

Vocabulary in *The Prince*

Compiled by AcadeMe for the Homer Project

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bethink	v.	remember recall
gainsay	v.	to deny or disagree with (something) :to show or say that (something) is not true used in negative statements <i>There is no gainsaying such evidence. [=the truth of such evidence cannot be denied]</i>
devastate	v.	to destroy much or most of (something) :to cause great damage or harm to (something) <i>The flood devastated the town.</i>
guileless	adj.	very innocent :naive <i>a guileless person/smile</i>
rapine	n.	pillage plunder
miserly	adj.	hating to spend money <i>The team's miserly [=stingy, tightfisted] owner refused to pay for new equipment.</i>
flinch	v.	to move suddenly because you are afraid of being hit or hurt <i>He flinched when I tapped him on the shoulder.</i>
lascivious	adj.	filled with or showing sexual desire <i>lascivious acts/thoughts</i>
confiscate	v.	to take (something) away from someone especially as punishment or to enforce the law or rules <i>Guards confiscated knives and other weapons from the prisoners.</i>
discus	n.	a heavy disk (as of wood or plastic) that is thicker in the center than at the perimeter and that is hurled for distance as a track-and-field event
centaur	n.	a creature in Greek mythology that is part human and part horse
faithless	adj.	not able to be trusted <i>a faithless friend/employee/servant</i>
effeminate	adj.	having or showing qualities that are considered more suited to women than to men :not manly <i>an effeminate manner</i>
fickle	adj.	changing often <i>fickle weather</i>
patrimony	n.	property that you receive from your father when he dies :inheritance <i>These historic landmarks are an important part of our cultural patrimony.</i>
leeway	n.	freedom to do something the way you want to do it <i>They give/allow their students leeway to try new things.</i>
defenseless	adj.	not able to defend yourself, your country, etc. <i>Without weapons of any kind, the people of the town were completely defenseless.</i>
crafty	adj.	clever in usually a deceptive or dishonest way <i>a crafty schemer/plotter</i>
praiseworthy	adj.	deserving praise :worthy of praise <i>praiseworthy efforts to develop an AIDS vaccine</i>

posse	n.	a group of people who were gathered together by a sheriff in the past to help search for a criminal <i>The sheriff and his posse rode out to look for the bandits.</i>
principality	n.	a small area or country that is ruled by a prince
presumptuous	adj.	too confident especially in a way that is rude <i>It would be presumptuous (of me) to tell the manager how to do things.</i>
laudable	adj.	deserving praise <i>She has shown a laudable [=praiseworthy, commendable] devotion to her children.</i>
ungrateful	adj.	not feeling or showing thanks for favors, gifts, etc. :not grateful <i>an ungrateful child</i>
lenient	adj.	allowing a lot of freedom and not punishing bad behavior in a strong way :not harsh, severe, or strict <i>a teacher who is lenient with students who have misbehaved</i>
enumerate	v.	to name (things) one after another in a list <i>Let me enumerate my reasons for doing this.</i>
benefactor	n.	someone who helps another person, group, etc., by giving money <i>With the help of a rich benefactor he set up a charity.</i>
chaste	adj.	not having sex <i>a chaste young woman</i>
cowardly	adj.	afraid in a way that makes you unable to do what is right or expected :lacking courage <i>He insisted on avoiding a cowardly retreat.</i>
shun	v.	to avoid (someone or something) <i>He shuns parties and social events.</i>
dissension	n.	disagreement that causes the people in a group to argue about something that is important to them <i>The incident has caused a lot of dissension within/in the police department.</i>
precept	n.	a rule that says how people should behave <i>the basic/moral precepts of a religion</i>
abstain	v.	to choose not to do or have something usually + from <i>He abstained from taking part in the discussion.</i>
allegation	n.	a statement saying that someone has done something wrong or illegal <i>The police are investigating allegations that the mayor has accepted bribes.</i>
liar	n.	a person who tells lies <i>She called him a dirty liar.</i>
frighten	v.	to cause (someone) to become afraid <i>The story really frightened me.</i>
frivolous	adj.	not important :not deserving serious attention <i>She thinks window shopping is a frivolous activity.</i>
inhuman	adj.	very fierce or cruel <i>inhuman [=savage] punishment</i>
plunder	v.	to steal things from (a place, such as a city or town) especially by force <i>The village was plundered by the invading army.</i>
courteous	adj.	very polite in a way that shows respect <i>The clerks were helpful and courteous.</i>
deviate	v.	to do something that is different or to be different from what is usual or expected usually + from <i>He almost never deviates from his usual routine.</i>
incur	v.	to cause yourself to have or experience (something unpleasant or unwanted) <i>incur expenses/debt</i>

greedy	adj.	having or showing a selfish desire to have more of something (such as money or food) :having greed <i>He was a ruthless and greedy businessman.</i>
unbearable	adj.	too bad, harsh, or extreme to be accepted or endured :not bearable <i>unbearable [=intolerable, unendurable] pain</i>
deem	v.	to think of (someone or something) in a particular way <i>The building was deemed [=considered, judged] unsafe after the fire.</i>
precaution	n.	something that is done to prevent possible harm or trouble from happening in the future <i>Be sure to follow the usual safety precautions when cooking outdoors.</i>
mutiny	n.	a situation in which a group of people (such as sailors or soldiers) refuse to obey orders and try to take control away from the person who commands them <i>The mutiny was led by the ship's cook.</i>
devout	adj.	deeply religious :devoted to a particular religion <i>They are devout Catholics.</i>
deceive	v.	to make (someone) believe something that is not true <i>Her parents punished her for trying to deceive them.</i>
reproach	v.	to speak in an angry and critical way to (someone) :to express disapproval or disappointment to (someone) often + for <i>She reproached her daughter for her selfishness.</i>
spoil	v.	to have a bad effect on (something) :to damage or ruin (something) <i>The fight spoiled the party.</i>
allegory	n.	a story in which the characters and events are symbols that stand for ideas about human life or for a political or historical situation <i>the long poem is an allegory of/about love and jealousy</i>
abide	v.	to accept or bear (someone or something bad, unpleasant, etc.) usually used in negative constructions <i>I can't abide his bad moods. [(more commonly) I can't stand his bad moods; I hate his bad moods]</i>
pretext	n.	a reason that you give to hide your real reason for doing something :pretense <i>The leaders used a minor clash at the border as a pretext for war. [=as a reason/excuse for starting a war]</i>
courageous	adj.	very brave :having or showing courage <i>a courageous soldier</i>
indulge	v.	to allow (yourself) to have or do something as a special pleasure <i>It's my birthday. I'm going to indulge myself and eat whatever I want to eat.</i>
omit	v.	to leave out (someone or something) :to not include (someone or something) <i>Please don't omit any details.</i>
cunning	adj.	getting what is wanted in a clever and often deceptive way <i>a cunning criminal</i>
dictate	v.	to speak or read (something) to a person who writes it down or to a machine that records it <i>She's dictating a letter to her secretary.</i>
prudence	n.	careful good judgment that allows someone to avoid danger or risks <i>act with ordinary/reasonable prudence</i>
rash	adj.	done or made quickly and without thought about what will happen as a result <i>He later regretted having made such a rash [=hasty] promise.</i>
conquer	v.	to take control of (a country, city, etc.) through the use of force <i>The city was conquered by the ancient Romans.</i>

stubborn	adj.	refusing to change your ideas or to stop doing something <i>She's wrong, but she's too stubborn to admit it.</i>
virtuous	adj.	morally good :having or showing virtue <i>a virtuous man/woman</i>
condemn	v.	to say in a strong and definite way that someone or something is bad or wrong <i>We strongly condemn this attack against our allies.</i>
swear	v.	to state (something) very strongly and sincerely <i>I swear (that) I was there. [=I was definitely there; I am telling you the truth when I say that I was there]</i>
imitate	v.	to make or do something the same way as (something else) <i>Their competitors soon imitated [=copied] the idea.</i>
defiance	n.	a refusal to obey something or someone :the act of defying someone or something <i>acts of defiance</i>
prudent	adj.	having or showing careful good judgment <i>He always listened to her prudent advice.</i>
troop	v.	to walk somewhere in a group <i>We all trooped back inside.</i>
deception	n.	the act of making someone believe something that is not true :the act of deceiving someone <i>She accuses the company of willful deception in its advertising.</i>
impress	v.	to cause (someone) to feel admiration or interest <i>He's trying to impress her. [=he is trying to win her admiration; he wants her to like him]</i>
wretched	adj.	very unhappy, ill, etc. <i>The slums were filled with poor, wretched children.</i>
legion	adj.	very many or numerous <i>Her admirers/fans are legion. [=she has a very large number of admirers/fans]</i>
dread	v.	to fear something that will or might happen <i>He can't swim and dreads going in the water.</i>
safeguard	v.	to make (someone or something) safe or secure :protect <i>laws that safeguard the rights of citizens</i>
preach	v.	to make a speech about religion in a church or other public place :to deliver a sermon <i>Have you ever heard that minister preach?</i>
condemnation	n.	a statement or expression of very strong and definite criticism or disapproval <i>The plan has drawn condemnation from both sides.</i>
endeavor	v.	to seriously or continually try to do (something) <i>The school endeavors to teach students to be good citizens.</i>
conceal	v.	to hide (something or someone) from sight <i>The sunglasses conceal her eyes.</i>
recourse	n.	an opportunity or choice to use or do something in order to deal with a problem or situation <i>His only recourse [=the only thing he can do] is to file a complaint with the management.</i>
punish	v.	to make (someone) suffer for a crime or for bad behavior <i>I think that murderers should be punished by/with life imprisonment.</i>
cruelty	n.	a desire to cause others to suffer :the quality or state of being cruel <i>a dictator/tyrant known for his cruelty</i>
admirable	adj.	deserving to be admired :very good <i>The film does an admirable [=excellent] job of depicting life in the 1940s.</i>

compassion	n.	a feeling of wanting to help someone who is sick, hungry, in trouble, etc. <i>He felt compassion for the lost child.</i>
seize	v.	to use legal or official power to take (something) <i>Police seized [=confiscated] the weapons and drugs.</i>
innumerable	adj.	too many to be counted :very many <i>the innumerable [=countless] stars in the sky</i>
corrupt	v.	to cause (someone or something) to become dishonest, immoral, etc. <i>He believes that violence on television and film is corrupting our children.</i> <i>[=teaching bad beliefs and behaviors to our children]</i>