
- ...a humorous magazine.

joke

jokes joking joked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **joke** is something that is said or done to make you laugh , for example a funny story .

- He debated whether to make a joke about shooting rabbits, but decided against it.
- No one told worse jokes than Claus.

2. verb

If you **joke** , you tell funny stories or say amusing things.

- She would joke about her appearance.
- Lorna was laughing and joking with Trevor.
- The project was taking so long that Stephen joked that it would never be finished.
- 'Well, a beautiful spring Thursday would probably be a nice day to be buried on,' Nancy joked.

3. countable noun

A **joke** is something untrue that you tell another person in order to amuse yourself.

- It was probably just a joke to them, but it wasn't funny to me.

4. verb

If you **joke** , you tell someone something that is not true in order to amuse yourself.

- Don't get defensive, Charlie. I was only joking.
- 'I wish you made as much fuss of me,' Vera joked.

5. singular noun

If you say that something or someone is **a joke** , you think they are ridiculous and do not deserve respect .

- It's ridiculous, it's pathetic, it's a joke.
- The police investigation was a joke. A total cover-up.

6. beyond a joke

7. make a joke of

8. no joke

9. the joke is on sb

10. can not take a joke

11. you're/you must be/you've got to be joking

imaginary

Explain

1. adjective

An **imaginary** person, place, or thing exists only in your mind or in a story , and not in real life.

- Lots of children have imaginary friends.
- ...creating an imaginary world.

laughter

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Laughter is the sound of people laughing, for example because they are amused or happy .

- Their laughter filled the corridor.
- He delivered the line perfectly, and everybody roared with laughter.

- ...hysterical laughter.

2. uncountable noun

Laughter is the fact of laughing, or the feeling of fun and amusement that you have when you are laughing.

- Pantomime is about bringing laughter to thousands.
- My interests: eating out, fun nights in, music and laughter.

imaginative

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe someone or their ideas as **imaginative**, you are praising them because they are easily able to think of or create new or exciting things.

- ...an imaginative writer.
- ...hundreds of cooking ideas and imaginative recipes.
- They should adopt a more imaginative approach.

lens

lenses

Explain

1. countable noun

A **lens** is a thin curved piece of glass or plastic used in things such as cameras, telescopes, and pairs of glasses. You look through a lens in order to make things look larger, smaller, or clearer.

- ...a camera lens.
- I packed your sunglasses with the green lenses.

2. countable noun

In your eye, the **lens** is the part behind the pupil that focuses light and helps you to see clearly.

indignant

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **indignant**, you are shocked and angry, because you think that something is unjust or unfair.

- He is indignant at suggestions that they were secret agents.
- MPs were indignant that the government had not consulted them.
- Sheena gave her an indignant look.

notable

notables

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **notable** is important or interesting.

- The proposed new structure is notable not only for its height, but for its shape.
- It is notable that she never allowed the men in her life to eclipse her.
- With a few notable exceptions, doctors are a pretty sensible lot.

2. countable noun

Notables are important or powerful people.

- Elected by local notables for nine years, Senators lack the democratic legitimacy of members of the National Assembly.

- The notables include five Senators, two Supreme Court judges and three State Governors.

intense

Explain

1. adjective

Intense is used to describe something that is very great or extreme in strength or degree.

- He was sweating from the intense heat.
- Suddenly the room filled with intense light.
- Stevens's murder was the result of a deep-seated and intense hatred.
- His threats become more intense, agitated, and frequent.

2. adjective

If you describe an activity as **intense**, you mean that it is very serious and concentrated, and often involves doing a great deal in a short time.

- The battle for third place was intense.
- The military on both sides are involved in intense activity.

3. adjective

If you describe the way someone looks at you as **intense**, you mean that they look at you very directly and seem to know what you are thinking or feeling.

- I felt so self-conscious under Luke's mother's intense gaze.
- He gazed at me with those intense blue eyes.

4. adjective

If you describe a person as **intense**, you mean that they appear to concentrate very hard on everything that they do, and they feel and show their emotions in a very extreme way.

- I know he's an intense player, but he does enjoy what he's doing.
- She is taller than I imagined, more adult, more intense.

note

notes noting noted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **note** is a short letter.

- Stevens wrote him a note asking him to come to his apartment.
- I'll have to leave a note for Karen.

2. countable noun

A **note** is something that you write down to remind yourself of something.

- I knew that if I didn't make a note I would forget.
- Take notes during the consultation as the final written report is very concise.

3. countable noun

In a book or article, a **note** is a short piece of additional information.

- See Note 16 on page p. 223.
- ...'Exiles' by James Joyce, edited with an Introduction and notes by J C C Mays.

4. countable noun

A **note** is a short document that has to be signed by someone and that gives official information about something.

- Since Mr Bennett was going to need some time off work, he asked for a sick note.

- *I've got half a ton of gravel in the lorry but he won't sign my delivery note.*
5. *countable noun*
You can refer to a banknote as a **note** .
- *Her husband received a telephone call ordering him to collect £ 40,000 in used notes.*
 - *...a five pound note.*
6. *countable noun*
In music, a **note** is the sound of a particular pitch, or a written symbol representing this sound.
- *She has a deep voice and doesn't even try for the high notes.*
 - *...the note of D.*
7. *singular noun*
You can use **note** to refer to a particular quality in someone's voice that shows how they are feeling.
- *There is an unmistakable note of nostalgia in his voice.*
 - *It was not difficult for him to catch the note of bitterness in my voice.*
8. *singular noun*
You can use **note** to refer to a particular feeling, impression , or atmosphere.
- *Yesterday's testimony began on a note of passionate but civilized disagreement.*
 - *Somehow he tells these stories without a note of horror.*
 - *The furniture strikes a traditional note which is appropriate to its Edwardian setting.*
9. *verb*
If you **note** a fact , you become aware of it.
- *The White House has noted his promise to support any attack that was designed to enforce the U.N. resolutions.*
 - *Suddenly, I noted that the rain had stopped.*
 - *Haig noted how he 'looked pinched and rather tired'.*
10. *verb*
If you tell someone to **note** something, you are drawing their attention to it.
- *Note the statue to Sallustio Bandini, a prominent Sieneese.*
 - *Please note that there are a limited number of tickets.*
11. *verb*
If you **note** something, you mention it in order to draw people's attention to it.
- *The report notes that export and import volumes picked up in leading economies.*
 - *The yearbook also noted a sharp drop in reported cases of sexually transmitted disease.*
12. *verb*
When you **note** something, you write it down as a record of what has happened .
- *'He has had his tonsils out and has been ill, too', she noted in her diary.*
 - *One policeman was clearly visible noting the number plates of passing cars.*
 - *A guard came and took our names and noted where each of us was sitting.*
13. *to compare notes*
14. *of note*
15. *strike a particular note/sound a particular note*
16. *take note*

mild

milder mildest

Explain

1. adjective

Mild is used to describe something such as a feeling , attitude , or illness that is not very strong or severe .

- Teddy turned to Mona with a look of mild confusion.
- Anna put up a mild protest.
- If you have only mild symptoms, try an over-the-counter treatment.

2. adjective

A **mild** person is gentle and does not get angry easily .

- He is a mild man, who is reasonable almost to the point of blandness.

3. adjective

Mild weather is pleasant because it is neither extremely hot nor extremely cold .

- The area is famous for its very mild winter climate.

4. adjective

You describe food as **mild** when it does not taste or smell strong, sharp , or bitter, especially when you like it because of this.

- This cheese has a soft, mild flavour.
- ...a mild curry powder.

5. graded adjective

Mild soap or washing-up liquid feels pleasant on your skin and does not contain any substances that might make your skin sore .

- Wash your face thoroughly with a mild soap and warm water.

6. uncountable noun

Mild is a clear , dark-coloured beer.

notebook

notebooks

Explain

1. countable noun

A **notebook** is a small book for writing notes in.

- He brought out a notebook and pen from his pocket.
- ...her reporter's notebook.

2. countable noun

A **notebook** computer is a small personal computer.

- This is a super-slim, lightweight notebook computer.

miserable

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **miserable** , you are very unhappy.

- I took a series of badly paid secretarial jobs which made me really miserable.
- She went to bed, miserable and depressed.

2. adjective

If you describe a place or situation as **miserable** , you mean that it makes you feel unhappy or depressed.

- There was nothing at all in this miserable place to distract him.

3. adjective

If you describe the weather as **miserable** , you mean that it makes you feel depressed, because it is raining or dull .

- It was a grey, wet, miserable day.
- It was very cold, damp and miserable.

4. adjective

If you describe someone as **miserable** , you mean that you do not like them because they are bad-tempered or unfriendly .

- He always was a miserable man. He never spoke to me nor anybody else.

5. adjective

You can describe a quantity or quality as **miserable** when you think that it is much smaller or worse than it ought to be.

- Our speed over the ground was a miserable 2.2 knots.

6. adjective

A **miserable** failure is a very great one.

- The film was a miserable commercial failure both in Italy and in the United States.

overturn

overturns overturning overturned

Explain

1. verb

If something **overturns** or if you **overturn** it, it turns upside down or on its side.

- The lorry veered out of control, overturned and smashed into a wall.
- Alex jumped up so violently that he overturned his glass of sherry.

- A dozen cartons of books had been overturned and strewn about the floor.

- ...a battered overturned boat.

2. verb

If someone in authority **overturns** a legal decision , they officially decide that that decision is incorrect or not valid .

- When the Russian parliament overturned his decision, he backed down.
- His nine-month sentence was overturned by Appeal Court judge Lord Justice Watkins.

3. verb

To **overturn** a government or system means to remove it or destroy it.

- He accused his opponents of wanting to overturn the government.
- ...a society where all the old values had been overturned.

modest

Explain

1. adjective

A **modest** house or other building is not large or expensive .

- ...the modest home of a family who lived off the land.
- A one-night stay in a modest hotel costs around £35.

2. adjective

You use **modest** to describe something such as an amount, rate , or improvement which is fairly small.

- Swiss unemployment rose to the still modest rate of 0.7

- The democratic reforms have been modest.
- You don't get rich, but you can get a modest living out of it.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is **modest**, you approve of them because they do not talk much about their abilities or achievements.

- He's modest, as well as being a great player.
- She is modest about her achievements.

4. adjective

You can describe a woman as **modest** when she avoids doing or wearing anything that might cause men to have sexual feelings towards her. You can also describe her clothes or behaviour as **modest**.

- ...cultures in which women are supposed to be modest.

oxygen

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Oxygen is a colourless gas that exists in large quantities in the air. All plants and animals need oxygen in order to live.

- The human brain needs to be without oxygen for only four minutes before permanent damage occurs.

moral

morals

Explain

1. plural noun

Morals are principles and beliefs concerning right and wrong behaviour.

- ...Western ideas and morals.
- They have no morals.

2. adjective

Moral means relating to beliefs about what is right or wrong.

- She describes her own moral dilemma in making the film.
- ...matters of church doctrine and moral teaching.
- ...the moral issues involved in 'playing God'.

3. adjective

Moral courage or duty is based on what you believe is right or acceptable, rather than on what the law says should be done.

- The Government had a moral, if not a legal duty to pay compensation.
- ...his moral courage and sane defence of his philosophy.

4. adjective

A **moral** person behaves in a way that is believed by most people to be good and right.

- The people who will be on the committee are moral, cultured, competent people.

5. adjective

If you give someone **moral** support, you encourage them in what they are doing by expressing approval.

- Moral as well as financial support was what the West should provide.

6. countable noun

The moral of a story or event is what you learn from it about how you should or should not behave.

- I think the moral of the story is let the buyer beware.
- The moral is that, once cooked, they look the same and taste every bit as good.

passenger

passengers

Explain

1. countable noun

A **passenger** in a vehicle such as a bus , boat, or plane is a person who is travelling in it, but who is not driving it or working on it.

- Mr Fullemann was a passenger in the car when it crashed.
- ...a flight from Milan with more than forty passengers on board.

2. adjective

Passenger is used to describe something that is designed for passengers, rather than for drivers or goods.

- I sat in the passenger seat.
- ...a passenger train.

obscure

obscurer obscurest obscures obscuring obscured

Explain

1. adjective

If something or someone is **obscure** , they are unknown , or are known by only a few people.

- The origin of the custom is obscure.
- The hymn was written by an obscure Greek composer.

2. adjective

Something that is **obscure** is difficult to understand or deal with, usually because it involves so many parts or details .

- The contracts are written in obscure language.
- Richard's statement was disgracefully obscure.

3. verb

If one thing **obscures** another, it prevents it from being seen or heard properly.

- Trees obscured his vision; he couldn't see much of the Square's southern half.
- One wall of the parliament building is now almost completely obscured by a huge banner.

4. verb

To **obscure** something means to make it difficult to understand.

- ...the jargon that frequently obscures educational writing.
- This issue has been obscured by recent events.

pencil

pencils pencilling pencilled

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pencil** is an object that you write or draw with. It consists of a thin piece of wood with a rod of a black or coloured substance through the middle . If you write or draw something **in pencil** , you do it using a pencil.

- I found a pencil and some blank paper in her desk.
- He had written her a note in pencil.

2. verb

If you **pencil** a letter or a note, you write it using a pencil.

- He pencilled a note to Joseph Daniels.

ordinary

Explain

1. adjective

Ordinary people or things are normal and not special or different in any way.

- I strongly suspect that most ordinary people would agree with me.
- It has 25 calories less than ordinary ice cream.
- It was just an ordinary weekend for us.

2. graded adjective

If you describe someone or something as **ordinary**, you mean they are not special or interesting in any way and may be rather dull.

- I'm just a very ordinary, boring normal guy.
- Your life since then must have seemed very ordinary.
- ...very ordinary, if very well made, drinking glasses, lamps and tableware.

3. out of the ordinary

- Most literature on the subject of immigrants in France has been written from the perspective of the French themselves.

- I would like to offer a historical perspective.

2. in perspective/into perspective/out of perspective

3. uncountable noun

Perspective is the art of making some objects or people in a picture look further away than others.

plentiful

Explain

1. adjective

Things that are **plentiful** exist in such large amounts or numbers that there is enough for people's wants or needs.

- Fish are plentiful in the lake.
- ...a plentiful supply of vegetables and salads and fruits.

plot

plots plotting plotted

Explain

1. countable noun

A **plot** is a secret plan by a group of people to do something that is illegal or wrong, usually against a person or a government.

- Security forces have uncovered a plot to overthrow the government.
- He was responding to reports of an assassination plot against him.

2. verb

If people **plot to** do something or **plot** something that is illegal or wrong, they plan secretly to do it.

perspective

perspectives

Explain

1. countable noun

A particular **perspective** is a particular way of thinking about something, especially one that is influenced by your beliefs or experiences.

- He says the death of his father 18 months ago has given him a new perspective on life.
- ...two different perspectives on the nature of adolescent development.

- Prosecutors in the trial allege the defendants plotted to overthrow the government.
- The military were plotting a coup.
- They are awaiting trial on charges of plotting against the state.

3. verb

When people **plot** a strategy or a course of action, they carefully plan each step of it.

- Yesterday's meeting was intended to plot a survival strategy for the party.
- For the next five years she plotted her career.

4. variable noun

The **plot** of a film, novel, or play is the connected series of events which make up the story.

5. countable noun

A **plot of** land is a small piece of land, especially one that has been measured or marked out for a special purpose, such as building houses or growing vegetables .

- I thought that I'd buy myself a small plot of land and build a house on it.
- The bottom of the garden was given over to vegetable plots.

6. verb

When someone **plots** something on a graph, they mark certain points on it and then join the points up.

- We plot about eight points on the graph.

7. verb

When someone **plots** the position or course of a plane or ship, they mark it on a map using instruments to obtain accurate information.

- We were trying to plot the course of the submarine.

8. verb

If someone **plots** the progress or development of something, they make a diagram or a plan which shows how it has developed in order to give some indication of how it will develop in the future .

- They used a computer to plot the movements of everyone in the building.

9. to lose the plot

powerful

Explain

1. adjective

A **powerful** person or organization is able to control or influence people and events .

- You're a powerful man—people will listen to you.
- ...Russia and India, two large, powerful countries.
- ...Hong Kong's powerful business community.

2. adjective

You say that someone's body is **powerful** when it is physically strong .

- Hans flexed his powerful muscles.
- It's such a big powerful dog.

3. adjective

A **powerful** machine or substance is effective because it is very strong.

- The more powerful the car the more difficult it is to handle.
- ...powerful computer systems.
- ...a powerful magnet.

4. adjective

A **powerful** smell is very strong.

- There was a powerful smell of garlic.
- ...tiny creamy flowers with a powerful scent.

5. adjective

A **powerful** voice is loud and can be heard from a long way away .

- At that moment the housekeeper's powerful voice interrupted them, announcing a visitor.

6. adjective

You describe a piece of writing , speech , or work of art as **powerful** when it has a strong effect on people's feelings or beliefs .

- ...Bleasdale's powerful 11-part drama about a corrupt city leader.
- ...one of the world's most powerful and moving operas, Verdi's 'Otello'.
- ...a powerful new style of dance-theatre.

pretext

pretexts

Explain

1. countable noun

A **pretext** is a reason which you pretend has caused you to do something.

- They wanted a pretext for subduing the region by force.
- He excused himself on the pretext of a stomach upset.
- They would now find some dubious pretext to restart the war.

privilege

privileges privileging privileged

Explain

1. countable noun

A **privilege** is a special right or advantage that only one person or group has.

- The Russian Federation has issued a decree abolishing special privileges for government officials.
- ...the ancient powers and privileges of the House of Commons.

2. uncountable noun

If you talk about **privilege** , you are talking about the power and advantage that only a small group of people have, usually because of their wealth or their high social class.

- Pironi was the son of privilege and wealth, and it showed.
- Having been born to privilege in old Hollywood, she was carrying on a family tradition by acting.

3. singular noun

You can use **privilege** in expressions such as **be a privilege** or **have the privilege** when you want to show your appreciation of someone or something or to show your respect .

- It must be a privilege to know such a man.
- I had the privilege of meeting Mandela at the only service of the Order of Merit he attended.

4. verb

To **privilege** someone or something means to treat them better or differently than other people or things rather than treat them all equally.

- ...privileging a structure that rewards the fastest, strongest, and wealthiest among us.
- They are privileging a tiny number to the disadvantage of the rest.

robust

Explain

1. adjective

Someone or something that is **robust** is very strong or healthy .

- More women than men go to the doctor. Perhaps men are more robust or worry less?
- We've always specialised in making very robust, simply designed machinery.

2. adjective

Robust views or opinions are strongly held and forcefully expressed.

- A British Foreign Office minister has made a robust defence of the agreement.
- He has the keen eye and robust approach needed.

purse

purses pursing pursed

Explain

1. countable noun

A **purse** is a very small bag that people, especially women, keep their money in.

2. countable noun

A **purse** is a small bag that women carry.

- She reached in her purse for her phone.

3. singular noun

Purse is used to refer to the total amount of money that a country, family, or group has.

- The money could simply go into the public purse, helping to lower taxes.

4. verb

If you **purse** your **lips** , you move them into a small, rounded shape, usually because you disapprove of something or when you are thinking .

- She pursed her lips in disapproval.

slippery

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **slippery** is smooth , wet , or oily and is therefore difficult to walk on or to hold .

- The tiled floor was wet and slippery.
- Motorists were warned to beware of slippery conditions.

2. adjective

You can describe someone as **slippery** if you think that they are dishonest in a clever way and cannot be trusted .

- He is a slippery customer, and should be carefully watched.

3. slippery slope

rust

rusts rusting rusted

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Rust is a brown substance that forms on iron or steel, for example when it comes into contact with water.

- ...a decaying tractor, red with rust.
- Manufacturers are looking into building cars out of plastic to avoid the problem of rust.

2. verb

When a metal object **rusts**, it becomes covered in rust and often loses its strength.

- Copper nails are better than iron nails because the iron rusts.
- There was an old rusting bolt on the door.

3. colour

Rust is sometimes used to describe things that are reddish-brown in colour.

- ...turquoise woodwork with accent colours of rust and ochre.
- ...a rust-coloured blouse.

4. uncountable noun

Rust is a disease which affects plants. It is caused by a fungus.

strong

stronger strongest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **strong** is healthy with good muscles and can move or carry heavy things, or do hard physical work.

- I'm not strong enough to carry him.

- I feared I wouldn't be able to control such a strong horse.

2. adjective

Someone who is **strong** is confident and determined, and is not easily influenced or worried by other people.

- He is sharp and manipulative with a strong personality.
- It's up to managers to be strong and do what they believe is right.
- Eventually I felt strong enough to look at him.

3. adjective

Strong objects or materials are not easily broken and can support a lot of weight or resist a lot of strain.

- The vacuum flask has a strong casing, which won't crack or chip.
- Glue the mirror in with a strong adhesive.
- The fabric is strong enough to withstand harsh processing.

4. adjective

A **strong** wind, current, or other force has a lot of power or speed, and can cause heavy things to move.

- Strong winds and torrential rain combined to make conditions terrible for golfers in the Scottish Open.
- A fairly strong current seemed to be moving the whole boat.
- A neutron star has a gravitational field strong enough to generate X-rays.

5. adjective

A **strong** impression or influence has a great effect on someone.

- *We're glad if our music makes a strong impression, even if it's a negative one.*
 - *There will be a strong incentive to enter into a process of negotiation.*
 - *Teenage idols have a strong influence on our children.*
 - *We had strong family traditions; we couldn't escape them.*
6. adjective
If you have **strong** opinions on something or express them using **strong** words, you have extreme or very definite opinions which you are willing to express or defend .
- *It was hard to find a jury who did not already hold strong views on the tragedy.*
 - *There has been strong criticism of the military regime.*
 - *I am a strong supporter of the NHS.*
 - *The newspaper condemned the campaign in extremely strong language.*
 - *It's bad judgment, but it's not treason. I think treason is too strong a word.*
7. adjective
If someone in authority takes **strong** action, they act firmly and severely.
- *The government has said it will take strong action against any further strikes.*
 - *He has also said he will have to become a strong President to put things right.*
8. adjective
If there is a **strong** case or argument for something, it is supported by a lot of evidence .
- *The testimony presented offered a strong case for acquitting her on grounds of self-defense.*
- *The evidence that such investment promotes growth is strong.*
9. adjective
If there is a **strong** possibility or chance that something is true or will happen , it is very likely to be true or to happen.
- *There is a strong possibility that the cat ate contaminated pet food.*
10. adjective
Your **strong** points are your best qualities or talents , or the things you are good at.
- *Discretion is not Jeremy's strong point.*
 - *Even in the area of foreign policy, his strong suit, he failed to deliver.*
 - *Cynics argue that the E.U. is stronger on rhetoric than on concrete action.*
11. adjective
A **strong** competitor , candidate , or team is good or likely to succeed .
- *She was a strong contender for Britain's rowing team.*
 - *Some countries where English is becoming a strong competitor to French, such as Algeria and Senegal, may see an immediate halt to the council's work.*
 - *They've got a strong squad and some great players.*
 - *This show has several strengths—notably a strong cast.*
12. adjective
If a relationship or link is **strong** , it is close and likely to last for a long time.
- *He felt he had a relationship strong enough to talk frankly to Sarah.*

- This has tested our marriage, and we have come through it stronger than ever.
- It is fairly easy for executive directors to develop strong ties with investors.

13. adjective

A **strong** currency, economy , or industry has a high value or is very successful .

- Investment performance was strong across the board last year.
- The local economy is strong and the population is growing.
- The company was not financially strong enough to be floated on the Stock Exchange.

14. adjective

If something is a **strong** element or part of something else, it is an important or large part of it.

- We are especially encouraged by the strong representation of women in technology.
- There is a strong element of truth to each of these explanations.

15. adjective

You can use **strong** when you are saying how many people there are in a group. For example, if a group is twenty strong, there are twenty people in it.

- Ukraine indicated that it would establish its own army, 400,000 strong.
- ...a 1,000-strong crowd.

16. adjective

A **strong** drink, chemical, or drug contains a lot of the particular substance which makes it effective.

- Strong coffee or tea late at night may cause sleeplessness.

- In strong concentrations it can cause nausea and vomiting.

17. adjective

A **strong** colour, flavour, smell, sound, or light is intense and easily noticed .

- As she went past there was a gust of strong perfume.
- Strong colours would flatter her pale skin and dark hair.
- Munster is among the strongest cheeses in France.

18. adjective

If someone has a **strong** accent, they speak in a distinctive way that shows very clearly what country or region they come from.

- 'Good, Mr Ryle,' he said in English with a strong French accent.

19. adjective

You can say that someone has **strong** features or a **strong** face if their face has large, distinctive features.

- He had a strong nose and olive-black eyes.

20. come on strong

21. going strong

sacrifice

sacrifices sacrificing sacrificed

Explain

1. verb

If you **sacrifice** something that is valuable or important , you give it up, usually to obtain something else for yourself or for other people.

Sacrifice is also a noun .

- They sacrificed family life to their careers.
- Her pride was a small thing to sacrifice for their children's security.
- Kitty Aldridge has sacrificed all for her first film.
- He sacrificed himself and so saved his country.
- She made many sacrifices to get Anita a good education.
- He was willing to make any sacrifice for peace.

2. verb

To **sacrifice** an animal or person means to kill them in a special religious ceremony as an offering to a god . **Sacrifice** is also a noun.

- The priest sacrificed a chicken.
- Two white bulls were sacrificed and a feast was held.
- ...animal sacrifices to the gods.

stupid

stupider stupidest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone or something is **stupid** , you mean that they show a lack of good judgment or intelligence and they are not at all sensible .

- I'll never do anything so stupid again.
- I made a stupid mistake.
- Your father wouldn't have asked such a stupid question.
- If you give him half a chance he can make you look stupid.

2. adjective

You say that something is **stupid** to indicate that you do not like it or care about it, or that it annoys you.

- I wouldn't call it art. It's just stupid and tasteless.
- Friendship is much more important to me than a stupid old ring!

secretary

secretaries

Explain

1. countable noun

A **secretary** is a person who is employed to do office work, such as typing letters , answering phone calls , and arranging meetings .

2. countable noun

The **secretary** of an organization such as a trade union , a political party , or a club is its official manager.

- My grandfather was secretary of the Scottish Miners' Union.

3. countable noun

The **secretary** of a company is the person who has the legal duty of keeping the company's records.

4. countable noun

Secretary is used in the titles of ministers and officials who are in charge of main government departments.

- ...the British Foreign Secretary.
- ...the former US Defense Secretary.

unexpected

Explain

1. adjective

If an event or someone's behaviour is **unexpected**, it surprises you because you did not think that it was likely to happen.

- His death was totally unexpected.
- He made a brief, unexpected appearance at the office.
- Help may also come from some unexpected places.
- 'Hello,' he said. 'This is an unexpected pleasure.'

spade

spades

Explain

1. countable noun

A **spade** is a tool used for digging, with a flat metal blade and a long handle.

- ... a garden spade.
- The girls happily played in the sand with buckets and spades.

2. uncountable noun

Spades is one of the four suits in a pack of playing cards. Each card in the suit is marked with one or more black symbols: ♠. A **spade** is a playing card of this suit.

- ...the ace of spades.

3. to call a spade a spade

universal

universals

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **universal** relates to everyone in the world or everyone in a particular group or society.

- The insurance industry has produced its own proposals for universal health care.
- The desire to look attractive is universal.

2. adjective

Something that is **universal** affects or relates to every part of the world or the universe.

- ...universal diseases.

3. countable noun

A **universal** is a principle that applies in all cases or a characteristic that is present in all members of a particular class.

- There are no economic universals.

steward

stewards

Explain

1. countable noun

A **steward** is a man who works on a ship, plane, or train, looking after passengers and serving meals to them.

2. countable noun

A **steward** is someone who has the responsibility for looking after property.

- The Earl didn't have the money or good judgement to employ a steward to manage the place for him.

3. countable noun

A **steward** is a man or woman who helps to organize a race, march, or other public event.

- The steward at the march stood his ground while the rest of the marchers decided to run.

warm

warmer warmest warms warming warmed

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **warm** has some heat but not enough to be hot.

- Wheat is grown in places which have cold winters and warm, dry summers.
- Because it was warm, David wore only a white cotton shirt.
- Dissolve the salt in the warm water.

2. adjective

Warm clothes and blankets are made of a material such as wool which protects you from the cold .

- They have been forced to sleep in the open without food or warm clothing.
- The bed had clean sheets and warm blankets.

3. adjective

Warm colours have red or yellow in them rather than blue or green, and make you feel comfortable and relaxed .

- We hope the colour gives the house a warm and inviting feel.
- The basement hallway is painted a warm yellow.

4. adjective

A **warm** person is friendly and shows a lot of affection or enthusiasm in their behaviour.

- She was a warm and loving mother.
- His familiar warm voice made everybody who knew him feel welcome.
- I would like to express my warmest thanks to the doctors.

5. verb

If you **warm** a part of your body or if something hot **warms** it, it stops feeling cold and starts to feel hotter.

- The sun had come out to warm his back.
- She went to warm her hands by the log fire.

6. verb

If you **warm to** a person or an idea, you become fonder of the person or more interested in the idea.

- Those who got to know him better warmed to his openness and honesty.
- Elizabeth warmed to her theme as the letter continued with her favourite lament.

trait

traits

Explain

1. countable noun

A **trait** is a particular characteristic, quality, or tendency that someone or something has.

- Many of our personality traits are developed during those early months.
- Creativity is a human trait.

wealthy

wealthier wealthiest

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **wealthy** has a large amount of money, property, or valuable possessions . **The wealthy** are people who are wealthy.

- ...a wealthy international businessman.
- ...a measure to raise income taxes on the wealthy.

trend

trends trending trended

Explain

1. countable noun

A **trend** is a change or development towards something new or different.

- This is a growing trend.
- ...a trend towards part-time employment.
- ...the downward trend in gasoline prices.

2. countable noun

To set a **trend** means to do something that becomes accepted or fashionable , and that a lot of other people copy .

- The record has already proved a success and may well start a trend.

3. verb

If something such as a topic or name **is trending** , a lot of people are discussing or mentioning it on social media.

- Minutes after the announcement, Heidi was trending on Twitter.
- The hashtag RoyalBaby became the world's number 1 trending topic.

wet

wetter wettest wets wetting wetted

Explain

1. adjective

If something is **wet** , it is covered in water, rain , sweat , tears , or another liquid.

- He towelled his wet hair.
- I lowered myself to the water's edge, getting my feet wet.
- My gloves were soaking wet.
- I saw his face was wet with tears.

2. verb

To **wet** something means to get water or some other liquid over it.

- When assembling the pie, wet the edges where the two crusts join.
- Fielding nervously wet his lips and tried to smile.

3. adjective

If the weather is **wet** , it is raining. **The wet** is used to mean wet weather.

- If the weather is wet or cold, choose an indoor activity.
- It was a miserable wet day.
- They had come in from the cold and the wet.
- Braking in the wet in heavy traffic is never fun.

4. adjective

If something such as paint , ink , or cement is **wet** , it is not yet dry or solid.

- I lay the painting flat to stop the wet paint running.

- *She rendered the walls in cement and, while it was still wet, applied the shells.*

5. *graded adjective*

*If a child or its nappy or clothing is **wet** , its nappy or clothing is soaked in urine .*

- *Change him when he's wet.*
- *Avoid changing a nappy unless it's dirty or very wet.*

6. *verb*

*If people, especially children, **wet** their beds or clothes or **wet themselves** , they urinate in their beds or in their clothes because they cannot stop themselves.*

- *A quarter of 4-year-olds frequently wet the bed.*
- *To put it plainly, they wet themselves.*

7. *adjective*

***Wet** fish is fish that is sold fresh and uncooked , and not frozen or dried.*

8. *graded adjective*

*If you say that someone is **wet** , you mean that they are weak and lacking in enthusiasm , energy , or confidence .*

- *Don't be so wet, Charles.*

9. *countable noun*

*A **wet** is a Conservative politician who supports moderate political policies and opposes extreme ones.*

- *The left, the so-called 'wets', thought more state spending would mean more jobs.*

10. *wet behind the ears*

victim

victims

Explain

1. *countable noun*

*A **victim** is someone who has been hurt or killed*

- *Not all the victims survived.*
- *Statistically, our chances of being the victims of violent crime are remote.*

2. *countable noun*

*A **victim** is someone who has suffered as a result of someone else's actions or beliefs , or as a result of unpleasant circumstances.*

- *He was a victim of racial prejudice.*
- *He described himself and Altman as victims rather than participants in the scandal.*
- *Infectious diseases are spreading among many of the flood victims.*

3. *fall victim to*

brief

briefer briefest briefs briefing briefed

Explain

1. *adjective*

*Something that is **brief** lasts for only a short time.*

- *She once made a brief appearance on television.*
- *This time their visit is brief.*

2. *adjective*

*A **brief** speech or piece of writing does not contain too many words or details .*

- *In a brief statement, he concentrated entirely on international affairs.*

- Write a very brief description of a typical problem.

3. adjective

If you are **brief**, you say what you want to say in as few words as possible.

- Now please be brief—my time is valuable.
- I hope to be brief and to the point.

4. adjective

You can describe a period of time as **brief** if you want to emphasize that it is very short.

- For a few brief minutes we forgot the anxiety and anguish.

5. plural noun

Men's or women's underpants can be referred to as **briefs**.

- A bra and a pair of briefs lay on the floor.

6. verb

If someone **briefs** you, especially about a piece of work or a serious matter, they give you information that you need before you do it or consider it.

- A department spokesperson briefed reporters.
- The Prime Minister has been briefed by her parliamentary aides.

7. countable noun

If someone gives you a **brief**, they officially give you responsibility for dealing with a particular thing.

- She joined the company less than two years ago with a brief to turn the studio around.

8. in brief

9. in brief

accuracy

Explain

1. uncountable noun

The **accuracy of** information or measurements is their quality of being true or correct, even in small details.

- We cannot guarantee the accuracy of these figures.

2. uncountable noun

If someone or something performs a task, for example hitting a target, **with accuracy**, they do it in an exact way without making a mistake.

- ...weapons that could fire with accuracy at targets 3,000 yards away.
- Every bank pays close attention to the speed and accuracy of its staff.

complicated

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that something is **complicated**, you mean it has so many parts or aspects that it is difficult to understand or deal with.

- The situation in Lebanon is very complicated.
- ...a very complicated voting system.

affection

affections

Explain

1. uncountable noun

If you regard someone or something with **affection**, you like them and are fond of them.

- She thought of him with affection.
- She had developed quite an affection for the place.
- ...trying to win their affection.

2. plural noun

Your **affections** are your feelings of love or fondness for someone.

- The distant object of his affections is Caroline.
- ...her fear of being replaced in his affections.

concise

Explain

1. adjective

Something that is **concise** says everything that is necessary without using any unnecessary words.

- Burton's text is concise and informative.
- Whatever you are writing make sure you are clear, concise, and accurate.

2. adjective

A **concise** edition of a book, especially a dictionary, is shorter than the original edition.

- ...Sotheby's Concise Encyclopedia of Porcelain.

altitude

altitudes

Explain

1. variable noun

If something is at a particular **altitude**, it is at that height above sea level.

- The aircraft had reached its cruising altitude of about 39,000 feet.
- The following day I ran my first race at high altitude.

digital

Explain

1. adjective

Digital systems record or transmit information in the form of thousands of very small signals.

- Digital technology allowed a rapid expansion in the number of TV channels.

2. adjective

Digital devices such as watches or clocks give information by displaying numbers rather than by having a pointer which moves round a dial. Compare analogue.

- ...a digital display.

aviation

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Aviation is the operation and production of aircraft.

dim

dimmer dimmest dims dimming dimmed

Explain

1. adjective

Dim light is not bright.

- She stood waiting, in the *dim* light.
- Below decks, the lights were *dim*.

2. adjective

A **dim** place is rather dark because there is not much light in it.

- The room was *dim* and cool and quiet.

3. adjective

A **dim** figure or object is not very easy to see, either because it is in shadow or darkness, or because it is far away .

- Pete's torch picked out the *dim* figures of Bob and Chang.

4. adjective

If you have a **dim** memory or understanding of something, it is difficult to remember or is unclear in your mind.

- It seems that the '60s era of social activism is all but a *dim* memory.

5. adjective

If the future of something is **dim** , you have no reason to feel hopeful or positive about it.

- The prospects for a peaceful solution are *dim*.

6. adjective

If you describe someone as **dim** , you think that they are stupid .

7. verb

If you **dim** a light or if it **dims** , it becomes less bright.

- *Dim* the lighting—it is unpleasant to lie with a bright light shining in your eyes.

- The houselights *dimmed*.

8. verb

If you are driving a car and **dim** the headlights, you operate a switch that makes them shine downwards , so that they do not shine directly into the eyes of other drivers .

- *Dim* your lights behind that car.

9. verb

If your future, hopes , or emotions **dim** or if something **dims** them, they become less good or less strong .

- Their economic prospects have *dimmed*.
- Forty eight years of marriage have not *dimmed* the passion between Bill and Helen.

10. ergative verb

If your eyes **dim** or **are dimmed** by something, they become weaker or unable to see clearly.

- Her eyes *dimmed* with sorrow.
- The *twinkle* in his eyes was *dimmed* by tears.

11. verb

If your memories **dim** or if something **dims** them, they become less clear in your mind.

- Their memory of what happened has *dimmed*.
- The intervening years had *dimmed* his memory.

bosom

bosoms

Explain

1. countable noun

A woman's breasts are sometimes referred to as her **bosom** or her **bosoms** .

- ...a large young mother with a baby resting against her ample bosom.

2. singular noun

If you are in **the bosom of** your family or of a community , you are among people who love , accept , and protect you.

- Joan was delighted to welcome her boyfriend into the bosom of her large, close-knit family.

3. adjective

A **bosom** friend is a friend who you know very well and like very much indeed.

- They were bosom friends.
- Sakota was her cousin and bosom pal.

4. to one's bosom

energetic

Explain

1. adjective

If you are **energetic** in what you do, you have a lot of enthusiasm and determination .

- Blackwell is 59, strong looking and enormously energetic.
- The next government will play an energetic role in seeking multilateral nuclear disarmament.

2. adjective

An **energetic** person is very active and does not feel at all tired . An **energetic** activity involves a lot of physical movement and power.

- Ten year-olds are incredibly energetic.
- ...an energetic exercise routine.

breast

breasts

Explain

1. countable noun

A woman's **breasts** are the two soft, round parts on her chest that can produce milk to feed a baby .

- She wears a low-cut dress which reveals her breasts.
- As my newborn cuddled at my breast, her tiny fingers stroked my skin.

2. countable noun

A person's **breast** is the upper part of his or her chest.

- He struck his breast in a dramatic gesture.

3. countable noun

The **breast** is often considered to be the part of your body where your emotions are.

- The verse rose up to fire his breast with inspiration.
- ...a sound calculated to arouse the sublimest emotions in the breast of the soldier.

4. countable noun

A bird's **breast** is the front part of its body.

- The cock's breast is tinged with chestnut.

5. singular noun

The **breast** of a shirt , jacket , or coat is the part which covers the top part of the chest.

- He moved out from beneath an awning, reaching for something inside the breast of his overcoat.
- He reached into his breast pocket for his cigar case.

6. *variable noun*

*You can refer to piece of meat that is cut from the front of a bird or lamb as **breast** .*

- ...a chicken breast with vegetables.
- ...breast of lamb.

7. *to beat one's breast*

8. *to make a clean breast of it*

erroneous

Explain

1. *adjective*

*Beliefs , opinions , or methods that are **erroneous** are incorrect or only partly correct .*

- *They did nothing to dispel his erroneous belief about the children's paternity.*
- *They have arrived at some erroneous conclusions.*

bug

bugs bugging bugged

Explain

1. *countable noun*

*A **bug** is an insect or similar small creature .*

- *We noticed tiny bugs that were all over the walls.*
- *...a bloodsucking bug which infests poor housing.*

2. *countable noun*

*A **bug** is an illness which is caused by small organisms such as bacteria.*

- *I think I've got a bit of a stomach bug.*

- *There was a bug going around at the club.*

- *...the killer brain bug meningitis.*

3. *countable noun*

*If there is a **bug** in a computer program, there is a mistake in it.*

- *There is a bug in the software.*

4. *countable noun*

*A **bug** is a tiny hidden microphone which transmits what people are saying .*

- *There was a bug on the phone.*

5. *verb*

*If someone **bugs** a place, they hide tiny microphones in it which transmit what people are saying.*

- *He heard that they were planning to bug his office.*
- *I found out my phone was bugged.*

6. *singular noun*

*You can say that someone has been bitten by a particular **bug** when they suddenly become very enthusiastic about something.*

- *I've definitely been bitten by the gardening bug.*
- *Roundhay Park in Leeds was the place I first got the fishing bug.*

7. *verb*

*If someone or something **bugs** you, they worry or annoy you.*

- *I only did it to bug my parents.*

faint

fainter faintest faints fainting fainted

Explain

1. adjective

A **faint** sound, colour, mark , feeling, or quality has very little strength or intensity .

- He became aware of the soft, faint sounds of water dripping.
- The room held the faint, sweet odour of pipe tobacco.
- He could see faint lines in her face.
- There was still the faint hope deep within him that she might never need to know.

2. adjective

A **faint** attempt at something is one that is made without proper effort and with little enthusiasm .

- Caroline made a faint attempt at a laugh.
- A faint smile crossed the Monsignor's face and faded quickly.
- Ten years ago today the U.S. Center for Disease Control published the first faint warnings of a worldwide epidemic.

3. verb

If you **faint** , you lose consciousness for a short time, especially because you are hungry , or because of pain , heat , or shock . **Faint** is also a noun .

- She suddenly fell forward on to the table and fainted.
- I thought he'd faint when I kissed him.
- She slumped to the ground in a faint.

4. adjective

Someone who is **faint** feels weak and unsteady as if they are about to lose consciousness.

- Other signs of angina are nausea, sweating, feeling faint and shortness of breath.

capsule

capsules

Explain

1. countable noun

A **capsule** is a very small tube containing powdered or liquid medicine, which you swallow .

- ...cod liver oil capsules.
- You can also take red ginseng in convenient tablet or capsule form.

2. countable noun

A **capsule** is a small container with a drug or other substance inside it, which is used for medical or scientific purposes.

- They first inserted capsules into the animals' mouths.
- The clear capsules start dissolving as soon as they are immersed in the lake.

3. countable noun

In some plants, a **capsule** is a part which forms a case or container for seeds, fruit, or spores .

- ...a large shiny brown nut, enclosed in a large spiny seed capsule.

4. countable noun

A space **capsule** is the part of a spacecraft in which people travel , and which often separates from the main rocket .

- A Russian space capsule is currently orbiting the Earth.

chest

chests

Explain

1. countable noun

Your **chest** is the top part of the front of your body where your ribs , lungs , and heart are.

- He crossed his arms over his chest.
- He was shot in the chest.
- He complained of chest pain.

2. countable noun

A **chest** is a large, heavy box used for storing things.

- At the very bottom of the chest were his carving tools.
- ...a treasure chest.
- ...a medicine chest.

3. get something off your chest

- They will make a handsome profit on the property.

4. graded adjective

A place such as a building or garden that is **handsome** is large and well made with an attractive appearance.

- ...the ports of Dubrovnik and Zadar, with their handsome Renaissance buildings.

5. adjective

If someone has a **handsome** win or a **handsome** victory , they get many more points or votes than their opponent .

- The opposition won a handsome victory in the election.

disease

diseases

Explain

1. variable noun

A **disease** is an illness which affects people, animals, or plants, for example one which is caused by bacteria or infection.

- ...the rapid spread of disease in the area.
- ...illnesses such as heart disease.
- Doctors believe they have cured him of the disease.

2. countable noun

You can refer to a bad attitude or habit , usually one that a group of people have, as a **disease** .

handsome

Explain

1. adjective

A **handsome** man has an attractive face with regular features.

- ...a tall, dark, handsome sheep farmer.

2. adjective

A **handsome** woman has an attractive appearance with features that are large and regular rather than small and delicate .

- ...an extremely handsome woman with a beautiful voice.

3. adjective

A **handsome** sum of money is a large or generous amount.

liberal

liberals

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who has **liberal** views believes people should have a lot of freedom in deciding how to behave and think . **Liberal** is also a noun .

- She is known to have liberal views on divorce and contraception.
- ...a nation of free-thinking liberals.

2. adjective

A **liberal** system allows people or organizations a lot of political or economic freedom. **Liberal** is also a noun.

- ...a liberal democracy with a multiparty political system.
- They favour liberal free-market policies.
- Price controls go against all the financial principles of free market liberals.

3. adjective

A **Liberal** politician or voter is a member of a Liberal Party or votes for a Liberal Party. **Liberal** is also a noun.

- The Liberal leader has announced his party's withdrawal from the election.
- The Liberals hold twenty-three seats on the local council.

4. adjective

Liberal means giving, using, or taking a lot of something, or existing in large quantities .

- As always he is liberal with his jokes.
- She made liberal use of her elder sister's make-up and clothes.

efficiency

efficiencies

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Efficiency is the quality of being able to do a task successfully, without wasting time or energy.

- There are many ways to increase agricultural efficiency in the poorer areas of the world.
- ...energy efficiency.

2. uncountable noun

In physics and engineering , **efficiency** is the ratio between the amount of energy a machine needs to make it work, and the amount it produces.

magnetic

Explain

1. adjective

If something metal is **magnetic** , it acts like a magnet.

- ...magnetic particles.

2. adjective

You use **magnetic** to describe something that is caused by or relates to the force of magnetism.

- The electrically charged gas particles are affected by magnetic forces.

3. adjective

You use **magnetic** to describe tapes and other objects which have a coating of a magnetic substance and contain coded information that can be read by computers or other machines .

- ...her magnetic strip ID card.
- ...magnetic recording tape.

4. adjective

If you describe something as **magnetic** , you mean that it is very attractive to people because it has unusual , powerful, and exciting qualities.

- London's creative reputation has had a magnetic effect.
- ...the magnetic pull of his looks and her personality.

fancy

fancies fancying fancied

Explain

1. verb

If you **fancy** something, you want to have it or to do it.

- What do you fancy doing, anyway?
- Do you fancy going to see a movie sometime?
- I just fancied a drink.

2. countable noun

A **fancy** is a liking or desire for someone or something, especially one that does not last long.

- She did not suspect that his interest was just a passing fancy.

3. verb

If you **fancy** someone, you feel attracted to them, especially in a sexual way.

- I think he thinks I fancy him or something.

4. verb

If you **fancy yourself as** a particular kind of person or **fancy yourself** doing a particular thing, you like the idea of being that kind of person or doing that thing.

- So you fancy yourself as the boss someday?
- I didn't fancy myself wearing a kilt.

5. verb

If you say that someone **fancies themselves as** a particular kind of person, you mean that they think, often wrongly, that they have the good qualities which that kind of person has.

- She fancies herself a bohemian.
- She knew Felix fancied himself as a connoisseur.
- ...a flighty young woman who really fancies herself.

6. verb

If you say that you **fancy** a particular competitor or team in a competition, you think they will win.

- You have to fancy Bath because they are the most consistent team in England.
- I fancy England to win through.

7. verb

If you **fancy** that something is the case, you think or suppose that it is so.

- When Ferris looked up he fancied that he saw a shadow pass close to the window.
- She fancied he was trying to hide a smile.

8. variable noun

A **fancy** is an idea that is unlikely, untrue, or imaginary.

- His last book is a bold, at times surrealistic mixture of fact and fancy.
- ...a childhood fancy.
- ...whims and fancies.

9. exclamation

You say '**fancy**' or '**fancy that**' when you want to express surprise or disapproval.

- *It was very tasteless. Fancy talking like that so soon after his death.*
- *'Fancy that!' smiled Conti.*

10. *take a fancy to sb/sth*

11. *take/tickle sb's fancy*

fleet

fleets

Explain

1. *countable noun*

A **fleet** is a group of ships organized to do something together, for example to fight battles or to catch fish.

- *The damage inflicted upon the British fleet was devastating.*
- *...restaurants supplied by local fishing fleets.*

2. *countable noun*

A **fleet** of vehicles is a group of them, especially when they all belong to a particular organization or business, or when they are all going somewhere together.

- *With its own fleet of trucks, the company delivers most orders overnight.*
- *A fleet of ambulances took the injured to hospital.*

mental

Explain

1. *adjective*

Mental means relating to the process of thinking .

- *...the mental development of children.*

- *...intensive mental effort.*

2. *adjective*

Mental means relating to the state or the health of a person's mind.

- *The mental state that had created her psychosis was no longer present.*
- *...mental health problems.*

3. *adjective*

A **mental** act is one that involves only thinking and not physical action.

- *Practise mental arithmetic when you go out shopping.*
- *Graham made a quick mental calculation.*
- *She made a mental note not to sit anywhere near him.*

4. *adjective*

If you say that someone is **mental** , you mean that you think they are mad .

- *I just said to him 'you must be mental'.*

5. *to make a mental note*

glue

glues glueing gluing glued

Explain

1. *variable noun*

Glue is a sticky substance used for joining things together, often for repairing broken things.

- *...a tube of glue.*
- *...high quality glues.*

2. *verb*

If you **glue** one object to another, you stick them together using glue.

- *Glue the fabric around the window.*
- *The material is cut and glued in place.*
- *They are glued together.*

3. *passive verb*

*If you say that someone **is glued to** something, you mean that they are giving it all their attention .*

- *They are all glued to the final episode.*

missing

Explain

1. *adjective*

*If something is **missing** , it is not in its usual place, and you cannot find it.*

- *It was only an hour or so later that I discovered that my gun was missing.*
- *The playing cards had gone missing.*

2. *adjective*

*If a part of something is **missing** , it has been removed or has come off, and has not been replaced .*

- *Three buttons were missing from his shirt.*

3. *adjective*

*If you say that something is **missing** , you mean that it has not been included, and you think that it should have been.*

- *What is missing, however, is an internal, artistic cohesion.*
- *She had given me an incomplete list. One name was missing from it.*

4. *adjective*

*Someone who is **missing** cannot be found, and it is not known whether they are alive or dead.*

- *Five people died in the explosion, and one person is still missing.*

golf

Explain

1. *uncountable noun*

Golf is a game in which you use long sticks called clubs to hit a small, hard ball into holes that are spread out over a large area of grassy land.

naked

Explain

1. *adjective*

*Someone who is **naked** is not wearing any clothes.*

- *Kate throws a kimono over her naked body.*
- *The hot paving stones scorched my naked feet.*
- *They stripped me naked.*
- *He stood naked in front of me.*

2. *adjective*

*If an animal or part of an animal is **naked** , it has no fur or feathers on it.*

- *The nest contained eight little mice that were naked and blind.*

3. *adjective*

*If you say that someone is **naked** or feels **naked** , you mean they are powerless or have no way of protecting themselves.*

- *If the reports are accurate, the deal leaves the authorities and the President virtually naked.*

4. *adjective*

*You can describe an object as **naked** when it does not have its normal covering.*

- ...a naked bulb dangling in a bare room.
- The water was heated by a naked gas flame.

5. adjective

Naked emotions are easy to recognize, because they are very strongly felt.

- The naked hatred in the woman's face shocked me.
- There had been naked misery in her voice when she'd spoken about the letter.

6. adjective

You can use **naked** to describe unpleasant or violent actions and behaviour which are not disguised or hidden in any way.

- Naked aggression and an attempt to change frontiers by force could not go unchallenged.
- ...violence and the naked pursuit of power.
- ...naked greed.

7. the naked eye

health

Explain

1. uncountable noun

A person's **health** is the condition of their body and the extent to which it is free from illness or is able to resist illness.

- Caffeine is bad for your health.

2. uncountable noun

Health is a state in which a person is not suffering from any illness and is feeling well.

- In hospital they nursed me back to health.

3. to drink someone's health

4. uncountable noun

The **health** of something such as an organization or a system is its success and the fact that it is working well.

- There's no way to predict the future health of the banking industry.

height

heights

Explain

1. variable noun

The **height** of a person or thing is their size or length from the bottom to the top.

- Her weight is about normal for her height.
- I am 5'6" in height.
- The wave here has a length of 250 feet and a height of 10 feet.
- He was a man of medium height.
- ...a garden containing all sorts of trees and shrubs of varying heights and shades.

2. uncountable noun

Height is the quality of being tall.

- She admits that her height is intimidating for some people.

3. variable noun

A particular **height** is the distance that something is above the ground or above something else mentioned.

- At the speed and height at which he was moving, he was never more than half a second from disaster.
- ...a test in which a 6.3 kilogram weight was dropped on it from a height of 1 metre.

- The corridors there were painted chocolate-brown to shoulder height.
- The chains were at different heights on the wall.

4. countable noun

A **height** is a high position or place above the ground.

- From a height, it looks like a desert.
- I'm not afraid of heights.
- ...the Golan Heights.

5. singular noun

When an activity, situation, or organization is **at its height**, it is at its most successful, powerful, or intense.

- During the early sixth century emigration from Britain to Brittany was at its height.
- At its height Bletchley Park employed 12,000 people.
- He was struck down at the height of his career.
- It was freezing up there even at the height of summer.

6. singular noun

If you say that something is **the height of** a particular quality, you are emphasizing that it has that quality to the greatest degree possible.

- The hip-hugging black and white polka-dot dress was the height of fashion.
- I think it's the height of bad manners to be dressed badly.
- This is the height of hooliganism.

7. plural noun

If something reaches great **heights**, it becomes very extreme or intense.

- ...the mid-1980s, when house prices rose to absurd heights.
- Recently the speculation has reached new heights.
- One wondered what heights of ecstasy the winner reached.

numerical

Explain

1. adjective

Numerical means expressed in numbers or relating to numbers.

- Your job is to group them by letter and put them in numerical order.

hike

hikes hiking hiked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **hike** is a long walk in the country, especially one that you go on for pleasure.

2. verb

If you **hike**, you go for a long walk in the country.

- You could hike through the Fish River Canyon.
- We plan to hike the Samaria Gorge.

3. countable noun

A **hike** is a sudden or large increase in prices, rates, taxes, or quantities.

- ...a sudden 1.75 per cent hike in interest rates.

- *His economic plan, with its tax hikes and spending cuts, will slow the economy.*

4. verb

To **hike** prices, rates, taxes, or quantities means to increase them suddenly or by a large amount . **Hike up** means the same as hike .

- *It has now been forced to hike its rates by 5.25 per cent.*
- *The federal government hiked the tax on hard liquor.*
- *The insurers have started hiking up premiums by huge amounts.*
- *Big banks were hiking their rates up.*

precise

Explain

1. adjective

You use **precise** to emphasize that you are referring to an exact thing, rather than something vague .

- *At that precise moment I felt sorry for him and didn't want to hurt him.*
- *The precise location of the wreck was discovered in 1988.*
- *He was not clear on the precise nature of his mission.*
- *We will never know the precise details of his death.*

2. adjective

Something that is **precise** is exact and accurate in all its details .

- *They speak very precise English.*
- *He does not talk too much and what he has to say is precise and to the point.*

3. to be precise

illness

illnesses

Explain

1. uncountable noun

Illness is the fact or experience of being ill.

- *If your child shows any signs of illness, take her to the doctor.*
- *Mental illness is still a taboo subject.*

2. countable noun

An **illness** is a particular disease such as measles or pneumonia .

- *She returned to her family home to recover from an illness.*

prudent

Explain

1. adjective

Someone who is **prudent** is sensible and careful.

- *It is always prudent to start any exercise programme gradually at first.*
- *Being a prudent and cautious person, you realise that the problem must be resolved.*

invalid

invalids

Explain

1. countable noun

An **invalid** is someone who needs to be cared for because they have an illness or disability .

- *I hate being treated as an invalid.*

2. adjective

If an action, procedure , or document is **invalid** , it cannot be accepted , because it breaks the law or some official rule .

- The trial was stopped and the results declared invalid.
- We cannot accept liability if you are refused entry because of invalid documents.

3. adjective

An **invalid** argument or conclusion is wrong because it is based on a mistake .

- We think that those arguments are rendered invalid by the hard facts on the ground.

quantitative

Explain

1. adjective

Quantitative means relating to different sizes or amounts of things.

- ...the advantages of quantitative and qualitative research.
- ...the quantitative analysis of migration.

love

loves loving loved

Explain

1. verb

If you **love** someone, you feel romantically or sexually attracted to them, and they are very important to you.

- Oh, Amy, I love you.
- We love each other. We want to spend our lives together.

2. uncountable noun

Love is a very strong feeling of affection towards someone who you are romantically or sexually attracted to.

- Our love for each other has been increased by what we've been through together.
- ...a old fashioned love story.
- ...an album of love songs.

3. verb

You say that you **love** someone when their happiness is very important to you, so that you behave in a kind and caring way towards them.

- You'll never love anyone the way you love your baby.

4. uncountable noun

Love is the feeling that a person's happiness is very important to you, and the way you show this feeling in your behaviour towards them.

- My love for all my children is unconditional.
- She's got a great capacity for love.

5. verb

If you **love** something, you like it very much.

- We loved the food so much, especially the fish dishes.
- I loved reading.
- ...one of these people that loves to be in the outdoors.
- I love it when I hear you laugh.

6. verb

You can say that you **love** something when you consider that it is important and want to protect or support it.

- I love my country as you love yours.

7. uncountable noun

Love is a strong liking for something, or a belief that it is important.

- This is no way to encourage a love of literature.
- The French are known for their love of their language.

8. countable noun

Your **love** is someone or something that you love.

- 'She is the love of my life,' he said.
- Music's one of my great loves.

9. verb

If you **would love to** have or do something, you very much want to have it or do it.

- I would love to play for England again.
- I would love a hot bath and clean clothes.
- His wife would love him to give up his job.

10. countable noun

Some people use **love** as an affectionate way of addressing someone.

- Well, I'll take your word for it then, love.
- Don't cry, my love.

11. number

In tennis, **love** is a score of zero.

- He beat the Austrian three sets to love.

12. convention

You can use expressions such as ' **love** ', ' **love from** ', and ' **all my love** ', followed by your name, as an informal way of ending a letter to a friend or relation.

- ...with love from Grandma and Grandpa.

13. uncountable noun

If you send someone your **love**, you ask another person, who will soon be speaking or writing to them, to tell them that you are thinking about them with affection.

- Please give her my love.

14. fall in love

15. fall in love

16. be in love

17. be in love

18. no love lost/little love lost

19. make love

20. for love or money

21. love at first sight

recent

Explain

1. adjective

A **recent** event or period of time happened only a short while ago.

- In the most recent attack one man was shot dead and two others were wounded.

- Sales have fallen by more than 75 percent in recent years.

lover

lovers

Explain

1. countable noun

Someone's **lover** is someone who they are having a sexual relationship with but are not married to.

- Every Thursday she would meet her lover Leon.
- He and Liz became lovers soon after they first met.

2. countable noun

If you are a **lover** of something such as animals or the arts, you enjoy them very much and take great pleasure in them.

- She is a great lover of horses and horse racing.
- Are you an opera lover?

rotten

Explain

1. adjective

If food, wood, or another substance is **rotten**, it has decayed and can no longer be used.

- The smell outside this building is overwhelming-like rotten eggs.
- The front bay window is rotten.

2. adjective

If you describe something as **rotten**, you think it is very unpleasant or of very poor quality.

- I personally think it's a rotten idea.
- I had a pretty rotten day yesterday.
- What rotten luck!

3. adjective

If you describe someone as **rotten**, you are insulting them or criticizing them because you think that they are very unpleasant or unkind.

- You rotten swine! How dare you?

- That's a rotten thing to say!

4. adjective

If you feel **rotten**, you feel bad, either because you are ill or because you are sorry about something.

- I had glandular fever and spent that year feeling rotten.
- Suddenly, Sarah felt rotten about the whole thing.

5. adjective

You use **rotten** to emphasize your dislike for something or your anger or annoyance about it.

- She was a rotten coward.
- Keep your rotten mouth shut.

mat

mats

Explain

1. countable noun

A **mat** is a small piece of something such as cloth, card, or plastic which you put on a table to protect it from plates or cups.

- The food is served on polished tables with mats.

2. countable noun

A **mat** is a small piece of carpet or other thick material which is put on the floor for protection, decoration, or comfort.

- There was a letter on the mat.
- Bring a sleeping bag and foam mat.

3. countable noun

A **mat of** something such as grass or moss is a thick, untidy layer of it.

- The houses are well spaced out, each on its own plot of ground and mat of coarse grass.
- She touched the thick mat of sandy hair on his chest.

shabby

shabbier shabbiest

Explain

1. adjective

Shabby things or places look old and in bad condition.

- His clothes were old and shabby.
- He walked past her into a tiny, shabby room.
- ...one of the shabbiest and poorest areas of London.

2. adjective

A person who is **shabby** is wearing old, worn clothes.

- ...a shabby, tall man with dark eyes.

3. adjective

If you describe someone's behaviour as **shabby**, you think they behave in an unfair or unacceptable way.

- It was hard to say why the man deserved such shabby treatment.
- I knew it was shabby of me, but I couldn't help feeling slightly disappointed.

navigation

Explain

1. uncountable noun

You can refer to the movement of ships as **navigation**.

- Pack ice around Iceland was becoming a threat to navigation.

silly

sillier silliest

Explain

1. adjective

If you say that someone or something is **silly**, you mean that they are foolish, childish, or ridiculous.

- My best friend tells me that I am silly to be upset about this.
- You silly boy; why did you tramp about so long in the cold?
- I thought it would be silly to be too rude at that stage.
- That's a silly question.
- ...a silly hat.

2. adjective

If you do something such as laugh or drink **yourself silly**, you do it so much that you are unable to think or behave sensibly.

- Poor Donald's been worrying himself silly.

norm

norms

Explain

1. countable noun

Norms are ways of behaving that are considered normal in a particular society .

- ...the commonly accepted norms of democracy.
- ...a social norm that says drunkenness is inappropriate behaviour.

2. singular noun

If you say that a situation is **the norm** , you mean that it is usual and expected.

- Families of six or seven are the norm in Borough Park.
- There will be more leases of 15 years than the present norm of 25 years.

3. countable noun

A **norm** is an official standard or level that organizations are expected to reach .

- ...an agency which would establish European norms and co-ordinate national policies to halt pollution.

simple

simpler simplest

Explain

1. adjective

If you describe something as **simple** , you mean that it is not complicated, and is therefore easy to understand.

- ...simple pictures and diagrams.
- ...pages of simple advice on filling in your tax form.
- Buddhist ethics are simple but its practices can seem very complex to some.

2. adjective

If you describe people or things as **simple** , you mean that they have all the basic or necessary things they require, but nothing extra .

- The Holy Family Church was closed and the parish now celebrates mass in this simple side chapel.
- He ate a simple dinner of rice and beans.
- ...the simple pleasures of childhood.
- He lives a very simple life for a man who has become incredibly rich.
- Nothing is simpler than a cool white shirt.

3. adjective

If a problem is **simple** or if its solution is **simple** , the problem can be solved easily .

- Some puzzles look difficult but once the solution is known are actually quite simple.
- The answer is simple.
- I cut my purchases dramatically by the simple expedient of destroying my credit cards.

4. adjective

A **simple** task is easy to do.

- The job itself had been simple enough.
- The simplest way to install a shower is to fit one over the bath.

5. adjective

If you say that someone is **simple** , you mean that they are not very intelligent and have difficulty learning things.

- He was simple as a child.

6. adjective

You use **simple** to emphasize that the thing you are referring to is the only important or relevant reason for something.

- *His refusal to talk was simple stubbornness.*

7. adjective

In grammar , **simple** tenses are ones which are formed without an auxiliary verb 'be', for example 'I dressed and went for a walk ' and 'This tastes nice '. **Simple** verb groups are used especially to refer to completed actions, regular actions, and situations. Compare continuous .

8. adjective

In English grammar, a **simple** sentence consists of one main clause . Compare compound , , complex .

clock

clocks clocking clocked

Explain

1. countable noun

A **clock** is an instrument, for example in a room or on the outside of a building, that shows what time of day it is.

- *He was conscious of a clock ticking.*
- *He also repairs clocks and watches.*
- *The hands of the clock on the wall moved with a slight click.*
- *...a digital clock.*

2. countable noun

A time **clock** in a factory or office is a device that is used to record the hours that people work. Each worker puts a special card into the device when they arrive and leave, and the times are recorded on the card.

- *Government workers were made to punch time clocks morning, noon and night.*

3. countable noun

In a car, **the clock** is the instrument that shows the speed of the car or the distance it has travelled

- *The car had 160,000 miles on the clock.*
- *At 240 mph the needle went off the clock.*

4. verb

To **clock** a particular time or speed in a race means to reach that time or speed.

- *Elliott clocked the fastest time this year for the 800 metres.*
- *The yacht swayed in 40-knot winds, clocking speeds of 17 knots at times.*

5. verb

If something or someone **is clocked at** a particular time or speed, their time or speed is measured at that level.

- *He has been clocked at 11 seconds for 100 metres.*
- *170-mile-an-hour winds were clocked on a mountaintop in North Carolina.*

6. verb

If you **clock** something, you notice or see it.

- *I walked past that gate hundreds of times before I clocked it.*

7. against the clock

8. to beat the clock

9. round the clock/around the clock

10. turn the clock back/put the clock back

11. watch the clock