

GRE Words List

adjective

1. laborious:

characterized by effort to the point of exhaustion; especially physical effort

The most laborious job I've had was working 20 hours a day as a fisherman in King Salmon in Alaska.

verb

2. prevail:

be widespread in a particular area at a particular time; be current

During the labor negotiations, an air of hostility prevailed in the office.

adjective

3. jubilant:

full of high-spirited delight because of triumph or success

My hardwork paid off, and I was jubilant to receive a perfect score on the GRE.

adverb

4. brusquely:

in a blunt direct manner.

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

noun

5. veneer:

covering consisting of a thin superficial layer that hides the underlying substance

"Mark Twain referred to the Victorian Period in America as the "'Gilded Age, implying the ample moral corruption that lay beneath a mere veneer of respectability."

adjective

6. unseemly:

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

"He acted in an unseemly manner, insulting the hostess and then speaking ill of her deceased husband.

noun

7. miser:

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

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

noun

8. vitriol:

abusive or venomous language used to express blame or bitter deep-seated ill will

His vitriol spewed forth from a deep-seated racism that consumed his whole life.

adjective

9. autocratic:

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

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

verb

10. meander:

to wander aimlessly.

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

adjective

11. cerebral:

involving intelligence rather than emotions or instinct.

A cerebral analysis of most pop music finds it to be simple and childish, but that ignores the point--the music's effect on the listener. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

12. corollary:

a practical consequence that follows naturally.

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

verb

13. belittle:

lessen the importance, dignity, or reputation of.

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

verb

14. preempt:

take the place of or have precedence over.

A governmental warning about an imminent terrorist attack would preempt ordinary network programming on television.

noun

15. duplicity:

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

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

adjective

16. genteel:

marked by refinement in taste and manners.

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

adjective

17. sardonic:

disdainfully or ironically humorous; scornful and mocking.

A stand-up comedian walks a fine line when making jokes about members of the audience; such fun and joking can quickly become sardonic and cutting.

adjective

18. cohesive:

well integrated, forming a united whole.

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

noun

19. aberration:

a deviation from what is normal or expected.

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

adjective

20. imponderable:

impossible to estimate or figure out.

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

adjective

21. bereft:

unhappy in love; suffering from unrequited love.

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

adjective

22. expansive:

communicative, and prone to talking in a sociable manner.

After a few sips of cognac, the octogenarian shed his irascible demeanor and became expansive, speaking fondly of the "good old days". This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

23. inclement:

(of weather) unpleasant, stormy.

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

noun

24. inequity:

injustice by virtue of not conforming with rules or standards.

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

verb

25. desecrate:

to willfully violate or destroy a sacred place.

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

verb

26. besiege:

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

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

verb

27. maunder:

speak (about unimportant matters) rapidly and incessantly.

After drinking two espressos each, the animated couple would maunder loudly, annoying the other patrons in the coffee shop.

noun

28. melee:

a wild, confusing fight or struggle.

After enduring daily taunts about my name, I became enraged and pummeled the schoolyard bully and his sycophantic friends in a brutal melee.

noun

29. anomaly:

something that is not normal, standard, or expected.

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

adjective

30. forlorn:

marked by or showing hopelessness.

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

noun

31. summit:

the peak or highest point.

After hiking for two days, the climbers finally reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

adjective

32. unimpeachable:

free of guilt; not subject to blame; beyond doubt or reproach.

After his long and unimpeachable service to the company, Sharat felt that a gold watch was a slap in the face rather than an honor.

adjective

33. spartan:

unsparing and uncompromising in discipline or judgment; practicing great self-denial.

After losing everything in a fire, Tim decided to live in spartan conditions, sleeping on the floor and owning as little furniture as possible.

verb

34. resolve:

reach a conclusion after a discussion or deliberation.

After much thought, Ted resolved not to travel abroad this summer because he didn't have much money in his bank account. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

35. estimable:

deserving of esteem and respect.

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

adjective

36. excruciating:

extremely painful.

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

verb

37. pillory:

ridicule or expose to public scorn.

After the candidate confessed, the press of the opposing party took the opportunity to pillory him, printing editorials with the most blatantly exaggerated accusations. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

38. poignant:

emotionally touching.

After the Montagues and Capulets discover the dead bodies of Romeo and Juliet, in the play's most poignant moment, the two griefstricken families agree to end their feud once and for all. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

39. effervescent:

marked by high spirits or excitement.

After the sales result, the manager was in an effervescent mood, letting several employees leave work early that day. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

40. disheartened:

made less hopeful or enthusiastic.

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

adjective

41. anemic:

lacking energy and vigor.

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

noun

42. exiguity:

the quality of being meager.

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

adjective

43. disaffected:

discontented as toward authority.

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

verb

44. importuned:

beg persistently and urgently.

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

verb

45. fete:

to celebrate a person.

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

verb

46. recrudescence:

to break out or happen again.

After years of gamblers anonymous, Tony thought he'd broken his compulsive slot machine playing, but it took only one trip to the Atlantic City for a full recrudescence--he lost \$5k on the one armed bandit.

noun

47. altruism:

the quality of unselfish concern for the welfare of others.

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

noun

48. eponym:

the name derived from a person (real or imaginary); the person for whom something is named.

Alexandria, Egypt is an eponym because it is named after Alexander the Great.

verb

49. start:

to suddenly move in a particular direction.

All alone in the mansion, Henrietta started when she heard a sound. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

50. verisimilitude:

the appearance of truth.

All bad novels are bad for numerous reasons; all good novels are good for their verisimilitude of reality, placing the readers in a world that resembles the one they know.

adjective

51. blatant:

without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious

Allen was often punished in school for blatantly disrespecting teachers.

adjective

52. inarticulate:

without or deprived of the use of speech or words.

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

noun

53. savvy:

a perceptive understanding.

Although a great CEO, he did not have the political savvy to win the election.

noun

54. rapprochement:

the reestablishing of cordial relations.

Although Ann hoped that her mother and her aunt would have a rapprochement, each one's bitter accusations against the other made any reconciliation unlikely.

verb

55. dovetail:

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

Although Darwin's evolution and Mendel's genetics were developed in isolation from one another, they dovetail each other very well. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

56. candidness:

the quality of being honest and straightforward in attitude and speech.

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

adjective

57. approbatory:

expressing praise or approval.

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

adjective

58. jejune:

dull; lacking flavor.

Although many top chefs have secured culinary foam's popularity in haute cuisine, Waters criticizes it for being jejune and unfilling.

adjective

59. soporific:

inducing mental lethargy; sleep inducing.

Although the professor is brilliant, his bland monotone gives his lectures a soporific effect.

adjective

60. contemptuous:

scornful, looking down at others with a sneering attitude.

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

adjective

61. amiable:

friendly.

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

noun

62. apostate:

a person who has abandoned a religious faith or cause.

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

adjective

63. arrant:

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

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

noun

64. egotist:

a conceited and self-centered person.

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

verb

65. hound:

to pursue relentlessly.

An implacable foe of corruption, Eliot Ness hounded out graft in all forms--he even helped nab Al Capone. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

66. differentiate:

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

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

verb

67. arrogate:

seize and control without authority.

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

adjective

68. maladroit:

clumsy.

As a child she was quite maladroit, but as an adult, she has become an adept dancer. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

69. exasperate:

to irritate intensely.

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

adjective

70. forthcoming:

at ease in talking to others.

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

adjective

71. thoroughgoing:

very thorough; complete.

As a thoroughgoing bibliophile, one who had turned his house into a veritable library, he shocked his friends when he bought a Kindle.

verb

72. stultify:

cause one, through routine, to lose energy and enthusiasm.

As an undergraduate Mark felt stultified by classes outside his area of study; only in grad school, in which he could focus solely on literary analysis, did he regain his scholarly edge.

noun

73. junta:

an aggressive takeover by a group (usually military).

As dangerous of a threat as North Korea is, some analysts believe that were a junta suddenly to gain power, it could be even more unpredictable and bellicose than the current leadership.

noun

74. apotheosis:

exaltation to divine status; the highest point of development.

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

noun

75. tribulation:

something, especially an event, that causes difficulty and suffering.

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

verb

76. abrogate:

revoke formally.

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

adjective

77. rakish:

marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness.

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

noun

78. hauteur:

overbearing pride evidenced by a superior manner toward inferiors.

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

verb

79. dispatch:

dispose of rapidly and without delay and efficiently.

As soon as the angry peasants stormed the castle, they caught the king and swiftly dispatched him. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

80. languid:

not inclined towards physical exertion or effort; slow and relaxed.

As the sun beat down and the temperature climbed higher, we spent a languid week lying around the house.

verb

81. bristle:

react in an offended or angry manner.

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

adjective

82. invidious:

likely to cause resentment.

At a time when many others in the office were about to be laid off, many considered Cheryl's fine clothes that day an invidious display. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

83. intimate:

to suggest something subtly.

At first Manfred's teachers intimated to his parents that he was not suited to skip a grade; when his parents protested, teachers explicitly told them that, notwithstanding the boy's precocity, he was simply too immature to jump to the 6th grade. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

84. intimation:

an indirect suggestion.

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

verb

85. demean:

to insult; to cause someone to lose dignity or respect.

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

verb

86. reproach:

to express criticism towards.

At first, Sarah was going to yell at the boy, but she didn't want to reproach him for telling the truth about the situation.

noun

87. pinnacle:

the highest point.

At its pinnacle, the Roman Empire extended across most of the landmass of Eurasia, a feat not paralleled to the rise of the British Empire in the 18th and 19th century.

verb

88. galvanize:

to excite or inspire (someone) to action.

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

noun

89. derelict:

(of a building) abandoned.

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

verb

90. unnerve:

to make nervous or upset.

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

adjective

91. admonitory:

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

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

verb

92. consecrate:

to make holy or set apart for a high purpose.

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

noun

93. denouement:

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

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

adjective

94. antiquated:

old-fashioned; belonging to an earlier period in time.

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

verb

95. hobble:

to hold back the progress of something.

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

verb

96. badger:

to pester.

Badgered by his parents to find a job, the 30-year-old loafer instead joined a gang of itinerant musicians. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

97. redress:

an act of making something right.

Barry forgot his wife's birthday two years in a row, and was only able to redress his oversight by surprising his wife with a trip to Tahiti. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

98. scrupulous:

characterized by extreme care and great effort.

Because of his scrupulous nature, Mary put him in charge of numbering and cataloging the entire collection of rare stamps.

adjective

99. urbane:

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

Because of his service as an intelligence officer and his refined tastes, W. Somerset Maugham became the inspiration for the urbane and sophisticate spy James Bond.

noun

100. nuance:

a subtle difference in meaning or opinion or attitude.

Because of the nuances involved in this case, I hired an outside consultant to advice us and help.

adjective

101. tendentious:

likely to lean towards a controversial view.

Because political mudslinging has become a staple of the 24-hour media cycle, most of us, despite protestations to the contrary, are tendentious on many of today's pressing issues.

adjective

102. ethereal:

characterized by lightness and insubstantiality.

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

adjective

103. tortuous:

marked by repeated turns and bends; not straightforward.

Because the logic behind McMahon's side of the debate was so tortuous, his audience came out either completely confused or, worse, feeling they'd been tricked.

verb

104. culminate:

reach the highest or most decisive point.

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

verb

105. prevail:

prove superior.

Before the cricket match, Australia was heavily favored, but India prevailed.

verb

106. disseminate:

cause to become widely known.

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

noun

107. powwow:

an informal meeting or discussion.

Before the team takes the field, the coach always calls for a powwow so that he can make sure all the players are mentally in the right place.

adjective

108. artful:

clever in a cunning way.

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

adjective

109. genial:

agreeable, conducive to comfort.

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

noun

110. hubris:

overbearing pride or presumption.

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

noun

111. inanity:

total lack of meaning or ideas.

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

verb

112. upbraid:

to reproach; to scold.

Bob took a risk walking into the "Students Barbershop"--in the end he had to upbraid the apparently drunk barber for giving him an uneven bowl cut.

adjective

113. callow:

young and inexperienced.

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

adjective

114. pyrrhic:

describing a victory that comes at such a great cost that the victory is not worthwhile George W.

Bush's win in the 2000 election was in many ways a pyrrhic victory: the circumstances of his win alienated half of the U.S. population.

verb

115. beg:

to evade or dodge (a question).

By assuming that Charlie was headed to college--which he was not--Maggie begged the question when she asked him to which school he was headed in the Fall. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

116. extrapolate:

draw from specific cases for more general cases.

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

verb

117. implicate:

convey a meaning; imply.

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

verb

118. countermand:

a contrary command cancelling or reversing a previous command.

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

adjective

119. tawdry:

tastelessly showy; cheap and shoddy.

Carol expected to find New York City magical, the way so many movies had portrayed it, but she was surprised how often tawdry displays took the place of genuine elegance.

noun

120. enmity:

a state of deep-seated ill-will.

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

adjective

121. plodding:

(of movement) slow and laborious.

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

adjective

122. mellifluous:

smooth and sweet-sounding.

Chelsea's grandmother thought Franz Schubert's music to be the most mellifluous ever written; Chelsea demurred, and to her grandmother's chagrin, would blast Rihanna on the home stereo speakers.

adjective

123. insufferable:

intolerable, difficult to endure.

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

adjective

124. dolorous:

showing sorrow.

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

adjective

125. robust:

sturdy and strong in form, constitution, or construction.

Chris preferred bland and mild beers, but Bhavin preferred a beer with more robust flavor.

verb

126. qualify:

to make less severe; to limit (a statement).

Chris qualified his love for San Francisco, adding that he didn't like the weather as much as the weather in Los Angeles.

adjective

127. tempestuous:

as if driven by turbulent or conflicting emotions; highly energetic and wildly changing or fluctuating.

Chuck and Kathy had always been stable and agreeable people on their own, but when they got involved, it was a tempestuous relationship.

adjective

128. abysmal:

extremely bad.

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

noun

129. miscreant:

a person who breaks the law.

Come back you miscreant! yelled the woman who just had her purse stolen.

adjective

130. tractable:

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

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

noun

131. conundrum:

a difficult problem.

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

adjective

132. concomitant:

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

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

verb

133. abstain:

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

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

verb

134. denigrate:

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

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

verb

135. quail:

draw back, as with fear or pain.

Craig always claimed to be a fearless outdoorsman, but when the thunderstorm engulfed the valley, he quailed at the thought of leaving the safety of his cabin. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

136. creditable:

deserving of praise but not that amazing.

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

noun

137. ingenuity:

the power of creative imagination.

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

verb

138. rile:

cause annoyance in; disturb, especially by minor irritations.

Dan is usually calm and balanced, but it takes only one intense glare from Sabrina to rile him.

noun

139. ploy:

a clever plan to turn a situation to one's advantage.

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

verb

140. check:

to limit (usually modifying the growth of something).

Deserted for six months, the property began to look more like a jungle and less like a residence--weeds grew unchecked in the front yard. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

141. contrive:

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

Despite a low GPA, he contrived to get into college, going so far as to write his own glowing letters of recommendation. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

142. raft:

a large number of something.

Despite a raft of city ordinances passed by an overzealous council, noise pollution continued unabated in the megalopolis. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

143. stalwart:

dependable; inured to fatigue or hardships.

Despite all the criticism directed at the President during this scandal, Lisa has remained his stalwart supporter.

noun

144. discord:

lack of agreement or harmony.

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

noun

145. sybarite:

a person who indulges in luxury.

Despite the fact that he'd maxed out fifteen credit cards, Max was still a sybarite at heart: when the police found him, he was at a \$1,000 an hour spa in Manhattan, getting a facial treatment.

noun

146. moment:

significant and important value.

Despite the initial hullabaloo, the play was of no great moment in Hampton's writing career, and within a few years the public quickly forgot his foray into theater arts. This word has other definitions but this is

the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

147. artless:

without cunning or deceit.

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

adjective

148. impertinent:

being disrespectful; improperly forward or bold.

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

verb

149. cow:

to intimidate.

Do not be cowed by a 3,000-word vocabulary list: turn that list into a deck of flashcards!. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

150. itinerant:

traveling from place to place to work

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

verb

151. subsume:

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

Don Quixote of La Mancha subsumes all other modern novels, demonstrating modern literary devices. and predating even the idea of a postmodern, metanarrative.

adjective

152. wanton:

without check or limitation; showing no moral restraints to one's anger, desire, or appetites.

Due to wanton behavior and crude language, the drunk man was thrown out of the bar and asked to never return.

adjective

153. infelicitous:

inappropriate.

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

noun

154. heyday:

the pinnacle or top of a time period or career.

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

verb

155. browbeat:

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

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

verb

156. palaver:

speak (about unimportant matters) rapidly and incessantly.

During the rain delay, many who had come to see the game palavered, probably hoping that idle chatter would make the time go by faster. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

157. zeitgeist:

spirit of the times.

Each decade has its own zeitgeist--the 1990's was a prosperous time in which the promise of the American Dream never seemed more palpable.

adjective

158. indecorous:

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

Eating with elbows on the table is considered indecorous in refined circles.

adjective

159. macabre:

suggesting the horror of death and decay; gruesome.

Edgar Allen Poe was considered the master of the macabre; his stories vividly describe the moment leading up to--and often those moments after--a grisly death.

adjective

160. illustrious:

widely known and esteemed; having or conferring glory

Einstein was possibly the most illustrious scientist in recent history.

adjective

161. stolid:

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

Elephants may appear stolid to casual observers, but they actually have passionate emotional lives.

verb

162. retract:

pull inward or towards a center; formally reject or disavow a formerly held belief, usually under pressure.

Email is wonderfully efficient, but once something awkward or damaging has been sent, there is no way to retract it.

verb

163. deliberate:

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

Emergency situations such as this call for immediate action and leave no room to deliberate over options. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

164. empiricism:

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

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

adjective

165. picayune:

trifling or petty (a person).

English teachers are notorious for being picayune; however, the English language is so nuanced and sophisticated that often such teachers are not being contrary but are only adhering to the rules.

verb

166. excoriate:

to criticize very harshly.

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

verb

167. elude:

escape understanding.

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

adjective

168. obliging:

showing a cheerful willingness to do favors for others.

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

verb

169. ossify:

make rigid and set into a conventional pattern.

Even as a young man, Bob had some bias against poor people, but during his years in social services, his bad opinions ossified into unshiftable views. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

170. perquisite:

a right reserved exclusively by a particular person or group (especially a hereditary or official right).

Even as the dishwasher at the French restaurant, Josh quickly learned that he had the perquisite of being able to eat terrific food for half the price diners would pay.

adjective

171. sanctimonious:

making a show of being pious; holier-than-thou.

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

noun

172. vicissitude:

change in one's circumstances, usually for the worse.

Even great rulers have their vicissitudes--massive kingdoms have diminished overnight, and once beloved kings have faced the scorn of angry masses.

verb

173. denote:

be a sign or indication of; have as a meaning.

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

adjective

174. Pollyannaish:

extremely optimistic.

Even in the midst of a lousy sales quarter, Debbie remained Pollyannaish, never losing her shrill voice and wide smile, even when prospective customers hung up on her.

noun

175. venality:

the condition of being susceptible to bribes or corruption.

Even some of the most sacrosanct sporting events are not immune to venality, as many of the officials have received substantial bribes to make biased calls.

adjective

176. percipient:

highly perceptive.

Even the most percipient editor will make an occasional error when proofreading.

adjective

177. tenacious:

stubbornly unyielding.

Even the most tenacious advocates for gun ownership must admit some of the dangers that firearms present.

noun

178. gall:

the trait of being rude and impertinent.

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

adjective

179. besotted:

strongly affectionate towards.

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

verb

180. ingratiate:

gain favor with somebody by deliberate efforts.

Even though Tom didn't like his new boss, he decided to ingratiate himself to her in order to advance his career.

adjective

181. candid:

a straightforward and honest look at something.

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

verb

182. cede:

relinquish possession or control over.

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

noun

183. flux:

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

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

adjective

184. splenetic:

very irritable.

Ever since the car accident, Frank has been unable to walk without a cane, and so he has become splenetic and unpleasant to be around.

verb

185. ferret:

to search for something persistently.

Ever the resourceful lexicographer, Fenton was able to ferret out the word origin of highly obscure words. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

186. respite:

a pause from doing something (as work).

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

adjective

187. surly:

inclined to anger or bad feelings with overtones of menace.

Every morning, Bhavin was a surly unhappy person, but once he ate breakfast, he became loving, laughing, and a joy to be around.

noun

188. recapitulation:

a summary (think of recap).

Every point of the professors lesson was so clear that the students felt his concluding recapitulation was not necessary.

adjective

189. evasive:

deliberately vague or ambiguous.

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

adjective

190. scrupulous:

having a sense of right and wrong; principled.

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

adjective

191. superfluous:

more than is needed, desired, or required

Everything in this closet is superfluous and can be given to charity.

adjective

192. benighted:

fallen into a state of ignorance.

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

adjective

193. colossal:

so great in size or force or extent as to elicit awe.

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

adjective

194. elegiac:

expressing sorrow.

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

adjective

195. desiccated:

uninteresting, lacking vitality.

Few novelists over 80 are able to produce anything more than desiccated works--boring shadows of former books. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

196. subterfuge:

something intended to misrepresent the true nature of an activity.

Finally deciding to abandon all subterfuge, Arthur revealed to Cindy everything about his secret affair over the past two years.

adjective

197. quixotic:

wildly idealistic; impractical.

For every thousand startups with quixotic plans to be the next big name in e-commerce, only a handful ever become profitable.

adjective

198. fell:

terribly evil.

For fans of the Harry Potter series, the fell Lord Voldemort, who terrorized poor Harry for seven lengthy installments, has finally been vanquished by the forces of good--unless, that is, JK Rowling decides to come out of retirement. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

199. ineluctable:

impossible to avoid or evade.

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

verb

200. vanquish:

come out better in a competition, race, or conflict.

For years, Argentina would dominate in World Cup qualifying matches, only to be vanquished by one of the European countries during the late stages of the tournament.

adjective

201. vaunted:

highly or widely praised or boasted about.

For years, they had heard of New York City's vaunted skyline, and when they finally saw it, the spectacular cityscape did not disappoint them in the least.

adjective

202. staid:

characterized by dignity and propriety.

Frank came from a staid environment, so he was shocked that his college roommate sold narcotics.

noun

203. firebrand:

someone who deliberately creates trouble.

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

noun

204. schadenfreude:

joy from watching the suffering of others.

From his warm apartment window, Stanley reveled in schadenfreude as he laughed at the figures below, huddled together in the arctic chill.

verb

205. derive:

reason by deduction; establish by deduction.

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

adjective

206. derivative:

(or a creative product, e.

g. music, writing, etc.) not original but drawing on the work of another person. Because the movies were utterly derivative of other popular movies, they did well at the box office. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

207. discursive:

(of e.

g. speech and writing) tending to depart from the main point. Many readers find it tough to read Moby Dick since the author is discursive, often cutting the action short to spend 20 pages on the history of a whale.

noun

208. epiphany:

a sudden revelation or moment of insight.

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

adjective

209. byzantine:

intricate and complex.

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

noun

210. melancholy:

a deep, long-lasting sadness.

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

verb

211. entice:

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

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

verb

212. antedated:

precede in time.

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

adjective

213. humdrum:

dull and lacking excitement.

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

verb

214. err:

to make an error.

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

noun

215. constraint:

something that limits or restricts.

He found pop music a constraint on his ability to learn and preferred to listen to classical musical while studying.

verb

216. impute:

attribute (responsibility or fault) to something.

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

adjective

217. inveterate:

habitual.

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

noun

218. credence:

belief in something.

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

noun

219. diminutive:

to indicate smallness.

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

adjective

220. irresolute:

uncertain how to act or proceed.

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

adjective

221. boon:

very close and convivial.

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

adjective

222. magnanimous:

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

He was a great sportsman: in defeat he was complementary and in victory he was magnanimous.

adjective

223. thrifty:

spending money wisely.

He was economical, spending his money thriftily and on items considered essential.

noun

224. stipend:

a regular allowance (of money).

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

adjective

225. impeccable:

without fault or error.

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

adjective

226. puerile:

of or characteristic of a child; displaying or suggesting a lack of maturity.

Helen enjoyed blowing soap bubbles, but Jim regarded this as puerile, totally unworthy of a woman with a Ph.D.

adjective

227. unstinting:

very generous.

Helen is unstinting with her time, often spending hours at the house of a sick friend.

adjective

228. muted:

softened, subdued.

Helen preferred muted earth colors, such as green and brown, to the bright pinks and red her sister liked. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

229. jejune:

immature; childish.

Her boss further cemented his reputation for being jejune after throwing a fit when the water cooler wasn't refilled.

adjective

230. becoming:

appropriate, and matches nicely.

Her dress was becoming and made her look even more beautiful. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

231. wax:

to gradually increase in size or intensity.

Her enthusiasm for the diva's new album only waxed with each song; by the end of the album, it was her favorite CD yet. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

232. compound:

make more intense, stronger, or more marked.

Her headache was compounded by the construction crew outside, which had six jackhammers going at the same time. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

233. limpid:

clarity in terms of expression.

Her limpid prose made even the most recondite subjects accessible to all.

adjective

234. telling:

significant and revealing of another factor.

Her unbecoming dress was very telling when it came to her sense of fashion.

verb

235. glean:

collect information bit by bit.

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

noun

236. banality:

a trite or obvious remark.

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

adjective

237. sullen:

showing a brooding ill humor.

Herbert took board games too seriously, often appearing sullen after losing.

verb

238. rankle:

gnaw into; make resentful or angry.

His constant whistling would rankle her, sometimes causing her to leave in a huff.

adjective

239. antithetical:

sharply contrasted in character or purpose.

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

verb

240. conciliate:

to make peace with.

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

adjective

241. evasive:

avoiding or escaping from difficulty or danger or commitment.

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

adjective

242. inscrutable:

not easily understood; unfathomable.

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

adjective

243. amorphous:

shapeless.

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

adjective

244. venial:

easily excused or forgiven; pardonable.

His traffic violations ran the gamut from the venial to the egregious--on one occasion he simply did not come to a complete stop; another time he tried to escape across state lines at speeds in excess of 140 mph.

noun

245. quisling:

a traitor.

History looks unfavorably upon quislings; indeed they are accorded about the same fondness as Nero--he who watched his city burn down while playing the violin.

adjective

246. imprudent:

not wise.

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

adjective

247. archaic:

so old as to appear to belong to a different period.

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

adjective

248. superfluous:

serving no useful purpose.

How can we hope to stay open if we don't eliminate all superfluous spending, like catered meetings and free acupuncture Tuesday?.

noun

249. anathema:

a detested person; the source of somebody's hate.

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

adjective

250. crestfallen:

brought low in spirit.

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

noun

251. mendacity:

the tendency to be untruthful.

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

adjective

252. sentimental:

effusively or insincerely emotional, especially in art, music, and literature.

I don't like romanticism for the same reason I don't like melodramatic acting and soap operas--overly sentimental.

adjective

253. incessant:

uninterrupted in time and indefinitely long continuing.

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

adjective

254. doughty:

brave; bold; courageous.

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

adjective

255. pithy:

concise and full of meaning.

I enjoy reading the Daodejing for its pithy and insightful prose; it always gives me something to think about.

noun

256. smattering:

a slight or superficial understanding of a subject; a small amount of something.

I know only a smattering of German, but Helen is able to read German newspapers and converse with natives.

noun

257. prolixity:

boring verbosity.

I loved my grandfather dearly, but his prolixity would put me to sleep, regardless of the topic.

verb

258. misattribute:

To erroneously attribute; to falsely ascribe; used especially of authorship.

I made a mistake; I misattributed "Crime and Punishment" to Leo Tolstoy when it was actually written by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

adjective

259. edifying:

enlightening or uplifting so as to encourage intellectual or moral improvement.

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

verb

260. enumerate:

specify individually, one by one.

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

adjective

261. futile:

producing no result or effect; unproductive of success.

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

verb

262. frustrate:

hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of.

I thought I would finish writing the paper by lunchtime, but a number of urgent interruptions served to frustrate my plan. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

263. solicitude:

a feeling of excessive concern.

I walked to his house in the rain to make sure he had enough to eat while he was sick, but he seemed not to appreciate my solicitude.

verb

264. thwart:

hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of.

I wanted to spend a week in New York this autumn, but the high costs of travel and lodging thwarted my plans.

noun

265. reservation:

an unstated doubt that prevents you from accepting something wholeheartedly.

I was initially excited by the idea of a trip to Washington, D.C. but now that I have read about the high crime statistics there, I have some reservations. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

266. loath:

unwillingness to do something contrary to your custom (usually followed by 'to')

I was loath to leave the concert before my favorite band finished playing.

adjective

267. derisive:

abusing vocally; expressing contempt or ridicule.

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

adjective

268. rudimentary:

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

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

noun

269. artlessness:

the quality of innocence.

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

adjective

270. serene:

calm and peaceful.

I'd never seen him so serene; usually, he was a knot of stress and anxiety from hours of trading on the stock exchange.

adjective

271. qualify:

to be legally competent or capable.

If James had made more than \$50,000 last year, then he wouldn't have qualified for the low-income scholarship.

noun

272. modicum:

a small or moderate or token amount.

If my sister had even a modicum of sense, she wouldn't be engaged to that barbarian.

adjective

273. transitory:

lasting a very short time.

If we lived forever and life was not transitory, do you think we would appreciate life less or more?.

adjective

274. deferential:

showing respect.

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

adjective

275. provident:

careful in regard to your own interests; providing carefully for the future.

In a move that hardly could be described as provident, Bert spend his entire savings on a luxurious cruise, knowing that other bills would come due a couple months later.

noun

276. tact:

consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offense.

In a tremendous display of tact, Shelly was able to maintain a strong friendship with Marcia, even though Marcia's husband, Frank, confessed to finding Shelley more attractive than Marcia.

noun

277. gall:

feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will.

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

noun

278. indifference:

the trait of seeming not to care.

In an effort to fight indifference, the president of the college introduced a new, stricter grading system.

noun

279. graft:

corruption, usually through bribery.

In countries with rampant graft, getting a driver's license can require no more than paying an official. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

280. blinkered:

to have a limited outlook or understanding.

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

adjective

281. vociferous:

conspicuously and offensively loud; given to vehement outcry.

In giving Marcia a particular vociferous response, Paul caused people at every other table in the restaurant to turn around and look at them angrily.

adjective

282. appurtenant:

supply added support.

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

adjective

283. tantamount:

being essentially equal to something.

In many situations, remaining silent is tantamount to admitting guilt, so speak to prove your innocence.

adjective

284. analogous:

similar in some respects but otherwise different.

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

adjective

285. copious:

in abundant supply.

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

noun

286. quip:

a witty saying or remark.

In one of the most famous quips about classical music, Mark Twain said: "Wagner's music is better than it sounds."

verb

287. defray:

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

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

adjective

288. ignoble:

dishonorable.

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

adjective

289. unscrupulous:

without scruples or principles.

In the courtroom, the lawyer was unscrupulous, using every manner of deceit and manipulation to secure a victory for himself.

noun

290. jingoist:

a person who thinks that their country should be at war.

In the days leading up to war, a nation typically breaks up into the two opposing camps: doves, who do their best to avoid war, and jingoists, who are only too eager to wave national flags from their vehicles and vehemently denounce those who do not do th.

noun

291. clemency:

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

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

verb

292. glut:

supply with an excess of.

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

adjective

293. indigent:

poor; having very little.

In the so-called Third World, many are indigent and only a privileged few have the resources to enjoy material luxuries.

verb

294. assail:

attack in speech or writing.

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

verb

295. peruse:

to read very carefully.

Instead of perusing important documents, people all too often rush to the bottom of the page and plaster their signatures at the bottom.

noun

296. bromide:

a trite or obvious remark.

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

noun

297. sanction:

a legal penalty for a forbidden action.

International sanctions have been placed on certain shipping lanes that were thought to be involved in human trafficking.

adjective

298. endemic:

native; originating where it is found.

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

noun

299. proponent:

a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea.

Ironically, the leading proponent of Flat-Earth Theory flies all over the world in an effort to win more adherents.

verb

300. rarefied:

make more subtle or refined.

Jack's vulgar jokes were not so successful in the rarefied environment of college professors. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

301. iconoclastic:

defying tradition or convention.

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

adjective

302. debonair:

having a sophisticated charm.

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

adjective

303. philistine:

smug and ignorant towards artistic and cultural values.

Jane considered Al completely philistine, because he talked almost exclusively about video games; she was entirely unaware of how well read he really was. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

304. parochial:

narrowly restricted in scope or outlook.

Jasmine was sad to admit it, but her fledgling relationship with Jacob did not work out because his culinary tastes were simply too parochial; "After all," she quipped on her blog, "he considered Chef Boyardee ethnic food."

adjective

305. destitute:

poor enough to need help from others.

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

verb

306. degrade:

reduce in worth or character, usually verbally.

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

adjective

307. peripatetic:

traveling by foot.

Jim always preferred a peripatetic approach to discovering a city: he felt that he could see so many more details while walking.

noun

308. panache:

distinctive and stylish elegance.

Jim, with his typical panache, came to the wedding reception with a top hat, a cane, and a long cape covered in sequins.

noun

309. screed:

an abusive rant (often tedious).

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

adjective

310. ravenous:

extremely hungry; devouring or craving food in great quantities.

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

noun

311. maxim:

a short saying expressing a general truth.

Johnson initially suggests that the secret to business can be summarized in a single maxim but then requires a 300-page book to explain exactly what he means.

adjective

312. catholic:

of broad scope; universal.

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

adjective

313. economical:

avoiding waste, efficient.

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

noun

314. raconteur:

a person skilled in telling anecdotes.

Jude is entertaining, but he is no raconteur: beyond the handful of amusing stories he has memorized, he has absolutely no spontaneous story-telling ability.

adjective

315. preemptive:

done before someone else can do it.

Just as Martha was about to take the only cookie left on the table, Noah preemptively swiped it.

adjective

316. maudlin:

overly emotional and sad.

Just as those who were alive during the 70's are mortified that they once cavorted about in bellbottoms, many who lived during the 80's are now aghast at the maudlin pop songs they used to enjoy--really, just what exactly is a total eclipse of the heart?.

verb

317. dissipate:

to disperse or scatter.

Kathleen's perfume was overwhelming in the cramped apartment, but once we stepped outside the smell dissipated and we could breathe once again.

adjective

318. parsimonious:

extremely frugal; miserly.

Katie is so parsimonious that she only buys a pair of socks if all of her other socks have holes in them.

adjective

319. lachrymose:

showing sorrow.

Lachrymose and depressed, Alexei Alexandrovich walked two miles home in the rain after learning that his wife was having an affair.

adjective

320. dilatory:

wasting time.

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

noun

321. exemplar:

something to be imitated.

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

adjective

322. insolent:

rude and arrogant.

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

verb

323. proselytize:

convert to another religion, philosophy, or perspective.

Lisa loves her Mac but says little about it; by contrast, Jake will proselytize, interrogating anyone with an Android about why she didn't purchase an iPhone.

adjective

324. lascivious:

lecherous; sexually perverted.

Lolita is a challenging novel for many, not necessarily because of the elevated prose style but because of the depravity of the main character, Humbert Humbert, who, as an old, lascivious man, falls in love with a girl.

noun

325. inkling:

a slight suggestion or vague understanding.

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

adjective

326. provincial:

characteristic of the a limited perspective; not fashionable or sophisticated

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

adjective

327. disingenuous:

not straightforward; giving a false appearance of frankness.

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

verb

328. hail:

enthusiastically acclaim or celebrate something.

Many college superstar athletes are hailed as the next big thing, but then flop at the professional level. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

329. haphazard:

marked by great carelessness; dependent upon or characterized by chance

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

verb

330. repudiate:

reject as untrue or unfounded.

Many in the public believed the rumors of a UFO crash outside town, so the chief of police did everything he could to repudiate the rumors.

adjective

331. detrimental:

(sometimes followed by "to") causing harm or injury.

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

adjective

332. perspicacious:

acutely insightful and wise.

Many modern observers regard Eisenhower as perspicacious, particularly in his accurate prediction of the growth of the military.

adjective

333. facile:

arrived at without due care or effort; lacking depth.

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

adverb

334. autonomously:

In an autonomous or self-governing manner.

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

verb

335. fleece:

to deceive.

Many people have been fleeced by Internet scams and never received their money back. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

336. dissolution:

a living full of debauchery and indulgence in sensual pleasure.

Many Roman emperors were known for their dissolution, indulging in unspeakable desires of the flesh. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

337. trite:

repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse.

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

verb

338. derive:

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

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

adjective

339. chivalrous:

being attentive to women like an ideal knight.

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

adjective

340. inclement:

used of persons or behavior; showing no mercy.

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

adjective

341. nettlesome:

causing irritation or annoyance.

Maria found her coworkers cell phone nettlesome, because every few minutes it would buzz to life with another text message.

verb

342. lampoon:

ridicule with satire.

Mark Twain understood that lampooning a bad idea with humor was the most effective criticism.

verb

343. champion:

protect or fight for as a champion.

Martin Luther King Jr. championed civil rights fiercely throughout his short life. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

344. advocate:

a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a tireless advocate for the rights of African-Americans in the United States. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

345. improvident:

not given careful consideration.

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

verb

346. flummox:

be a mystery or bewildering to.

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

verb

347. maunder:

wander aimlessly.

Max liked to maunder down by the seaside and pick up whatever sea shells he would stumble upon.

adjective

348. incumbent:

necessary (for someone) as a duty or responsibility.

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

adjective

349. palatable:

acceptable to the taste or mind.

Mike didn't partake much in his friends' conversations, but found their presence palatable. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

350. boon:

a desirable state.

Modern technology has been a boon to the travel industry.

adjective

351. sartorial:

related to fashion or clothes.

Monte was astute at navigating the world of finance; sartorially, however, he was found wanting--he typically would attempt to complement his beige tie with a gray suit and white pants.

adjective

352. frugal:

not spending much money (but spending wisely).

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

adjective

353. hagiographic:

excessively flattering toward someone's life or work.

Most accounts of Tiger Woods' life were hagiographic, until, that is, his affairs made headlines.

adjective

354. arcane:

requiring secret or mysterious knowledge.

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

adjective

355. cardinal:

of primary importance; fundamental.

Most cultures consider gambling a cardinal sin and thus have outlawed its practice. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

356. empathetic:

showing understanding and ready comprehension of other peoples' states and emotions.

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

verb

357. elaborate:

explain in more detail.

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

adjective

358. stringent:

demanding strict attention to rules and procedures.

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

adjective

359. hoary:

ancient.

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

noun

360. solecism:

a socially awkward or tactless act.

Mother Anna was always on guard against any solecism from her children and scolded them immediately if any of them talked out of place in public. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

361. eccentric:

highly unconventional or usual (usually describes a person).

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

verb

362. differentiate:

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

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

adjective

363. inimitable:

defying imitation; matchless.

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

noun

364. litany:

any long and tedious account of something.

Mr. Rogers spoke to a Senate committee and did not give a litany of reasons to keep funding the program, but instead, appealed to the basic human decency of all present.

adjective

365. apathetic:

marked by a lack of interest.

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

noun

366. atavism:

a reappearance of an earlier characteristic; throwback.

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

noun

367. chagrin:

strong feelings of embarrassment.

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

noun

368. anodyne:

something that soothes or relieves pain.

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

verb

369. proscribe:

command against.

My doctor proscribes that I not eat donuts with chocolate sauce and hamburger patties for breakfast.

noun

370. epigram:

a witty saying.

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

adjective

371. malleable:

easily influenced.

My little brother is so malleable that I can convince him to sneak cookies from the cupboard for me.

verb

372. irk:

irritate or vex.

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

noun

373. aplomb:

great coolness and composure under strain.

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

noun

374. juggernaut:

a force that cannot be stopped.

Napoleon was considered a juggernaut until he decided to invade Russia in winter; after which, his once indomitable army was decimated by cold and famine.

adjective

375. capricious:

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

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

adjective

376. supercilious:

haughty and disdainful; looking down on others.

Nelly felt the Quiz Bowl director acted superciliously towards the underclassmen; really, she fumed, must he act so preternaturally omniscient each time he intones some obscure fact--as though everybody knows that Mt. Aconcagua is the highest peak in South America.

adjective

377. retiring:

to be shy, and to be inclined to retract from company.

Nelson was always the first to leave soirees--rather than mill about with "fashionable" folk, he was retiring, and preferred the solitude of his garret.

adjective

378. besotted:

very drunk.

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

adjective

379. derogative:

expressed as worthless or in negative terms.

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

verb

380. appease:

pacify by acceding to the demands of.

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

verb

381. bridle:

the act of restraining power or action or limiting excess

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

noun

382. aphorism:

a short instructive saying about a general truth.

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

noun

383. temerity:

fearless daring.

No child has the temerity to go in the rundown house at the end of the street and see if it is haunted.

adjective

384. staunch:

firm and dependable especially in loyalty.

No longer a staunch supporter of the movement, Todd now will openly question whether its goals are worthwhile.

verb

385. refute:

prove to be false or incorrect.

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

noun

386. jingoism:

fanatical patriotism.

North Korea maintains intense control over its population through a combination of jingoism and cult of personality.

adjective

387. malfeasance:

misconduct or wrongdoing (especially by a public official).

Not even the mayor's trademark pearly-toothed grin could save him from charges of malfeasance: while in power, he'd been running an illegal gambling rink in the room behind his office.

verb

388. perturb:

disturb in mind or cause to be worried or alarmed.

Now that Henry is recovering from a major illness, he no longer lets the little trivialities, such as late mail, perturb him.

adjective

389. destitute:

completely wanting or lacking (usually "destitute of")

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

adjective

390. beatific:

blissfully happy.

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

noun

391. presentiment:

a feeling of evil to come.

On the night that Lincoln would be fatally shot, his wife had a presentiment about going to Ford's Theater, but Lincoln persuaded her that everything would be fine.

adjective

392. irrevocable:

incapable of being retracted or revoked.

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

adjective

393. checkered:

one that is marked by disreputable happenings.

One by one, the presidential candidates dropped out of the race, their respective checkered pasts--from embezzlement to infidelity--sabotaging their campaigns. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

394. arbitrary:

based on a random, groundless decision.

One of the arbitrary decrees in place during the emperor's rule is that all citizens pay him weekly homage at his palace. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

395. transmute:

change or alter in form, appearance, or nature.

One of the goals of alchemy was to find the substance or process that would transmute lead into gold.

verb

396. circumvent:

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

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

verb

397. crystallize:

cause to take on a definite and clear shape.

Only after fifteen minutes of brainstorming did Samantha's ideas for the essay crystallize. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

398. cumbersome:

difficult to handle or use especially because of size or weight.

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

verb

399. adjudicate:

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

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

adjective

400. replete:

completely stocked or furnished with something.

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

adjective

401. solicitous:

showing hovering attentiveness.

Our neighbors are constantly knocking on our door to make sure we are ok, and I don't know how to ask them to stop being so solicitous about our health. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

402. peevish:

easily irritated or annoyed.

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

adjective

403. puissant:

powerful.

Over the years of service, and quite to his surprise, he became a puissant advisor to the community.

verb

404. coalesce:

fuse or cause to grow together.

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

verb

405. kowtow:

to bow or act in a subservient manner.

Paul kowtowed to his boss so often the boss herself became nauseated by his sycophancy.

noun

406. capitulate:

to surrender (usually under agreed conditions).

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

verb

407. reconcile:

make (one thing) compatible with (another).

Peggy was unable to reconcile her kind friend Jane with the cruel and merciless character Jane played on television.

adjective

408. cavalier:

given to haughty disregard of others

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

adjective

409. industrious:

characterized by hard work and perseverance.

Pete was an industrious student, completing every assignment thoroughly and on time.

adjective

410. protean:

readily taking on different roles; versatile.

Peter Sellers was truly a protean actor--in Doctor Strangelove he played three very different roles: a jingoist general, a sedate President and a deranged scientist.

adjective

411. artful:

exhibiting artistic skill.

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

adjective

412. insidious:

working in a subtle but destructive way.

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

noun

413. broadside:

a strong verbal attack.

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

noun

414. virago:

an ill-tempered or violent woman.

Poor Billy was the victim of the virago's invective--she railed at him for a good 30-minutes about how he is the scum of the earth for speaking loudly on his cellphone in public.

adjective

415. pedantic:

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

Professor Thompson was regarded as an expert in his field, but his lectures were utterly pedantic, focused on rigorous details of the most trivial conventions in the field.

adjective

416. unassailable:

immune to attack; without flaws.

Professor Williams is so self-assured as to seem arrogant, presenting each and every opinion as an unassailable fact.

noun

417. gambit:

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

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

adjective

418. pragmatic:

guided by practical experience and observation rather than theory.

Rather than make a philosophical appeal to the Congressmen, the Speaker decided to take a far more pragmatic approach, making small side-deals that would add votes to his bill.

adjective

419. pejorative:

expressing disapproval (usu.

refers to a term). Most psychologists object to the pejorative term "shrink", believing that they expand the human mind, not limit it. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

420. appreciable:

large enough to be noticed (usu.

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

adjective

421. uncanny:

suggesting the operation of supernatural influences; surpassing the ordinary or normal.

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

adjective

422. remiss:

to be negligent in one's duty.

Remiss in his duty to keep the school functioning efficiently, the principle was relieved of his position after only three months.

adjective

423. bilious:

irritable; always angry.

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

verb

424. debunk:

expose as false ideas and claims, especially while ridiculing.

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

adjective

425. scintillating:

describes someone who is brilliant and lively.

Richard Feynman was renowned for his scintillating lectures--the arcana of quantum physics was made lucid as he wrote animatedly on the chalkboard.

noun

426. tumult:

a state of chaos, noise and confusion.

Riots broke out just in front of our apartment building, and the tumult continued late into the night.

verb

427. discriminate:

recognize or perceive the difference.

Sarah couldn't discriminate between a good wine and a bad wine, so she avoided wine tastings. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

428. prolific:

intellectually productive.

Schubert was the most prolific composer, producing hundreds of hours of music before he died at the age of 31.

adjective

429. eminent:

standing above others in quality or position.

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

adjective

430. wanting:

lacking.

She did not think her vocabulary was wanting, yet there were so many words that inevitably she found a few she didn't know.

noun

431. dispatch:

the property of being prompt and efficient.

She finished her thesis with dispatch, amazing her advisors who couldn't believe she hadn't written 60 scholarly pages so quickly. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

432. enamor:

attraction or feeling of love.

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

verb

433. chagrin:

cause to feel shame; hurt the pride of.

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

verb

434. patronize:

treat condescendingly.

She says she genuinely wanted to help me, but instead she patronized me, constantly pointing out how I was inferior to her. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

435. spurn:

reject with contempt.

She spurned all his flattery and proposals, and so he walked off embarrassed and sad.

noun

436. audacity:

aggressive boldness in social situations.

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

adjective

437. base:

the lowest, class were without any moral principles.

She was not so base as to begrudge the beggar the unwanted crumbs from her dinner plate. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

438. enthrall:

hold spellbound.

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

adjective

439. winsome:

charming in a childlike or naive way.

She was winsome by nature, and many people were drawn to this free and playful spirit. Basic Words.

adjective

440. jaundice:

to be biased against due to envy or prejudice.

Shelly was jaundiced towards Olivia; though the two had once been best friends, Olivia had become class president, prom queen, and, to make matters worse, the girlfriend of the one boy Shelly liked.

verb

441. nonplussed:

unsure how to act or respond.

Shirley was totally nonplussed when the angry motorist cut her off and then stuck his finger out the window.

verb

442. lambast:

criticize severely or angrily.

Showing no patience, the manager utterly lambasted the sales team that lost the big account.

adjective

443. avaricious:

excessively greedy.

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

noun

444. summit:

a meeting of high-level leaders.

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

noun

445. umbrage:

a feeling of anger caused by being offended.

Since he was so in love with her, he took umbrage at her comments, even though she had only meant to gently tease him.

noun

446. dispensation:

an exemption from a rule or obligation.

Since her father is a billionaire, she is given dispensation from many of the school's policies. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

447. surreptitious:

stealthy, taking pains not to be caught or detected.

Since his mom was a light sleeper, Timmy had to tiptoe surreptitiously through the entire house, careful to not make the floors creak, until he at last was able to enjoy his plunder: a box of chocolate chip cookies.

noun

448. resignation:

the acceptance of something unpleasant that can't be avoided.

Since Jack could not think of a convincing reason why he had to miss the seminar, he attended it with a sense of resignation. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

449. culpability:

a state of guilt.

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

adjective

450. cryptic:

mysterious or vague, usually intentionally.

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

adjective

451. moot:

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

Since the Board just terminated Steve as the CEO, what the finance committee might have thought of his proposed marketing plan for next year is now a moot point. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

452. patent:

glaringly obvious.

Since the book had been through no fewer than six proof runs, the staff was shocked to see such a patent spelling mistake remaining, right in the middle of the front cover!.

adjective

453. ignominious:

(used of conduct or character) deserving or bringing disgrace or shame.

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

verb

454. delegate:

give an assignment to (a person).

Since the senior manager had to go on many international business trips, she was forced to delegate many of her responsibilities to two lower-level managers. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

455. timorous:

timid by nature or revealing fear and nervousness.

Since this was her first time debating on stage and before an audience, Di's voice was timorous and quiet for the first 10 minutes.

noun

456. curmudgeon:

a grouchy, surly person.

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

verb

457. begrudge:

to envy someone for possessing or enjoying something.

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

adjective

458. cadaverous:

emaciated; gaunt.

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

noun

459. cupidity:

greed for money.

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

adjective

460. plucky:

marked by courage and determination.

Some scouts initially doubted Pedroia because of his short stature, but he is a plucky player, surprising everyone with his boundless energy and fierce determination.

adjective

461. malodorous:

having an unpleasant smell.

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

verb

462. hoodwink:

to deceive or trick someone.

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

adjective

463. truculent:

having a fierce, savage nature.

Standing in line for six hours, she became progressively truculent, yelling at DMV employees and elbowing other people waiting in line.

noun

464. quandary:

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

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

adjective

465. sagacious:

having good judgement and acute insight.

Steve Jobs is surely one of the most sagacious CEOs, making Apple the most recognizable and valuable companies in the world.

verb

466. finagle:

achieve something by means of trickery or devious methods.

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

verb

467. eke:

To live off meager resources, to scrape by.

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

verb

468. languish:

become feeble.

Stranded in the wilderness for four days, the hiker languished, eating protein bars and nuts.

verb

469. lionize:

assign great social importance to.

Students in the U.S. learn to lionize Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington because they are the founding fathers of the nation.

noun

470. insouciance:

lack of concern.

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

adjective

471. evenhanded:

without partiality.

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

adjective

472. paradoxical:

seemingly contradictory but nonetheless possibly true.

That light could be both a particle and a wave seems paradoxical, but nonetheless, it is true.

adjective

473. vicarious:

felt or undergone as if one were taking part in the experience or feelings of another.

The advent of twitter is a celebrity stalker's dream, as he or she can--through hundreds of intimate "tweets"--vicariously live the life of a famous person.

adjective

474. turgid:

(of language) pompous and tedious.

The amount of GRE vocabulary he used increased with his years--by the time he was 60, his novels were so turgid that even his diehard fans refused to read them.

noun

475. apogee:

the highest point.

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

adjective

476. fecund:

intellectually productive.

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

noun

477. aesthetic:

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

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

noun

478. ascendancy:

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

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

verb

479. sanction:

give authority or permission to.

The authorities have sanctioned the use of the wilderness reserve for public use; many expect to see hikers and campers enjoying the park in the coming months.

verb

480. construe:

interpreted in a particular way.

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

noun

481. amalgam:

a mixture of multiple things.

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

adjective

482. arch:

to be deliberately teasing.

The baroness was arch, making playful asides to the townspeople; yet because they couldn't pick up on her dry humor, they thought her supercilious. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

483. exegesis:

critical explanation or analysis, especially of a text.

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

adjective

484. embryonic:

in an early stage of development.

The Board of Directors is hoping to launch a new product soon, but planning for the Z7 is in an embryonic stages. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adverb

485. amply:

more than is adequate.

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

adjective

486. coterminous:

being of equal extent or scope or duration.

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

verb

487. hector:

to bully or intimidate.

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

adjective

488. deleterious:

harmful to living things.

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

adjective

489. ersatz:

not real or genuine; phony.

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

verb

490. expurgate:

to remove objectionable material.

The censor expurgated every reference to sex and drugs, converting the rapper's raunchy flow into a series of bleeps.

verb

491. expound:

add details or explanation; clarify the meaning; state in depth.

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

noun

492. sycophant:

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

The CEO was unaware of the damaging consequences of his choices, largely because he surrounded himself with sycophants who would never dare criticize him.

adjective

493. snide:

expressive of contempt; derogatory or mocking in an indirect way.

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

noun

494. chauvinist:

a person who believes in the superiority of their group.

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

noun

495. imbroglio:

a confusing and potentially embarrassing situation.

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

adjective

496. propitious:

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

The child's heartbeat is still weak, but I am seeing many propitious signs and I think that she may be healing.

noun

497. arriviste:

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

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

adjective

498. malleable:

capable of being shaped or bent or drawn out.

The clay became malleable and easy to work with after a little water was added.

adjective

499. antic:

ludicrously odd.

The clown's antic act was too extreme for the youngest children, who left the room in tears. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

500. obstinate:

resistant to guidance or discipline; stubbornly persistent.

The coach suggested improvements Sarah might make on the balance beam, but she remained obstinate, unwilling to modify any of the habits that made her successful in the past.

adjective

501. dictatorial:

expecting unquestioning obedience; characteristic of an absolute ruler

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

adjective

502. punctilious:

marked by precise accordance with details.

The colonel was so punctilious about enforcing regulations that men felt compelled to polish even the soles of their shoes.

verb

503. appropriate:

to allocate.

The committee appropriated the funds to its various members. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

504. myopic:

lacking foresight or imagination.

The company ultimately went out of business because the myopic managers couldn't predict the changes in their industry. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

505. devolve:

pass on or delegate to another.

The company was full of managers known for devolving tasks to lower management, but never doing much work themselves.

adjective

506. diabolical:

to be extremely wicked like the devil.

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

noun

507. constituent:

an abstract part of something.

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

adjective

508. factious:

produced by, or characterized by internal dissension.

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

verb

509. implicate:

to indicate in wrongdoing, usually a crime.

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

adjective

510. restive:

restless.

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

adjective

511. obtain:

be valid, applicable, or true.

The custom of waiting your turn in line does not obtain in some countries, in which many people try to rush to front of the line at the same time. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

512. variance:

the quality of varying.

The cynic quipped, "There is not much variance in politicians; they all seem to prevaricate".

noun

513. decimation:

destroying or killing a large part of the population.

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

adjective

514. factitious:

artificial; not natural.

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

adjective

515. pecuniary:

relating to or involving money.

The defendant was found guilty and had to serve a period of community service as well as pay pecuniary damages to the client.

noun

516. desideratum:

something desired as a necessity.

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

verb

517. devolve:

grow worse (usually "devolve into").

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

adjective

518. grandiloquent:

puffed up with vanity.

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

adjective

519. aesthetic:

concerned with the appreciation of beauty.

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

noun

520. palimpsest:

something that has been changed numerous times but on which traces of former iterations can still be seen.

The downtown was a palimpsest of the city's checkered past: a new Starbucks had opened up next to an abandoned, shuttered building, and a freshly asphalted road was inches away from a pothole large enough to swallow a small dog.

noun

521. simulacrum:

a bad imitation.

The early days of computer graphics made real people into a simulacrum that now seems comical.

adjective

522. meteoric:

like a meteor in speed or brilliance or transience.

The early spectacular successes propelled the pitcher to meteoric stardom, but a terribly injury tragically cut short his career.

verb

523. morph:

To undergo dramatic change in a seamless and barely noticeable fashion.

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

adjective

524. commendable:

worthy of high praise.

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

noun

525. despot:

a cruel and oppressive dictator.

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

verb

526. stymie:

hinder or prevent the progress or accomplishment of.

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

noun

527. enormity:

an act of extreme wickedness.

The enormity of Pol Pot's regime is hard to capture in words--within months hundreds of thousands of Cambodians lost their lives. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

528. equitable:

fair to all parties as dictated by reason and conscience.

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

adjective

529. flush:

to be in abundance.

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

adjective

530. irrefutable:

impossible to deny or disprove.

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

verb

531. hamstrung:

made ineffective or powerless.

The FBI has made so many restriction on the local police that they are absolutely hamstrung, unable to accomplish anything.

adjective

532. mawkish:

overly sentimental to the point that it is disgusting.

The film was incredibly mawkish, introducing highly likeable characters only to have them succumb to a devastating illnesses by the end of the movie.

adjective

533. equivocal:

confusing or ambiguous.

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

adjective

534. halcyon:

idyllically calm and peaceful; suggesting happy tranquillity; marked by peace and prosperity.

The first decade after WWI was a halcyon period in America with new-found wealth and rapidly improving technology.

verb

535. enjoin:

give instructions to or direct somebody to do something with authority.

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

verb

536. appropriate:

to give or take something by force.

The government appropriated land that was occupied by squatters, sending them scurrying for another place to live. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

537. tender:

offer up something formally.

The government was loath to tender more money in the fear that it might set off inflation. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

538. animosity:

intense hostility.

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

adjective

539. negligible:

so small as to be meaningless; insignificant.

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

adjective

540. internecine:

(of conflict) within a group or organization.

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

adjective

541. haughty:

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

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

adjective

542. complementary:

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

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

adjective

543. taxing:

use to the limit; exhaust.

The hike to the summit of Mt. Whitney was so taxing that I could barely speak or stand up. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

544. sangfroid:

calmness or poise in difficult situations.

The hostage negotiator exhibited a sangfroid that oftentimes was more menacing than the sword at his throat, or the gun at his head.

verb

545. bridle:

anger or take offense.

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

adjective

546. unflappable:

not easily perturbed or excited or upset; marked by extreme calm and composure.

The house shook and the ground quaked, but my dad was unflappable and comforted the family.

adjective

547. impending:

close in time; about to occur.

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

noun

548. indigent:

a poor or needy person.

The indigents, huddled under the overpass, tried to start a small bonfire in the hope of staying warm.

adjective

549. intermittent:

stopping and starting at irregular intervals.

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

noun

550. cornucopia:

an abundant supply of something good.

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

noun

551. glut:

an excessive supply.

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

noun

552. cataclysm:

an event resulting in great loss and misfortune.

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

noun

553. serendipity:

the instance in which an accidental, fortunate discovery is made.

The invention of the 3M Post It Note was serendipitous, because the scientist who had come up with the idea was looking for a strong adhesive; the weak adhesive he came up with was perfect for holding a piece of paper in place but made it very easy for so.

noun

554. apex:

the highest point.

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

adjective

555. immaterial:

not relevant.

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

adjective

556. impartial:

free from undue bias or preconceived opinions.

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

adjective

557. extenuating:

making less guilty or more forgivable.

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

verb

558. cosseted:

treat with excessive indulgence.

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

verb

559. underwrite:

to support financially.

The latest symphony broadcast was made possible with underwriting from the Carnegie Endowment.

adjective

560. incisive:

having or demonstrating ability to recognize or draw fine distinctions.

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

adjective

561. unconscionable:

unreasonable; unscrupulous; excessive.

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

adjective

562. dilapidated:

in terrible condition.

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

adjective

563. autocratic:

offensively self-assured or given to exercising usually unwarranted power.

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

adjective

564. churlish:

lacking manners or refinement.

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

adjective

565. telltale:

revealing.

The many telltale signs of chronic smoking include yellow teeth, and a persistent, hacking cough.

verb

566. deign:

do something that one considers to be below one's dignity.

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

adjective

567. aboveboard:

open and honest.

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

noun

568. artifice:

cunning tricks used to deceive others.

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

noun

569. constituent:

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

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

verb

570. juxtapose:

place side by side.

The meaning of her paintings comes from a classical style which juxtaposes modern themes.

adjective

571. raffish:

marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness.

The men found him raffish, but the women adored his smart clothes and casual attitude.

verb

572. immure:

to enclose, usually in walls.

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

adjective

573. effacing:

reluctant to draw attention to yourself.

The most admirable teachers and respected leaders are those who are self-effacing, directing attention and praise to their students and workers.

verb

574. remonstrate:

to make objections while pleading.

The mothers of the kidnapped victims remonstrated to the rogue government to release their children, claiming that the detention violated human rights.

noun

575. bastardization:

an act that debases or corrupts.

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

noun

576. acme:

the highest point of achievement.

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

noun

577. raillery:

light teasing.

The new recruit was not bothered by the raillery, finding most of it light-hearted and good-natured.

adjective

578. bucolic:

relating to the pleasant aspects of the country.

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

verb

579. deride:

treat or speak of with contempt.

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

adjective

580. slapdash:

carelessly and hastily put together.

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

adverb

581. askance:

with a look of suspicion or disapproval.

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

adjective

582. sententious:

to be moralizing, usually in a pompous sense.

The old man, casting his nose up in the air at the group of adolescents, intoned sententiously, "Youth is wasted on the young."

noun

583. reprisal:

a retaliatory action against an enemy in wartime.

The Old Testament doctrine of an eye for an eye is not the kind of retaliation practiced in war; rather, an arm, a leg, and both ears are the reprisal for the smallest scratch.

noun

584. pariah:

an outcast.

The once eminent scientist, upon being found guilty of faking his data, has become a pariah in the research community.

adjective

585. involved:

complicated, and difficult to comprehend.

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

adjective

586. unviable:

not able to work, survive, or succeed (also spelled inviable).

The plan was obviously unviable considering that it lead to complete environmental destruction in the river valley.

verb

587. mesmerize:

to spellbind or enthrall.

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

verb

588. rebuke:

criticize severely or angrily; censure.

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

verb

589. misconstrue:

interpret in the wrong way.

The politician never trusted journalists because he thought that they misconstrue his words and misrepresent his positions.

adjective

590. demure:

to be modest and shy.

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

noun

591. sinecure:

an office that involves minimal duties.

The position of Research Director is a sinecure: the job entails almost no responsibilities, nor does the person in that position have to answer to anyone.

adjective

592. forthcoming:

available when required or as promised.

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

verb

593. promulgate:

state or announce.

The President wanted to promulgate the success of the treaty negotiations, but he had to wait until Congress formally approved the agreement.

noun

594. primacy:

the state of being first in importance.

The primacy of Apple Computers is not guaranteed, as seen in the recent lawsuits and weak growth.

noun

595. row:

an angry dispute.

The Prime Minister looked very foolish after his row with the foreign dignitary was caught on video and posted on youtube. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

596. besmirch:

damage the good name and reputation of someone.

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

noun

597. precedent:

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

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

adjective

598. reverent:

feeling or showing profound respect or veneration.

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

adjective

599. pellucid:

transparently clear; easily understandable.

The professor had a remarkable ability make even the most difficult concepts seem pellucid.

adjective

600. germane:

relevant and appropriate.

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

verb

601. buck:

resist.

The profits at our firm bucked the general downturn that effected the real estate industry. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

602. canard:

a deliberately misleading fabrication

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

verb

603. conniving:

taking part in immoral and unethical plots.

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

adjective

604. querulous:

habitually complaining.

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

verb

605. machinate:

engage in plotting or enter into a conspiracy, swear together

The rebels met at night in an abandoned barn to machinate.

verb

606. dissipate:

squander or spend money frivolously.

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

adjective

607. uncompromising:

not making concessions.

The relationship between Bart and Hilda ultimately failed because they were both so uncompromising, never wanting to change their opinions.

verb

608. consummate:

to make perfect and complete in every respect.

The restoration of the ancient church was only consummated after a twenty years of labor. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

609. inexorable:

impossible to stop or prevent.

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

verb

610. subsume:

contain or include.

The rogue wave quickly subsumed the pier and boardwalk, destroying everything in its path.

adjective

611. subversive:

in opposition to a civil authority or government.

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

adjective

612. impermeable:

does not allow fluids to pass through.

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

verb

613. maintain:

to assert.

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

noun

614. simulacrum:

a representation of a person (especially in the form of sculpture).

The Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center showcases a simulacrum of all the present and approved buildings in the city of Shanghai.

verb

615. mulct:

to defraud or swindle.

The so-called magical diet cure simply ended up mulcting Maria out of hundreds of dollars, but did nothing for her weight.

verb

616. truncate:

reduce the length of something.

The soccer game was truncated when the monsoon rain began to fall.

adjective

617. ribald:

humorously vulgar.

The speaker was famous for his ribald humor, but the high school principal asked him to keep the talk G- rated when he spoke to the student body.

verb

618. savvy:

get the meaning of something.

The student savvies the meaning of astrophysics with little effort.

adjective

619. undermine:

to weaken (usually paired with an abstract term).

The student undermined the teacher's authority by questioning the teacher's judgment on numerous occasions.

verb

620. afford:

provide with an opportunity.

The summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro affords a panoramic view that encompasses both Tanzania and Kenya. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

621. enumerate:

determine the number or amount of.

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

adjective

622. unforthcoming:

uncooperative, not willing to give up information.

The teacher demanded to know who broke the window while he was out of the room, but the students understandably were unforthcoming.

adjective

623. implausible:

describing a statement that is not believable.

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

verb

624. behooves:

to be one's duty or obligation.

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

adjective

625. derelict:

(of a person) not doing one's duties.

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

verb

626. lacerate:

deeply hurt the feelings of; distress.

The teacher was fired for lacerating a student who wrote a poor essay. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

627. resurgent:

rising again as to new life and vigor.

The team sank to fourth place in June, but is now resurgent and about to win the division.

verb

628. exalt:

praise or glorify.

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

noun

629. parvenu:

a person who has suddenly become wealthy, but not socially accepted as part of a higher class.

The theater was full of parvenus who each thought that they were surrounded by true aristocrats.

verb

630. debase:

reduce the quality or value of something.

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

adverb

631. assiduously:

with care and persistence.

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

noun

632. malady:

a disease or sickness.

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

noun

633. recrimination:

mutual accusations.

The two brothers sat and cried, pointing fingers and making elaborate recriminations of the other's guilt.

verb

634. disenfranchise:

deprive of voting rights.

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

adjective

635. transient:

lasting a very short time.

The unpredictable and transient nature of déjà vu makes it a very difficult phenomenon to study properly.

adjective

636. rustic:

characteristic of rural life; awkwardly simple and provincial.

The vacation cabin had no electricity and no indoor plumbing, but despite these inconveniences, Nigel adored its rustic charm.

verb

637. pontificate:

talk in a dogmatic and pompous manner.

The vice-president would often pontificate about economic theory, as if no one else in the room were qualified to speak on the topic. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

638. convivial:

describing a lively atmosphere.

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

adjective

639. untrammelled:

not confined or limited.

The whole notion of living untrammelled inspired the American Revolution and was enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

adjective

640. tempered:

moderated in effect.

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

noun

641. duress:

compulsory force or threat.

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

adjective

642. brazen:

unrestrained by convention or propriety.

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

verb

643. circumscribe:

restrict or confine.

Their tour of South America was circumscribed so that they saw only popular destinations and avoided the dangerous parts of cities. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

644. myriad:

a large indefinite number.

There are a myriad of internet sites hawking pills that claim to boost energy for hours on end.

adjective

645. cosmopolitan:

comprising many cultures; global in reach and outlook.

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

noun

646. surfeit:

an excessive amount of something.

There was no such thing as a surfeit of shopping for Nancy--she could stay at the outlet stores from opening to closing time.

adjective

647. embroiled:

involved in argument or contention.

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

verb

648. banish:

expel from a community, residence, or location; drive away The most difficult part of the fast was banishing thoughts of food.

This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE

noun

649. chimera:

something desired or wished for but is only an illusion and impossible to achieve Many believe that a world free of war is a chimera--a dream that ignores humanity's violent tendencies.

This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

650. flag:

droop, sink, or settle from or as if from pressure or loss of tautness; become less intense After the three crushing defeats in the last three games, the team's enthusiasm began to flag.

This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

651. elaborate:

marked by complexity and richness of detail.

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

noun

652. hodgepodge:

a confusing mixture or jumble.

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

noun

653. reprobate:

a person who is disapproved of.

Those old reprobates drinking all day down by the river--they are not going to amount to much.

adjective

654. phantasmagorical:

illusive; unreal.

Those suffering from malaria fall into a feverish sleep, their world a whirligig of phantasmagoria; if they recover, they are unsure of what actually took place and what was simply a product of their febrile imaginations.

adjective

655. pastoral:

relating to the countryside in a pleasant sense.

Those who imagine America's countryside as a pastoral region are often disappointed to learn that much of rural U.S. is filled with cornfields extending as far as the eye can see.

noun

656. contrition:

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

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

verb

657. chastise:

to reprimand harshly.

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

adjective

658. exacting:

requiring and demanding accuracy.

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

adjective

659. precocious:

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

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

adjective

660. histrionic:

to be overly theatrical.

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

adjective

661. magisterial:

offensively self-assured or given to exercising unwarranted power.

Though she was only a third grade teacher, Ms. Martinet was magisterial in dealing with her class, lording over them like a queen. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

662. execrate:

to curse and hiss at.

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

verb

663. inure:

to make accustomed to something unpleasant.

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

verb

664. dog:

to pursue relentlessly; to hound.

Throughout his life, he was dogged by insecurities that inhibited personal growth. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

665. emulate:

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

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

verb

666. bowdlerize:

edit by omitting or modifying parts considered indelicate.

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

verb

667. stem:

to hold back or limit the flow or growth of something.

To stem the tide of applications, the prestigious Ivy requires that each applicant score at least 330 on the Revised GRE. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

668. vacuous:

devoid of intelligence, matter, or significance.

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

noun

669. jargon:

a characteristic language of a particular group.

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

noun

670. mendicant:

a pauper who lives by begging.

Tolstoy was an aristocrat, but he strove to understand the Christianity of the Russian peasants by wandering among them as a mendicant.

adjective

671. didactic:

instructive (especially excessively).

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

adjective

672. belligerent:

characteristic of one eager to fight.

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

adjective

673. inviolable:

never to be broken, infringed, or dishonored.

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

adjective

674. penurious:

lacking money; poor.

Truly penurious, Mary had nothing more than a jar full of pennies.

adjective

675. consummate:

having or revealing supreme mastery or skill.

Tyler was the consummate musician: he was able to play the guitar, harmonica, and the drum at the same time. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

676. munificent:

very generous.

Uncle Charley was known for his munificence, giving all seven of his nephews lavish Christmas presents each year.

noun

677. largess:

extreme generosity and giving.

Uncle Frank was known for his largess, so his nephew was sad when he did not receive a present for his birthday.

adjective

678. incontrovertible:

necessarily or demonstrably true; impossible to deny or disprove.

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

adjective

679. errant:

to be wandering; not sticking to a circumscribed path.

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

adjective

680. provisional:

under terms not final or fully worked out or agreed upon.

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

adjective

681. hegemony:

dominance over a certain area.

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

noun

682. chauvinism:

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

Vegetarians argue that man is chauvinistic in his belief that animals do not consciously feel the pain we humans do. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

683. pittance:

a small amount (of money).

Vinny's uncle beamed smugly about how he'd offered his nephew fifty dollars for his Harvard tuition; even twice the amount would have been a mere pittance.

adjective

684. unruly:

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

Walk in to any preschool and I am sure that you will find an unruly and chaotic scene--unless it's nap time.

verb

685. chortle:

to chuckle, laugh merrily.

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

noun

686. gumption:

resourcefulness and determination.

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

adjective

687. penurious:

miserly.

Warren Buffett, famous multi-billionaire, still drives a cheap sedan, not because he is penurious, but because luxury cars are gaudy and impractical.

noun

688. celerity:

speed, rapidity.

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

verb

689. begrudge:

to give reluctantly.

We never begrudge money spent on ourselves.

adjective

690. fractious:

irritable and is likely to cause disruption.

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

verb

691. renege:

fail to fulfill a promise or obligation.

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

noun

692. temperance:

the trait of avoiding excesses.

Welles wasn't known for his temperance--he usually ate enough for two and drank enough for three.

noun

693. travesty:

an absurd presentation of something; a mockery.

What I expected to be an intelligent, nuanced historical documentary turned out to be a poorly-produced travesty of the form.

adjective

694. carping:

persistently petty and unjustified criticism.

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

verb

695. snub:

refuse to acknowledge; reject outright and bluntly.

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

adjective

696. unprecedented:

having never been done or known before; novel.

When America first created its national parks, the idea of setting aside the most beautiful land in a country was unprecedented in the history of mankind.

verb

697. hedge:

to limit or qualify a statement; to avoid making a direct statement.

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

definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

698. relegate:

assign to a lower position.

When Dexter was unable to fulfill his basic duties, instead of firing him, the boss relegated him to kitchen cleanup.

noun

699. check:

the condition of being held back or limited.

When government abuses are not kept in check, that government is likely to become autocratic. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

700. diminutive:

very small.

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

verb

701. incense:

make furious.

When Herb bought football tickets for a game on the day of their wedding anniversary, Jill was incensed. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

verb

702. expunge:

to eliminate completely.

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

noun

703. profusion:

the property of being extremely abundant.

When Maria reported that she had been visited by Jesus Christ and had proof, a profusion of reporters and journalists descended on the town.

adjective

704. smug:

marked by excessive complacency or self-satisfaction.

When Phil was dating the model, he had a smug attitude that annoyed his buddies.

adjective

705. demonstrative:

given to or marked by the open expression of emotion.

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

adjective

706. portentous:

ominously prophetic.

When the captain and more than half the officers were sick on the very first night of the voyage, many of the passengers felt this was portentous, but the rest of the voyage continued without any problems.

noun

707. prognostication:

a statement made about the future.

When the Senator was asked about where the negotiations would lead, he said that any guess he could make would be an unreliable prognostication.

verb

708. guffaw:

laugh boisterously.

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

adverb

709. amuck:

in a frenzied or uncontrolled state.

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

adjective

710. moribund:

being on the point of death; declining rapidly losing all momentum in progress

Whether you like it or not, jazz as a genre is moribund at best, possibly already dead.

adjective

711. choleric:

prone to outbursts of temper; easily angered.

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

adjective

712. mordant:

biting and caustic in thought, manner, or style.

While Phil frequently made mordant remarks about company policy overall, he always was considerably gentler in discussing any person in particular.

verb

713. brook:

put up with something or somebody unpleasant.

While she was at the chalkboard, the teacher did not brook any form of talking--even a tiny peep resulted in afternoon detention. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

noun

714. semblance:

an outward or token appearance or form that is deliberately misleading.

While the banker maintained a semblance of respectability in public, those who knew him well were familiar with his many crimes.

verb

715. bemoan:

express discontent or a strong regret.

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

verb

716. abjure:

formally reject or give up (as a belief).

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

noun

717. panacea:

hypothetical remedy for all ills or diseases; a universal solution.

While the company credit card has made most large purchases easier, it is no panacea: some smaller basic transactions still must be conducted in cash.

adjective

718. complicit:

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

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

verb

719. underscore:

give extra weight to (a communication).

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

adjective

720. inviolate:

must be kept sacred.

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

adjective

721. vehement:

marked by extreme intensity of emotions or convictions.

While the other employees responded to the bad news in a measured way, Andrew responded in a vehement manner, tipping over his desk and shouting at the top of his lungs.

verb

722. vie:

compete for something.

While the other teams in the division actively vie for the championship, this team seems content simply to go through the motions of playing.

verb

723. advocate:

speak, plead, or argue in favor of.

While the senator privately approved of gay marriage, he was unwilling to advocate for the cause in a public venue. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.

adjective

724. vitriolic:

harsh or corrosive in tone.

While the teacher was more moderate in her criticism of the other student's papers, she was vitriolic toward Peter's paper, casting every flaw in the harshest light.

noun

725. travail:

use of physical or mental energy; hard work; agony or anguish.

While they experienced nothing but travails in refinishing the kitchen, they completed the master bedroom in less than a weekend.

adjective

726. fastidious:

overly concerned with details; fussy.

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

noun

727. apathy:

an absence of emotion or enthusiasm.

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

adjective

728. anodyne:

inoffensive.

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

noun

729. apothegm:

a short, pithy instructive saying.

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

adjective

730. harried:

troubled persistently especially with petty annoyances.

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

adjective

731. insolvent:

unable to pay one's bills; bankrupt.

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

adjective

732. savvy:

well-informed or perceptive.

With his savvy business partner, the company was able to turn a profit within a year.

adjective

733. unpropitious:

(of a circumstance) with little chance of success.

With only a bottle of water and a sandwich, the hikers faced an unpropitious task: ascending a huge mountain that took most two days to climb.

verb

734. betray:

to reveal or make known something, usually unintentionally.

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

noun

735. calumny:

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

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

adjective

736. sanguine:

cheerful; optimistic.

With the prospect of having to learn 3,000 words during the course of the summer, Paul was anything but sanguine.

adjective

737. bumbling:

lacking physical movement skills, especially with the hands

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

adjective

738. leery:

openly distrustful and unwilling to confide.

Without checking his references and talking to previous employers, I am leery of hiring the candidate.

adjective

739. unprepossessing:

creating an unfavorable or neutral first impression.

World leaders coming to meet Gandhi would expect a towering sage, and often would be surprised by the unprepossessing little man dressed only in a loincloth and shawl.

verb

740. gerrymander:

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

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

adjective

741. bereft:

sorrowful through loss or deprivation.

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

noun

742. charlatan:

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

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