

SAT

Vocabulary:

REPEAT OFFENDERS

Master 700 of the most commonly occurring SAT words.



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Welcome!

Welcome to PowerScore's free e-book featuring 700 of the most commonly occurring SAT words. These words were first published in the *PowerScore SAT Reading Bible*, but we have provided them free to our students and potential customers to help streamline your study and make the time you invest more effective.

After each SAT administration, we compile a list of vocabulary words that appear in both Sentence Completion and Passage-Based Reading questions and answer choices. Then we compare those words to the words on our Repeat Offender lists. The results reveal that we consistently prepare students for 40% to 50% of the words tested on any given SAT. This is an extremely high rate of return compared to other similar products on the market, but we're the only company providing these words for free.

The vocabulary lists in this book were created from the analysis of over 60 previously administered SAT and PSAT tests. The most commonly-occurring words were then sorted and organized first by their frequency, then by their difficulty or concept. We recommend you learn the words from these lists in the following order:

1. PowerScore's Top 200 Repeat Offenders
2. PowerScore's Top 100 Easy Repeat Offenders
3. PowerScore's Top 100 Medium Repeat Offenders
4. PowerScore's Top 100 People Repeat Offenders
5. PowerScore's Top 100 Hard Repeat Offenders
6. PowerScore's Top 100 Extreme Repeat Offenders

Only study the words that are unfamiliar to you. Once you know a word, remove it from your list to avoid redundant studying.

These words are also available in printable form, as both a book and flash cards, on our website at www.powerscore.com/satreadingbible.

If you have any questions about the Repeat Offenders or one of PowerScore's highly-rated courses or publications, please do not hesitate to contact us at sat@powerscore.com.

PowerScore Strategies for Studying Vocabulary Words

- 1. Write out the words and their meanings.**
Transferring the words and their definitions to paper helps transfer the information into your long-term memory.
- 2. Write new sentences for each word.**
Similarly, using the word in context helps cement its meaning.
- 3. Draw a picture representing the word.**
Pictures can create a connection to the definition, and students who are visual learners are sure to prefer this method of vocabulary study.
- 4. Type the words and definitions.**
Type each word list into a word processing document or spreadsheet. Then try to define them without looking at the definitions.
- 5. Write a short story using 10 or 20 vocabulary words.**
Trying to create a context for each word is sure to help you remember its definition on test day.
- 6. Read the word aloud and say it in a sentence.**
Some audio learners find it easier to learn when they hear information. Record yourself for later playback.
- 7. Analyze the roots, prefixes, and suffixes.**
Can you find words that have the same suffix? If so, do they mean the same thing in both words? Learning to associate words with related words can help you solve even the toughest test questions.
- 8. Group words by meaning.**
Many SAT words have similar meanings. Organize your words or flashcards or your lists so that you associate a meaning, such as “lacking money” or “friendly” with all of the words in the group.
- 9. Have someone quiz you.**
Ask a friend or parent to quiz you using your list or flashcards.
- 10. Write your own vocabulary quizzes.**
Experts believe people learn best when they teach, so here is your chance! Write your own vocabulary quizzes and then take the them a week or two later.

Everyone has unique learning styles and some methods are more efficient than others. Select the strategy or strategies from this list that have been most successful for you in the past. The more ways you learn the words, the more likely you will retain the definitions.

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PowerScore's Top 200 Repeat Offenders

In the survey of previously administered SATs and PSATs, these words appeared on 10% to 50% of all tests.

abstract: (vb) to draw or take away

Although Abby never mentioned her childhood, John abstracted from the conversation that she had a strict upbringing.

acquire: (vb) to come into possession of

The captive dolphin has acquired a taste for freshwater perch, a fish not found in its normal habitat.

Word Forms: acquirable, acquirability, acquirement, acquirer, acquiree

Related Words: acquisition

adversary: (n) an opponent or enemy

The character's adversary plotted to embarrass her during the homecoming dance.

Word Forms: adversarial, adversarious, adversariness

Related Words: adverse, adversity, averse

advocate: (vb) to argue in favor of

Adam advocated for longer lunch hours when he was elected class president.

Word Forms: advocate (n.), advocacy, advocative, advocatory, advocator

aesthetic: (adj) relating to beauty

Alaina chose this church because of its aesthetic qualities; it was the most beautiful wedding chapel she had ever seen.

Word Forms: aesthetically, aesthetics (n.), aestheticize, aesthete, aesthetician

Antonym Forms: unaesthetic

allege: (vb) to declare without proof

The teacher alleged that Allie cheated on the test, even though he had no proof.

Word Forms: allegeable, allegation, alleged, allegedly, allegor

alleviate: (vb) to provide relief; to make easier

The medicine was created to alleviate headaches.

Word Forms: alleviation, alleviant, alleviative, alleviatory, alleviator

allude: (vb) to make an indirect reference to

Mrs. Alvarez alluded to a pop quiz on Monday, but would not confirm or deny its occurrence.

Word Forms: allusion, allusive, allusively

ambiguous: (adj) open to more than one interpretation

Amber's ambiguous reply left me wondering where she had been all night.

Word Forms: ambiguously, ambiguousness, ambiguity

Antonym Forms: unambiguous, unambiguously, unambiguity

ambivalent: (adj) having mixed feelings

Ambrose is ambivalent about attending college, which is why his applications still aren't completed.

Word Forms: ambivalently, ambivalence, ambivalency

amiable: (adj) friendly

The amiable celebrity was known for his willingness to sign autographs and visit with his fans.

Word Forms: amiably, amiability, amiableness

Antonym Forms: unamiable

Related Words: amicable

analogous: (*adj*) corresponding; similar

The analogous relationship between the brain and a computer has been the subject of many movies.

Word Forms: analogously, analogousness, analogy, analogue, analogize, analogic, analogically, analogicalness, analogist

anecdote: (*n*) a short account of an amusing incident

The speaker used a anecdote about his dog to humorously illustrate why loyalty is important.

Word Forms: anecdotal, anecdotally, anecdotalic, anecdotically, anecdotist

Related Words: anecdotage

antagonize: (*vb*) to provoke or display hostility

Annie antagonized her little brother by knocking over his tower of toy bricks.

Word Forms: antagonizable, antagonistic, antagonistically, antagonism, antagonist

Antonym Forms: protagonism, protagonist

anthropology: (*n*) the study of the origins, behavior, and culture of human beings

In my anthropology class we studied the development of culture in ancient Egypt.

Word Forms: anthropologic, anthropological, anthropologically, anthropologist

archaeology: (*n*) the study of prehistoric people and their cultures

His interest in Native American archaeology led to a large collection of arrowheads.

Word Forms: archaeologic, archaeological, archaeologically, archaeologist

arrogant: (*adj*) having feelings of excessive pride and self-worth

The arrogant soccer player thought he was too important to waste time meeting his fans.

Word Forms: arrogantly, arrogance, arrogancy

articulate: (*adj*) clearly pronounced; well-spoken

The articulate carpenter clearly expressed his concerns to the architect.

Word Forms: articulate (*vb.*), articulately, articulation, articulateness, articulative, articulator

Antonym Forms: inarticulate, inarticulately, inarticulation, inarticulateness

ascertain: (*vb*) to make certain

The detective was able to ascertain the suspect's whereabouts on the night of the burglary through surveillance video.

Word Forms: ascertainable, ascertainableness, ascertainably, ascertainment, ascertainment

aspiration: (*n*) a desire to succeed

The military medic had aspirations of becoming a doctor after his tour of duty.

Word Forms: aspirational, aspire, aspiringly, aspirer

assert: (*vb*) to state confidently

Sam asserted his innocence when interviewed by the principal, swearing that he had nothing to do with the senior prank.

Word Forms: assertedly, assertion, assertional, assertible, asserter

Related Words: assertive, assertory

assume: (*vb*) to accept as true without proof

Important Note: Assumptions made by an author are key components of reading questions. On the SAT, assumptions are unstated propositions that are accepted as true. You must be able to identify assumptions in order to form conclusions based on those assumptions. Consider the following sentence:

Mrs. Crawford will cancel the field trip next week if we continue to misbehave in class.

- Fact: We have previously misbehaved in class.
- Assumption: Field trips are fun.

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- Assumption: Mrs. Crawford has the authority to cancel the trip.

astute: (*adj*) intelligent and clever

An astute student figures out his English teacher's favorite novel and then reads it for his book report.

Word Forms: astutely, astuteness

augment: (*vb*) to enlarge or increase

In an effort to augment her paper on William Faulkner, Audrey added three pages about the author's childhood.

Word Forms: augmentation, augmentable, augmentative, augmentatively, augments

autonomy: (*n*) independence

The Confederate states fought to gain autonomy from the Union during the Civil War.

Word Forms: autonomous, autonomously, autonomist

avid: (*adj*) enthusiastic

Alvin is an avid baseball card collector, having amassed over ten thousand cards.

Word Forms: avidly, avidness

Related Words: avidious

belie: (*vb*) to misrepresent

Her soft voice belies her aggressive demeanor.

Word Forms: belier

Related Words: lie

benevolent: (*adj*) charitable; kind

The benevolent nun spent her entire life working with the poor.

Word Forms: benevolently, benevolence, benevolence

Related Words: benefactor, benefit

bewilder: (*vb*) to puzzle

Bea was bewildered by the puzzle; no matter how hard she concentrated, she could not find a solution.

Word Forms: bewilderedly, bewilderingly, bewilderness, bewilderment

bolster: (*vb*) to support and strengthen

The manager hoped to bolster the morale of his sales team by creating an incentive program.

Word Forms: bolster (*n.*), bolsterer

callous: (*adj*) insensitive; emotionally hardened

The senator's callous indifference to the suffering of the people in the war-torn country cost him reelection.

Word Forms: callously, callousness

Related Words: callus

camaraderie: (*n*) friendship

The camaraderie among the soldiers lasted long after the end of the second World War; the men kept in touch and met for reunions for over forty years.

Related Words: comrade

candid: (*adj*) open and straightforward

Much to my surprise, Candace was quite candid when talking about the private traumas of her childhood.

Word Forms: candidly, candidness

cantankerous: (*adj*) ill-tempered and unwilling to cooperate

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The cantankerous old man took the little boy's sucker and refused to give it back.

Word Forms: cantankerously, cantankerousness

capricious: (*adj*) apt to change suddenly

Cane's capricious personality made him a fun friend but a terrible boss; social spontaneity was exciting but workplace unpredictability was frustrating.

Word Forms: capriciously, capriciousness, caprice

censure: (*n*) strong disapproval

High school teachers voiced their censure of the novel, citing several reasons for leaving it off the summer reading list.

Word Forms: censure (vb.), censureless, censurable, censurably, censurability, censurer

Related Words: censor

coherent: (*adj*) clear and logical

Kobe began recycling when his daughter made a coherent argument about the money and energy he would save.

Word Forms: coherently, cohere, coherence, coherency

Antonym Forms: incoherent, incoherently, incoherence

Related Words: cohesive, cohesion

collaborate: (*vb*) to work together

Colleen and Curtis collaborated on the book; Colleen wrote the stories and Curtis illustrated the scenes.

Word Forms: collaboration, collaborative, collaboratively, collaborator

commend: (*vb*) to praise

Corey was commended for returning the wallet he found at the mall.

Word Forms: commendable, commendably, commendingly, commendableness, commendation, commendatory, commender

Related Words: recommend

complacent: (*adj*) contented to a fault with oneself or one's actions

After twenty years of teaching, Mr. Compton had become complacent, failing to keep up with new trends in education.

Word Forms: complacently, complacence, complacency, complacential

conciliate: (*vb*) to win over; to make peace

The manager was able to conciliate the angry customer by offering her a fifty dollar gift certificate.

Word Forms: conciliable, conciliation, conciliatory, conciliatorily, conciliatoriness

Related Words: reconcile

concise: (*adj*) expressing much in few words

Your essay should be concise; be sure to remove any unnecessary words and sentences.

Word Forms: concisely, conciseness, concision

condemn: (*vb*) to express strong disapproval of

By 1800, slavery was condemned in many of the northern states.

Word Forms: condemnably, condemnable, condemnably, condemnatory, condemnation, condemnee, condemner, condemnor

Related Words: damn

condescend: (*vb*) to behave as if lowering oneself to an inferior level

Constance believed that her wealth permitted her to be rude and arrogant; she refused to condescend to speak to the bell boy at the upscale hotel.

Word Forms: condescending (adj.), condescendingly, condescension, condescensive, condescensively

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Related Words: descend

condone: (vb) to excuse, overlook, or make allowances for

The honor code states that you condone cheating by not reporting it to a teacher.

Word Forms: condonable, condonance, condonation, condoner

constrain: (vb) to hold back

The size of the small aquarium will constrain the growth of the turtle.

Word Forms: constrainable, constrainably, constrainedly, constrainingly, constraint, constrainer

Related Words: strain

contempt: (n) scorn or open disrespect

Connie was looked upon with contempt by her peers when she was discovered spreading rumors about them.

Word Forms: contemptible, contemptibility, contemptibleness, contemptibility, contemptuous, contemptuously, contemptuousness

Related Words: contemn

conventional: (adj) following accepted customs and behaviors

Consuelo favored conventional wedding vows, while Callie wanted to break tradition and write her own.

Word Forms: conventionally, convention, conventionality, conventional, conventionalize, conventionalist

Antonym Forms: unconventional, unconventionally, unconventionality

convoluted: (adj) complicated

Connor was unable to finish the seventeenth-century novel due to the convoluted language of the period.

Word Forms: convolutedly, convolutedness

Related Words: involuted

corroborate: (vb) to confirm or support with evidence

Coral's thesis was corroborated by three supporting paragraphs, each presenting an example that proved her main idea.

Word Forms: corroborated, corroboration, corroborative, corroboratively, corroboratory, corroborant, corroborator

Antonym Forms: uncorroborated

cunning: (pos) deceptive and sly

The cunning fox slipped into the henhouse when the farmer left the barn and went back to the house.

Word Forms: cunning (n.), cunningly, cunningness

Antonym Forms: uncunning, uncunningly, uncunningness

cynical: (adj) distrusting and pessimistic

Cyndi's cynical attitude made it hard for her to believe in anyone's good intentions.

Word Forms: cynically, cynicism, cynic

dearth: (n) a lack in supply

During the Second World War, the dearth of male baseball players led to the creation of a women's baseball league.

debunk: (vb) to prove untrue

The reporter debunked the urban legend about the witch in the woods by revealing wild goats as the sources of the noises.

Word Forms: debunker

decry: (vb) to express strong disapproval of

The politician decryed the injustices suffered by the people of the nation.

Word Forms: decrier, decrial

Related Words: cry

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deject: (vb) to lower someone's spirits; make downhearted

The news of her father's declining condition dejected Denise, as she had been sure his health was starting to improve.

Word Forms: dejected (adj.), dejectedly, dejectedness, dejectory, dejection

Related Words: reject, eject

denounce: (vb) to openly speak out against

The sports reporter denounced the professional football team for raising ticket prices again.

Word Forms: denouncement, denunciate, denunciatory, denunciative, denunciation, denouncer

Related Words: announce, pronounce, renounce

depict: (vb) to represent or show

The author depicts the historical figure as a charming but manipulative woman.

Word Forms: depictive, depiction, depicter

Related Words: depicture, picture

deride: (vb) to ridicule

The unsupportive team captain derided Desiree's attempts to make the volleyball squad.

Word Forms: deridingly, derision, derisive, derisible, derider

differentiate: (vb) to mark as different

It is easy to differentiate between the twins; Daisy has blond hair and Daphne has red hair.

Word Forms: differentiation, differential, differentially Antonym Form: undifferentiated Related Word: different

digress: (vb) to wander away, especially from the main subject of writing or speaking

When Diane was describing the floats in yesterday's parade, she digressed into a story from her childhood.

Word Forms: digressingly, digression, digressional, digressory, digresser

Related Words: progress (vb.)

diligent: (adj) detailed and persistent

The diligent editor was praised for her ability to find errors in even the most pain-staking text.

Word Forms: diligently, diligence, diligency

Antonym Forms: negligent

diminish: (vb) to decrease in size, extent, or range

The loud music from the party next door diminished after the police showed up.

Word Forms: diminishable, diminishment

discern: (vb) to perceive or understand with sight or other senses

The captain discerned another ship in the fog.

Word Forms: discernible, discernibly, discernment, discernibility, discernableness, discerner

Antonym Forms: indiscernible, indiscernibly, indiscernibility, indiscernibleness

disclose: (vb) to reveal or uncover

The teacher disclosed to her class the winner of the Homecoming contest before the announcement was made.

Word Forms: disclosed (adj.), disclosure, disclosable, discloser

Antonym Forms: undisclosed, undisclosed, undisclosable

disdain: (n) a lack of respect accompanied by a feeling of intense dislike

The suspect was looked upon with disdain by the detectives who investigated the terrible crime.

Word Forms: disdain (vb.), disdainful, disdainfully, disdainfulness

Related Words: deign

disillusion: (vb) to free from false beliefs

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As a young politician, Dane believed he could stop the corruption that ran through the county government, but he was quickly disillusioned by the extent of the illegal activity.

Word Forms: disillusionment, disillusionive, disillusionize, disillusionist

disingenuous: (*adj*) insincere

Denise's disingenuous apology was just an attempt to get out of her punishment; she was not truly sorry for going to the concert without permission.

Word Forms: disingenuously, disingenuousness, disingenuity

Antonym Forms: ingenuous, ingenuously, ingenuousness

Related Words: genuine

disparage: (*vb*) to belittle or criticize

My mom's feelings were hurt when I disparaged her cooking skills.

Word Forms: disparagement, disparaging (*adj.*), disparagingly, disparager

disparate: (*adj*) different and distinct

The mixture of three disparate styles—jazz, rock, and country—created a unique sound and a diverse audience.

Word Forms: disparately, disparateness

Related Words: disparity

dispute: (*vb*) to question the truth of

The church disputes the theory of evolution, instead citing religious sources of creation.

Word Forms: dispute (*n.*), disputable, disputeless, disputant, disputation, disputer

Antonym Forms: indisputable, indisputably

dogmatic: (*adj*) characterized by assertion of unproved or unprovable principles

The dogmatic scientist continued to publish his theory, despite the fact that it was unproven.

Word Forms: dogmatically, dogmaticalness, dogmatize, dogmatism, dogmatist

Related Words: dogma

dubious: (*adj*) doubtful; questionable

The candidate's dubious past came back to haunt her in the election.

Word Forms: dubiously, dubiousness, dubitable

Antonym Forms: indubious, indubiously

Related Words: doubt

eccentric: (*adj*) peculiar; odd

The eccentric woman often wore an angel halo and ballet tutu to the grocery store.

Word Forms: eccentric (*n.*), eccentricity, eccentrical, eccentrically

elicit: (*vb*) to call or bring out

The woman elicits sympathy from her audience by telling the story of her difficult childhood.

Word Forms: elicitation, elicitor

Related Words: solicit

Note: *elicit* is often confused with *illicit*, which means illegal

elite: (*adj*) selected as the best

The elite college only admitted students with the highest SAT scores.

Word Forms: elite (*n.*), elitist, elitism

eloquent: (*adj*) expressing oneself powerfully and effectively

The minister's eloquent sermon stirred the members of the church.

Word Forms: eloquently, eloquence

Antonym Forms: ineloquent, ineloquently, ineloquence

elucidate: (vb) to make clear by explanation

The story in the newspaper elucidated some of the details of the mystery that had previously raised questions.

Word Forms: elucidation, elucidative, elucidatory, elucidator

Related Words: lucid

embellish: (vb) to make better by adding details (especially false details)

When he saw the crowd losing interest in his tale, Emilio embellished the story by adding an adventure in a cave.

Word Forms: embellishment, embellisher

Antonym Forms: unembellished

empathy: (n) the understanding of another's feelings

Emma felt empathy for the victims of the earthquake, having lost her own home to a hurricane last year.

Word Forms: empathize, empathetic, empathetically

Antonym Forms: antipathy, antipathetic, antipathetically

Related Words: sympathy, apathy

emphatic: (adj) expressed with emphasis

The teacher was emphatic about the project's due date; no late assignments would be accepted.

Word Forms: emphatically, emphaticalness

Antonym Forms: unemphatic, unemphatically

Related Words: emphasis, emphasize

emulate: (vb) to imitate in order to match or excel

Emily hoped to emulate her older sister's success on the tennis court.

Word Forms: emulative, emulatively, emulation, emulator

endure: (vb) to continue despite difficulty

Enzo endured Mr. Smith's extremely boring lecture on photosynthesis.

Word Forms: enduring (adj.), enduringly, enduringness, endurance, endurer

epitome: (n) a perfect example

Paula is the epitome of a politician, with her good looks, bright smile, and charming personality.

Word Forms: epitomize, epitomical, epitomization, epitomizer

equivocal: (adj) uncertain; open to multiple interpretations

The politician's equivocal statement about the environment could support either side of the issue.

Word Forms: equivocality, equivocacy, equivocally, equivocality

Antonym Forms: unequivocal, unequivocally, unequivocalness

eradicate: (vb) to destroy

Since 1988, the worldwide effort to eradicate polio has reduced cases of the disease by over ninety-nine percent.

Word Forms: eradication, eradicated, eradicant, eradicator

erroneous: (adj) mistaken; containing error

Erin's erroneous identification of the purse snatcher led to the conviction of an innocent man.

Word Forms: erroneously, erroneousness

Related Words: error

evoke: (vb) to call forth emotions, feelings, or responses

Evan's stirring speech evoked a standing ovation from the audience.

Word Forms: evocable, evocation, evoker, evocator

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Related Words: invoke, provoke, revoke

exacerbate: (*vb*) to increase the harshness or bitterness of

My headache was exacerbated by the child playing drums on the pots and pans.

Word Forms: exacerbatingly, exacerbation

Related Words: acerbate

Note: *exacerbate* is often confused with *exasperate* (meaning to irritate).

exasperate: (*vb*) to intensely irritate

The airline passenger was exasperated by the last minute cancellation of his flight.

Word Forms: exasperatedly, exasperatingly, exasperation, exasperator

Related Words: asperate

Note: *exasperate* is often confused with *exacerbate* (meaning to increase).

exemplary: (*adj*) serving as a worthy example

The student's exemplary attendance record was recognized at the awards ceremony.

Word Forms: exemplarily, exemplariness, exemplarity, exemplar

Related Words: example, exemplify

explicit: (*adj*) clearly expressed or demonstrated

Mr. Jones left explicit directions for the substitute so he was surprised when they were not followed.

Word Forms: explicitly, explicitness

Antonym Forms: implicit, implicitly, implicitness

exploit: (*vb*) to use for one's own advantage

The company was criticized for exploiting the workers by not paying a fair wage.

Word Forms: exploitable, exploitability, exploitative, exploitative, exploitive, exploiter

Antonym Forms: unexploited

Related Words: exploit (n.)

extol: (*vb*) to praise highly

The critic extolled the works of Shakespeare, citing them as the most important contribution to the English language.

Word Forms: extollingly, extolment, extoller

flagrant: (*adj*) shockingly obvious

When the referee did not call the flagrant foul, the announcer suggested the ref needed a eye exam.

Word Forms: flagrance, flagrancy, flagrantness

foster: (*vb*) to encourage or care for

The arts foundation hopes to foster art education in the schools by donating supplies and materials.

Word Forms: fostered (adj.), fosteringly, fosterer

frugal: (*adj*) characterized by the avoidance of excessive spending

A frugal shopper will always wait for items to go on sale or clearance before purchasing them.

Word Forms: frugally, frugality, frugality

fundamental: (*adj*) essential; basic

The fundamental principle of the educational theory is that all students can learn.

Word Forms: fundamentally, fundamentality, fundamentalism, fundamentalness, fundamentalist

futile: (*adj*) useless; unproductive

Forcing the students to abide by the dress code is futile; they will continue to wear whatever they want.

Word Forms: futilely, futility, futility

generalization: (n) an opinion or conclusion formed from only a few facts or examples

Saying that freshmen are younger than sophomores is a generalization that is usually—but not always—true.

Word Forms: generalize, generalizable, generalizer

Related Words: general

gullible: (adj) easily deceived or tricked

The gullible little girl actually believed the magician made the woman disappear.

Word Forms: gullibly, gullibility

hierarchy: (n) a ranking system

As the company's newest employee, Hiram was at the bottom of the office hierarchy even though he had many more years of experience than his coworkers.

Word Forms: hierarchal, hierarchical, hierarchically, hierarchize, hierarch, hierarchist

hostile: (adj) openly opposed; showing ill-will

Several hostile threats against the suspect's lawyer were made by unidentified callers.

Word Forms: hostilely, hostility

idiosyncrasy: (n) a characteristic that is peculiar to a specific person

Some people found Ida's idiosyncrasy a source of humor, but I never made fun of her for wearing her shirt backwards.

Word Forms: idiosyncratic, idiosyncratically

illuminate: (vb) to make clear; to supply light

The presentation on the artist was illuminating; I did not know that he was originally from China.

Word Forms: illumine, illuminatingly, illumination, illuminational

Related Words: luminary

impetuous: (adj) impulsive

While at the airshow to see old war planes, Ivan made an impetuous decision to go skydiving.

Word Forms: impetuously, impetuosity, impetuosity

Related Words: impetus

implausible: (adj) not believable

The teacher did not believe his implausible excuse for not completing the assignment.

Word Forms: implausibly, implausibility, implausibility

Antonym Forms: plausible, plausibly, plausibility, plausibility

implicit: (adj) implied though not directly expressed

Although we never mentioned the fight, there seemed to be an implicit agreement not to talk about it.

Word Forms: implicitly, implicitness, implicitness

Antonym Forms: explicit, explicitly, explicitness

imply: (vb) to suggest without directly stating

Important Note: Authors frequently imply information in the reading comprehension passages. These implications usually result in multiple choice questions designed to test a student's ability to understand such indirect suggestions.

Consider an example:

When I arrived at school, I saw that all of the other students were wearing blue shirts too.

- Fact: All of the other students are wearing blue shirts.
- Implication: I am a student.
- Implication: I am wearing a blue shirt.

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improvise: (*vb*) to perform or manage without preparation or required materials
The recipe called for molasses, but because I didn't have any I had to improvise with honey.
Word Forms: improvisation, improvisational, improvisationally, improviser

incompetent: (*adj*) incapable; not qualified
The incompetent driver failed to yield, which caused the oncoming car to swerve and crash.
Word Forms: incompetent (n.), incompetently, incompetence, incompetency
Antonym Forms: competent, competently, competence, competency

incontrovertible: (*adj*) unquestionable; impossible to deny
Protesters demanded the release of the imprisoned woman, saying there was incontrovertible proof of her innocence.
Word Forms: incontrovertibly, incontrovertibility, incontrovertibility
Antonym Forms: controvertible, controvertibly, controvertibility, controvertibility, controvert

incredulous: (*adj*) skeptical; not willing to believe
The incredulous car buyer did not believe the dealer's claim that the car was accident-free; he insisted on seeing a report on the car's history.
Word Forms: incredulously, incredulousness, incredulity
Related Word: incredible
Antonym Forms: credulous, credulously, credulousness, credulity

indifferent: (*adj*) showing lack of interest, concern, or bias
The writer produced an indifferent article about the two candidates by successfully suppressing her preference.
Word Forms: indifferently, indifference

indignant: (*adj*) displaying anger due to unfairness
The seniors were indignant over their disqualification in the homecoming contest, claiming that the decision was unfair.
Word Forms: indignantly, indignation

induce: (*vb*) to lead or bring about
The presence of the washed up jellyfish induced a panic in the beachgoers, few of whom dared to venture into the water.
Word Forms: inducible, inducement, induction
Related Words: conduce, produce, seduce

indulgent: (*adj*) yielding; lenient; tolerant
The indulgent mother gave her child everything he wanted.
Word Forms: indulgently, indulgence, indulgency, indulge

infer: (*vb*) to conclude based on reasoning or evidence
Important Note: The SAT reading section will require you to make several inferences based on the passages. You must reach these conclusions through reasoning. Consider an example:
Malia had a hard time maneuvering on her crutches while carrying the open umbrella in the pouring rain.

- Inference: Malia has an injury.
- Inference: Malia is trying to avoid getting wet.

inherent: (*adj*) existing as a natural and essential characteristic
The abused dog had an inherent distrust of men, so only female volunteers at the shelter could get close to him.
Word Forms: inherently, inhere, inhere
Related Words: inherit

insight: (*n*) a clear understanding of a situation
Jane's insight into the computer problem was the result of years of working with the computer system.
Word Forms: insightful, insightfully, insightfulness

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

invoke: (*vb*) to summon into action or bring into existence

The psychic claimed that he could invoke the spirits in the house through an old-fashioned séance.

Word Forms: invocable, invocation, invocational, invoker

Related Words: evoke, provoke, revoke

irrelevant: (*adj*) unrelated; not connected

We will address the issues with our health insurance; any other complaints are irrelevant and will not be discussed.

Word Forms: irrelevantly, irrelevance, irrelevancy

Antonym Forms: relevant, relevantly, relevance, relevancy

Related Words: irrelative, relative

lament: (*vb*) to express grief; to mourn

When Lamont left for college, his little sister lamented his absence for weeks.

Word Forms: lament (n.), lamentingly, lamentable, lamentably, lamenter

Antonym Forms: unlamented

liberate: (*adj*) free; unrestrained

When the farmer accidentally left the stall door open, the liberated horse sprinted for the woods.

Word Forms: liberate, liberative, liberatory, liberation, liberator

mar: (*vb*) to make imperfect; to disfigure

My nearly-perfect report card was marred by a low grade in speech class.

Word Forms: mar (n.), marred (adj.)

Antonym Forms: unmarred

meticulous: (*adj*) extremely careful and precise with details

Miss Walter demanded meticulous essays; perfect spelling and punctuation were essential for a high grade.

Word Forms: meticulously, meticulousness, meticulousity

modest: (*adj*) displaying a moderate or ordinary opinion of one's own talents or abilities

Although Moe was a gifted athlete, he was very modest; he acted as if his contribution was average at best.

Word Forms: modestly, modesty

Antonym Forms: immodest, immodestly, immodesty

Related Word: moderate

mundane: (*adj*) ordinary and somewhat boring

While a trip to the beach had once been exciting, we went so often that it had become mundane.

Word Forms: mundanely, mundaneness, mundanity

naïve: (*adj*) inexperienced and gullible

Nan was naïve in thinking that no one looked at her online social page except her friends; her father looked at it daily.

Word Forms: naïvely, naïveness, naïveté

negligent: (*adj*) careless and neglectful

The negligent baby-sitter was caught on the videotape ignoring the cries of the helpless infant.

Word Forms: negligently, negligence, negligible, negligibly

Antonym Forms: diligent, diligently, diligence

Related Word: neglect

nostalgia: (*n*) a desire to return to the past

When I revisited my childhood home, I was surprised by the nostalgia that I felt.

Word Forms: nostalgic, nostalgically, nostalgist

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

notorious: (*adj*) well-known for unfavorable reasons
The librarian is notorious for sending students to detention.
Word Forms: notoriously, notoriousness, notoriety

objective: (*adj*) not influenced by personal feelings or bias
It is important for a judge to be objective; he cannot let his personal beliefs affect his rulings.
Word Forms: objectively, objectiveness, objectivity
Antonym Forms: unobjective, subjective, subjectively, subjectiveness, subjectivity

obscure: (*adj*) not clearly understood or expressed
Most of the movie audience did not understand the obscure reference to the other movie.
Word Forms: obscure (vb.), obscurely, obscureness, obscuredly, obscurity

obsolete: (*adj*) no longer in use
The typewriter became obsolete when the personal computer was made affordable for the general public.
Word Forms: obsoletely, obsolescence, obsolesce

oppress: (*vb*) to keep down
The dictator oppressed the lower classes by stripping them of their rights and depriving them of an income.
Word Forms: oppressingly, oppressible, oppressive, oppression, oppressor
Related Words: suppress, repress

orthodox: (*adj*) customary; traditional
Maria and Bryan chose an orthodox ceremony with the standard wedding vows and the typical progression of events.
Word Forms: orthodoxly, orthodoxness, orthodoxal, orthodoxical, orthodoxy
Antonym Forms: unorthodox, unorthodoxical, heterodox

overwhelming: (*adj*) overpowering; intense
The stench of burning popcorn was overwhelming, forcing us to evacuate to the porch.
Word Forms: overwhelmingly, overwhelm
Antonym Forms: underwhelming, underwhelmingly, underwhelm

parenthetical: (*adj*) characterized by the use of parenthesis
A remark in parenthesis is called a parenthetical remark, which is usually used to explain the sentence.
Word Forms: parenthetic, parenthetically, parentheticalness
Related Words: parentheses

partisan: (*adj*) tending to favor one group or one way of thinking
Gun control is a partisan issue; one party favors government management while the other prefers individual authority.
Word Forms: partisanship, partisanry, partisan (n.)
Antonym Forms: nonpartisan, bipartisan
Related Word: party

perpetuate: (*vb*) to cause to continue
Pacey could stop the rumor by refusing to repeat it, or perpetuate it by passing it on to his best friend.
Word Forms: perpetual, perpetually, perpetuation, perpetuity, perpetuator

perplex: (*vb*) to puzzle or confuse
Percy was perplexed by the complex puzzle and distressed that he could not find a solution.
Word Forms: perplexed (*adj.*), perplexingly, perplexity, perplexer

pertinent: (*adj*) relevant
The professor distributed a list of articles and books that were pertinent to the discussions in his course.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Forms: pertinently, pertinence, pertinency

Antonym Forms: impertinent, impertinently, impertinence, impertinency

Related Word: pertain

petty: (*adj*) of little importance; minor

Pete and I had a petty argument about which way the toilet paper should be put on the holder.

Word Forms: pettily, pettiness

phenomenon: (*n*) an occurrence, often which is impressive or unusual

Echolocation is a sensory phenomenon that is used by some animals to locate objects in their environment.

Word Forms: phenomenal, phenomenally, phenomenalize, phenom

pragmatic: (*adj*) practical; guided by practice rather than theory

When her bobby pin broke, Penelope found a pragmatic solution; she used a paper clip to hold back her stray hair.

Word Forms: pragmatical, pragmatically, pragmaticalness, pragmatism, pragmatistic, pragmatist

precedent: (*n*) an example that is used to justify similar occurrences at a later time

When I allowed Priscilla to leave early every day, I set a precedent that he could not deny to other employees.

Word Forms: precedented

Antonym Forms: unprecedented

Related Word: precede

presume: (*vb*) to accept as true without proof

I presume that you are tired after your long drive today.

Word Forms: presumption, presumable, presumably, presumedly, presumptive, presumptuous, presumer

Related Word: assume

pretense: (*n*) a false act intending to deceive

He got an interview with the pretense that he had a doctorate from Yale, but the interviewer quickly discovered the lie.

Word Forms: pretenseful, pretension, pretentious, pretentiously

Antonym Forms: pretenseless, unpretentious

Related Word: pretend

prevalent: (*adj*) widespread; commonly occurring

Bass are the most prevalent species of fish in the lake, accounting for more than half of all fish caught by anglers.

Word Forms: prevalently, prevalence, prevalentness, prevail

profound: (*adj*) deep; intense

Her profound knowledge of electricity was showcased at the science fair, where she won first place for her project.

Word Forms: profoundly, profoundness, profundity

prominent: (*adj*) important; noticeable

The senator is a prominent woman who is well-known for fighting unfair labor practices.

Word Forms: prominently, prominence, prominency

propaganda: (*n*) information that is spread for the purpose of promoting some cause

The brochure was propaganda intended to earn the community's support for the multi-million dollar project.

Word Forms: propagandism, propagandize, propagandistic, propagandistically, propagandist

provincial: (*adj*) unsophisticated and limited; associated with the country

The officer judged Prescott by his provincial dress; she assumed he was unsophisticated just because he wore overalls.

Word Forms: provincially, provincialism, provincialize, provincialist

Related Word: province

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

provocative: (*adj*) tending to rouse feelings of excitement, irritation, or anger

At the press conference, the boxer made provocative remarks intended to anger his opponent.

Word Forms: provocatively, provocativeness, provoke, provocation, provocateur Related Word: provoke

prudent: (*adj*) careful and sensible

Perry made a prudent decision when he chose not to ride home with his friend who had been drinking.

Word Forms: prudently, prudence, prudence, prudential

Antonym Forms: imprudent, imprudently, imprudence, imprudential

Related Word: prude

quell: (*vb*) to put an end to

The coach quelled the rumor that he was taking another job by signing an extension of his current contract.

Word Forms: quellable, queller

query: (*vb*) to ask

The reporter queried the mayor about his role in the embezzlement scandal.

Word Forms: query (n.), queryingly, querier

Related Words: inquire, inquiry

rebut: (*vb*) to prove false using evidence

The lawyer rebutted the witness's testimony by providing contrary evidence.

Word Forms: rebuttable, rebuttal, rebutter

Related Word: but (conj.)

reconcile: (*vb*) to make compatible; to bring into harmony

After years of separation due to an argument, the sisters reconciled when they both apologized.

Word Forms: reconciliation, reconcilingly, reconcilable, reconcilableness, reconciliation, reconciler

Antonym Form: irreconcilable

Related Word: conciliate

refute: (*vb*) to prove to be false; to deny as true

The senator refuted claims he was arrested for careless driving by publishing his flawless driving record in the paper.

Word Forms: refutable, refutably, refutability, refutation, refutal, refuter

Antonym Forms: irrefutable, irrefutably, irrefutability

reiterate: (*vb*) to say again

Since you didn't hear me the first time, let me reiterate the rules of the game.

Word Forms: reiterable, reiterative, reiteratively, reiteration, reiterator

Related Word: iterate

renounce: (*vb*) to give up; to turn away from

The king renounced the throne when he married a woman who was not accepted by the royal family.

Word Forms: renounceable, renouncement, renouncer

Related Words: announce, denounce

reprehensible: (*adj*) deserving of punishment

It's a harsh punishment, but I do not feel sorry for you; stealing from a charity is a reprehensible crime.

Word Forms: reprehensibly, reprehensibility, reprehensibleness, reprehension Related Word: reprehend

resilient: (*adj*) easily recovering or rebounding

Fire ants are resilient pests; even if you destroy their mound, they'll quickly rebuild just a few feet away.

Word Forms: resiliently, resilience, resiliency

reticent: (*adj*) inclined to keep quiet and private

Ironically, the actor once known for his outspoken behavior became reticent in later years, refusing to grant interviews.

Word Forms: reticently, reticence, reticency

revere: (*vb*) to regard with respect and awe

Paul Revere was one of many colonists who revered freedom and democracy.

Word Forms: reverable, reverent, reverently, reverence, reverential, reverer

Antonym Forms: irreverent, irreverently, irreverence

Related Word: reverend

rhetoric: (*n*) skill in using language to persuade; empty talk

The real estate agent was well-versed in the rhetoric needed to sell the broken-down house.

Word Forms: rhetorical, rhetorically, rhetoricalness

rigorous: (*adj*) rigidly accurate; strict

Reggie started a rigorous weight loss plan that consisted of a strict diet and intense exercise schedule.

Word Forms: rigorously, rigorousness, rigor

sarcasm: (*n*) cutting, ironic language intending to ridicule

When Sara said she liked Blake's car, he knew she meant the exact opposite; her sarcasm was meant to make fun of his inexpensive automobile.

Word Forms: sarcastic, sarcastically, sarcasticness, sarcastical

satire: (*n*) the use of ridicule or a work (such as an essay, play, or movie) intending to ridicule

The movie is a satire, making fun of all the teenage horror movies that came before it.

Word Forms: satiric, satirical, satirically, satiricalness, satirize, satirizable, satirization, satirizer

scorn: (*n*) a lack of respect accompanied by a feeling of intense dislike

Steve knew he deserved the scorn of his teammates after he was caught cheating, but their reaction still saddened him.

Word Forms: scorn (*vb.*), scornful, scornfully, scornfulness, scorningly, scerner

scrupulous: (*adj*) abiding by morals or strict rules

The scrupulous executive would not let the advertisement run with the misleading information printed in it.

Word Forms: scrupulously, scrupulousness, scrupulosity

Antonym Forms: unscrupulous, unscrupulously, unscrupulousness, unscrupulosity

Related Word: scruples

scrutinize: (*vb*) to inspect carefully

Ruth scrutinized the classified ads, carefully reading each of the posted jobs.

Word Forms: scrutinizingly, scrutinization, scrutiny, scrutinizer

skeptical: (*adj*) having doubt

Skip was skeptical of the car dealer's promise of free oil changes, so he asked for the offer in writing.

Word Forms: skeptically, skepticalness, skepticism, skeptic

smug: (*adj*) marked by excessive self-satisfaction

The smug senior thought that she had the homecoming election all wrapped up; however, she was beaten by a junior who was much more polite to the underclassmen.

Word Forms: smugly, smugness

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

somber: (*adj*) gloomy and serious

I could tell by the somber look on my teacher's face that something had gone terribly wrong.

Word Forms: somberly, somberness

spontaneous: (*adj*) unplanned; impulsive

When the soldier exited the airplane, the crowd at the gate broke into spontaneous applause.

Word Forms: spontaneously, spontaneousness, spontaneity

subjective: (*adj*) influenced by personal feelings or bias

Suzanne felt that her evaluation was unfairly subjective because it was clear her supervisor had a grudge against her.

Word Forms: subjectively, subjectiveness, subjectivity

Antonym Forms: objective, objectively, objectiveness, objectivity

subsequent: (*adj*) coming later; following in order

You will need to remember this basic arithmetic formula for subsequent assignments later this year.

Word Forms: subsequently, subsequentness, subsequence

Related Words: sequel, sequence

substantiate: (*vb*) to establish or strengthen

Her case against the insurance company was substantiated by other plaintiffs who suffered the same injustice.

Word Forms: substantiatable, substantiation, substantiative, substantiator Antonym Form: unsubstantiated

Related Word: substantial

subtle: (*adj*) difficult to detect

The subtle irony throughout the novel is missed by most readers.

Word Forms: subtly, subtleness, subtlety

Antonym Forms: unsubtle, unsubtly

superficial: (*adj*) on the surface; shallow; not significant

The officer was grazed by the bullet but luckily the wound was superficial and didn't require stitches.

Word Forms: superficially, superficialness, superficiality, superficialize, superficialist

superfluous: (*adj*) having more than needed or wanted; excessive

The lawyer's continuing arguments were superfluous, as the jury had already reached a verdict.

Word Forms: superfluously, superfluousness, superfluity

supplant: (*vb*) to replace or take the place of

In the early 1990s, compact discs supplanted long-playing records.

Word Forms: supplantation, supplanter

suppress: (*vb*) to stop; to control

The news anchor suppressed a smile when the reporter fell, but laughed hysterically as soon as she went off the air.

Word Forms: suppressedly, suppressible, suppressive, suppressively, suppression, suppressor

Related Word: oppress, repress

sustain: (*vb*) to uphold as valid

The critic sustained that the performance was superb, even though his peers thought it fell short of expectations.

Word Forms: sustainable, sustainability, sustainedly, sustainingly, sustainment Related Word: maintain

temperate: (*adj*) moderate; not extreme

The plants prefer a temperate climate—not too hot and not too cold.

Word Forms: temperately, temperateness, temperance, temper (*vb*.)

Antonym Forms: intemperate, intemperately, intemperateness

tenacious: (*adj*) unyielding; stubborn

The tenacious defense refused to let the opponent score.

Word Forms: tenaciously, tenaciousness, tenacity

trivial: (*adj*) small and of little importance

The documentary on poverty reminded me that my own financial issues are trivial compared to the those of others.

Word Forms: trivially, trivialness, trivialize Related Word: trivia

tyranny: (*n*) dominance through threat of punishment and violence

The leader ruled by tyranny, threatening to imprison any people who spoke out against the government.

Word Forms: tyrannical, tyrannically, tyrannicize, tyrannous, tyrant

undermine: (*vb*) to weaken

My argument for a soda machine in school was undermined by the ill-timed report on teenage obesity.

Word Forms: underminingly, underminer

underscore: (*vb*) to emphasize

The recent dorm room fire underscores the need for fire extinguishers in every room.

Word Forms: underscore (*n*.)

Related Word: underline

venerated: (*adj*) highly respected

The venerated teacher had earned the respect of his students by helping them meet the high expectations he set for them.

Word Forms: venerate, venerable, venerably, venerability, veneration, venerationally, venerator

vigor: (*n*) healthy, energetic strength

The kitten attacked the ball of paper with vigor, powerfully batting it across the room.

Word Forms: vigorous, vigorously, vigorousness

Related Word: invigorate

vindicate: (*vb*) to clear, justify, or prove

Vinnie's victory in court vindicated his actions; it proved he was allowed to build a privacy fence between the two houses.

Word Forms: vindication, vindicator

Related Word: vindictive

vulnerable: (*adj*) capable of being wounded or attacked

Without their mother's protection, the baby rabbits are vulnerable to attack by birds, rodents, and other small mammals.

Word Forms: vulnerably, vulnerability, vulnerableness

Antonym Forms: invulnerable, invulnerably, invulnerability, invulnerableness

wary: (*adj*) watchful; distrustful

The children were taught to be wary of strangers.

Word Forms: warily, wariness

Antonym Forms: unwary, unwarily, unwariness

whimsical: (*adj*) characterized by carefree impulses

The baby-sitter's whimsical personality meant that the kids were never bored; one minute they were making peanut butter cookies, and the next they were reenacting a scene from a famous play.

Word Forms: whimsically, whimsicality

Related Words: whim, whimsy

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

zealous: (*adj*) enthusiastic and devoted

The zealous sports fan had a tattoo of his favorite team's logo on his ankle.

Word Forms: zealously, zealousness, zealot

Related Word: zeal

PowerScore's Top 100 Easy Repeat Offenders

In the survey of previously administered SATs and PSATs, these basic vocabulary words appeared frequently.

accessible: (*adj*) easy to approach, obtain, or use

The restaurant failed because it wasn't in an accessible location; many customers complained about how difficult it was to get there.

Word Forms: access, accessibly, accessibility

Antonym Forms: inaccessible, inaccessibly, inaccessibility

adhere: (*vb*) to stick to; to follow through

Once you sign the athletic code of conduct, you must adhere to school rules in order to be eligible for the team.

Word Forms: adherable, adherence, adherent, adherer

Antonym Form: inadherent

Related Words: adhesive, adhesion:

alienate: (*vb*) to create hostility or indifference

Allen alienated his classmates by insulting them and refusing to participate in group activities.

Word Forms: alienation, alienative, alienator

Related Word: alien

animated: (*adj*) lively and spirited

The storyteller used animated gestures to help tell the exciting tale.

Word Forms: animate, animately, animateness, animatingly, animation

Antonym Forms: inanimate, inanimately

apt: (*adj*) intelligent

The apt student scored a 780 on the math section of the SAT.

Word Forms: aptly, aptness

Antonym Forms: inapt, inaptly, inaptness

Related Words: aptitude, inaptitude

arbitrate: (*vb*) to judge or decide

The teacher arbitrated the dispute between the juniors and seniors concerning prom decorations.

Word Forms: arbitrate, arbitrator, arbiter Related Word: arbitrary

atypical: (*adj*) not typical

Mr. Ericksen was an atypical teacher; he never gave homework or used textbooks.

Word Forms: atypically, atypicality

Antonym Forms: typical, typically, typicality

audible: (*adj*) able to be heard

Audrey's murmur was just audible enough for Ms. Frank to have heard.

Word Forms: audibly, audibility, audibleness

Antonym Forms: inaudible, inaudibly, inaudibility, inaudibleness

aversion: (*n*) a feeling of intense dislike

Ava's aversion to dogs stemmed from an incident in her childhood when she was bit by a stray terrier.

Word Forms: aversive, aversively, averse, aversely Related Word: adverse, avert

avert: (*vb*) to turn away or to prevent

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

I knew my sister was lying because she averted her eyes when I asked her about the rip in my shirt.

Word Forms: avertable, avertedly, averter

Related Word: aversion

awestruck: (*adj*) filled with an overwhelming feeling of wonder

Unable to speak or move, I was awestruck in the presence of the rock star.

Word Form: awestricken

Related Words: awe, awesome

baffle: (*vb*) to confuse or puzzle

Unable to find the solution, Buffy was baffled by the puzzle.

Word Forms: bafflement, baffling (*adj.*), baffingly, bafflingness, baffler Antonym Form: un baffled

caricature: (*n*) a representation of a person that is exaggerated for comic effect

At the amusement park, Caroline had a caricature drawn in which the artist gave her a big head on a little body.

Word Forms: caricature (*vb.*), caricaturable, caricatural, caricaturist

catastrophic: (*adj*) extremely harmful; disastrous

The hurricane was catastrophic, destroying hundreds of homes and causing millions of dollars in damage.

Word Forms: catastrophic, catastrophically, catastrophe

circumscribed: (*adj*) restricted

Her driving privileges are circumscribed by the state; she is only allowed to drive at night if she is returning from work.

Word Forms: circumscribable, circumscriber

Related Word: circle

clarity: (*n*) clearness

Clarence could recall the woman with clarity; she was short, with blond hair and a small birthmark on her right temple.

Related Words: clarify

commemorate: (*vb*) to honor the memory of, usually with a ceremony or memorial

The mayor commemorated the fallen soldiers by renaming the town park in their honor.

Word Forms: commemorable, commemoration, commemorative, commemoratively, commemorator

Related Word: memory

concord: (*n*) agreement

There was complete concord among all the jury members that the defendant was guilty.

Word Forms: concordal, concordance, concordant, concordantly

Antonym Form: discord

Related Word: concur, accord, cordial

conducive: (*adj*) favorable; contributing to

Plenty of water and sunlight are conducive to a healthy garden.

Word Forms: conduciveness, conduce, conducive, conductingly

Antonym Forms: inconducive

Related Word: conduct

conformity: (*n*) behavior that agrees with standards

The man was never one to live in conformity, which is why he refused to follow the neighborhood rules.

Word Forms: conformist

Related Word: conform

consensus: (n) agreement reached by a group as a whole

The town council members had to reach a consensus in order to pass the new ordinances.

Related Word: consent

console: (vb) to give support and comfort during sadness or disappointment

Few people could console Consuela when her dog died.

Word Forms: consolingly, consolable, consoler

Antonym Forms: inconsolable, inconsolability, inconsolableness

Related Word: consolation

curative: (adj) tending to cure or restore to health

Many of the villagers believed that the plant had curative powers after it appeared to heal the boy's wound.

Word Forms: curatively, curativeness

Related Word: cure

decisive: (adj) deciding without dispute or hesitation

During the War, the lawmakers of Missouri cast a decisive vote to stay with the Union; they had no interest in seceding.

Word Forms: decisively, decisiveness

Antonym Forms: indecisive, indecisively, indecisiveness

Related Words: decide, decision

defer: (vb) to delay or postpone

Daphne deferred her first year of college in order to travel across Europe.

Word Forms: deferrable, deferment, deferral

deliberate: (vb) to carefully consider

Del spent several hours deliberating whether or not he would accept the job offer.

Word Forms: deliberate (adj.), deliberately, deliberation, deliberateness, deliberative

demeanor: (n) behavior

Deana's quiet demeanor was often mistaken for unfriendliness.

derivative: (n) something that came from an original

The Pilates exercise system is a derivative of the ancient Indian practice of yoga.

Word Forms: derivative (adj.), derivatively, derivativeness, derive, derivation

detract: (vb) to take away

Although many found Detta beautiful, most would agree that her wickedness detracted from her good looks.

Word Forms: detractingly, detraction, detractive, detractory, detractor

Antonym Forms: attract, attraction, attractive

Related Words: distract, retract, extract

devoid: (adj) completely wanting or lacking

Devin is devoid of all social skills; she cannot even make eye contact or engage in small talk.

Related Words: void

diplomatic: (adj) skillful in handling sensitive situations

When the two men got into a heated disagreement, Diana's diplomatic negotiation skills defused the situation.

Word Forms: diplomatical, diplomatically, diplomacy, diplomat

discredit: (vb) to cause to be distrusted or disbelieved

The prosecuting attorney was able to discredit the witness by proving he lied about the alibi.

Word Forms: discredit (n.), discredibility, discreditable, discreditably, discreditor Related Word: credit

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

discreet: (*adj*) careful or moderate, especially concerning privacy

Dennis revealed his secret to Jane because he knew she was discreet and wouldn't tell anyone.

Word Forms: discreetly, discreetness, discretion

discrepancy: (*n*) a difference or inconsistency

I found a discrepancy with the balance of my checking account; the bank shows I have \$50 less than I actually do.

Word Forms: discrepant, discrepantly, discrepancy

disgruntled: (*adj*) in a state of sulky dissatisfaction

The disgruntled customer stormed out after his steak was undercooked and his salad had the wrong dressing.

Word Forms: disgruntle, disgruntlement

dispel: (*vb*) to drive away

The teacher dispelled any rumors that he was retiring by volunteering to coach next year's swim team.

Word Forms: dispellable, dispeller

Related Words: compel, impel, expel, propel, repel

disperse: (*vb*) to scatter, spread, or drive away

When the police showed up, the crowd that had been watching the fight quickly dispersed.

Word Forms: dispersedly, dispersible, dispersibility, dispersal, dispersion, disperser

divert: (*vb*) to turn away from a course

Traffic was diverted through side streets in order to avoid an accident on the main road.

Word Forms: divertedly, diversion, divertible

Related Words: invert, convert, revert

domestic: (*adj*) relating to the home or relating to the home country

Mom said that Dad must share in domestic duties, which is why he helps with the cooking and cleaning each week.

Word Forms: domestically, domesticity, domesticate

encompass: (*vb*) to surround or to include

The author's works encompassed nearly every genre, from poetry to theater to fiction.

Word Form: encompassment

Related Word: compass (*vb.*)

esteemed: (*adj*) highly respected

The esteemed designer has been asked to participate in an exclusive fashion show to highlight his fall collection.

Word Forms: esteem (*vb.*), esteem (*n.*), esteemable

estrangement: (*n*) separation resulting from hostility

The family's estrangement resulted from an argument at Thanksgiving; the family members hadn't spoken in months.

Word Forms: estrange (*vb.*), estranger

Related Words: strange, stranger

eulogy: (*n*) a formal expression of praise (often delivered at funerals)

The director delivered a eulogy about the center's most helpful volunteer, praising her for helping the needy.

Word Forms: eulogize, eulogist

extravagant: (*adj*) excessively high or expensive

The restaurant's extravagant prices attracted a wealthy clientele.

Word Forms: extravagantly, extravagantness, extravagance

Related Word: extravaganza

fabricated: (*adj*) constructed to deceive

Fabian knew that he would be punished for going to the party so he told a fabricated story about studying at the library.

Word Forms: fabricate, fabrication, fabricative, fabricator

Antonym Form: unfabricated

fallible: (*adj*) capable of making a mistake

Fallon knew that her boyfriend was fallible, but she was still disappointed to learn that he had lied to her.

Word Forms: fallibly, fallibility, fallibleness

Antonym Forms: infallible, infallibly, infallibility, infallibleness

Related Word: fall

feasible: (*adj*) possible

Student loans are a feasible source of tuition for most incoming college students.

Word Forms: feasibly, feasibility, feasibleness

Antonym Forms: infeasible, infeasibly, infeasibility, infeasibleness

fortify: (*vb*) to make stronger

The army fortified the area by adding security guards and a large chain link fence.

Word Forms: fortified (*adj.*), fortifiable, fortifyingly, fortifier

Antonym Form: unfortified

humble: (*adj*) not arrogant or prideful; modest

The humble athlete preferred to talk about the team's accomplishments rather than his stellar individual contribution.

Word Forms: humbly, humbleness, humbly, humbler

Related Word: humility

humility: (*n*) the condition of not being arrogant or prideful; the quality of being humble

Heather showed humility when she chose not to tell her parents about her scholarship until after her sister's wedding.

Related Words: humble

idealism: (*n*) the practice of seeing things in an ideal form

Even after all of the drama and conflict Ida witnessed, her idealism still remained; she still believed that she could bring harmony to the warring neighborhood.

Word Forms: idealize, idealist

Related Word: ideal

illusory: (*adj*) creating illusions; deceiving

The illusory sweepstakes isn't really a contest at all; "winners" think they have won a free cruise, but the trip actually costs several hundred dollars and requires attendance at marketing seminars.

Word Forms: illusorily, illusoriness, illusive

Related Word: illusion

inconsequential: (*adj*) not important

The blown tire turned out to be inconsequential to the race results, as the driver still managed to come in first.

Word Forms: inconsequentially, inconsequent, inconsequentialness

Antonym Forms: consequential, consequent, consequentially, consequentialness

Related Word: consequence

ingenious: (*adj*) clever and inventive

Jeannie invented an ingenious device for the beach that combined a cooler, radio, and portable fan.

Word Forms: ingeniously, ingeniousness, ingenuity

Related Word: genius

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

inhibit: (*vb*) to limit; to hold back

Inez wanted to go camping with her friends, but she was inhibited by her fear of spiders and snakes.

Word Forms: inhibited (adj.), inhibitory, inhibitable, inhibitive, inhibitor, inhibition

Antonym Forms: uninhibited, uninhibitive

innovative: (*adj*) creative or the condition of being something new and unseen

The first touch-screen computer was praised for its innovative monitor.

Word Forms: innovatively, innovativeness, innovate, innovation, innovator Related Word: novel (adj.)

inquisitive: (*adj*) showing curiosity; asking questions

The inquisitive little boy at the zoo wanted to know why the penguins had wings if they couldn't fly.

Word Forms: inquisitively, inquisitiveness, inquisitor

Antonym Form: uninquisitive

Related Words: inquisition, inquire, quiz

interrogate: (*vb*) to question

The suspect was interrogated by the police at the station.

Word Forms: interrogable, interrogatingly, interrogative, interrogation, interrogee, interrogator

intuitive: (*adj*) knowing through feelings rather than from reasoning or observation

Tony is a very intuitive teacher, often sensing when one of the kids is having difficulty even if the child does not indicate her confusion.

Word Forms: intuitively, intuitiveness

Related Word: intuition

invigorate: (*vb*) to give life or energy to

The cold shower invigorated me after the long, tiring drive.

Word Forms: invigoratingly, invigoration, invigorative, invigoratively, invigorator

Related Words: vigor, vigorous

legitimate: (*adj*) lawful; in accordance with accepted standards; genuine

Leah had a legitimate complaint when the dry cleaning company failed to remove the stain from her coat.

Word Forms: legitimately, legitimize, legitimation, legitimacy, legitimacy

Antonym Form: illegitimate

longevity: (*n*) length of life

Mr. Long's longevity in teaching was celebrated with a cake in honor of his 40th anniversary at the school.

Word Forms: longevous

Antonym Form: brevity

Related Word: long

mandate: (*vb*) to require (often by law)

The governor mandated school uniforms for all public school systems in the state.

Word Forms: mandate (n.)

Related Word: mandatory

mediocre: (*adj*) moderate to inferior in quality

Mia's hamburger was just mediocre; the sandwiches she had previously at the restaurant had been a lot tastier.

Word Forms: mediocrity

melodrama: (*n*) an exaggerated drama

The play was a melodrama, focusing more on over-the-top plot lines than on the qualities of the characters.

Word Forms: melodramatic, melodramatically, melodramatize, melodramatist

monarch: (n) a ruler, such as a king or queen

The monarch was remembered for listening to the people when making and reforming laws.

Word Forms: monarchy, monarchal, monarchial, monarchist

nonchalant: (adj) coolly casual and unconcerned

Nina acted nonchalant about attending Charlie's party, but I could tell that she was secretly excited to be invited.

Word Forms: nonchalantly, nonchalance

opaque: (adj) not clear; not allowing light to pass through

The glass on the bathroom shower has an opaque layer that prevents people from seeing through it.

Word Forms: opaquely, opaqueness, opacity

opportune: (adj) favorable or happening at a favorable time

Porter looked for an opportune moment to ask Tamara to prom.

Word Forms: opportunely, opportuneness

Antonym Forms: inopportune, inopportunely, inopportuneness

Related Word: opportunity

ornamentation: (n) decoration

The elegant ornamentation of the cathedral was in direct contrast to the plainness of the rural church.

Related Words: ornament

pacify: (vb) to calm; to bring peace

The babysitter used a teething ring to pacify the crying baby.

Word Forms: pacifiable, pacifyingly, pacific, pacifier, pacifist

parasite: (n) something or someone who attaches to another being for personal gain

Polly was like a parasite, following me around in the hopes that she could become friends with the people I knew.

Word Form: parasitic

Antonym Form: nonparasitic

periphery: (n) the outside boundary

To keep our dogs from running away, my dad built a fence along the periphery of our property.

Word Forms: peripheral, peripherally

popularize: (vb) to make popular

The Foxtrot, a ballroom dance style invented in 1914, was popularized by an actor named Harry Fox.

Word Forms: popularization, popularizer

Related Words: popular, popularity

prolong: (vb) to lengthen in time

Although the class ended at noon, Mr. Probst prolonged our exit by droning on about binomials for another ten minutes.

Word Forms: prolongable, prolongableness, prolongably, prolongment, prolonger

Related Word: long

prophetic: (adj) predictive of future events

Mrs. Probert's warnings about speeding proved to be prophetic when her son got in a ticket as a result of going too fast.

Word Forms: prophetic, prophetically, propheticness, propheticity

Antonym Form: unprophetic

Related Words: prophet, prophecy

protagonist: (n) the main character in a fictional work

The protagonist of the story is a young girl who returns home to find three bears in her bed.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Form: protagonistism

Antonym Forms: antagonist, antagonism, antagonize:

quantitative: (*adj*) relating to the measurement of quantity

The cost of publishing a book is directly influenced by the quantitative requirements of your order; the fewer pages required and the more copies you order, the less money you pay per book.

Word Forms: quantitatively, quantitiveness

Related Words: quantity, qualitative

redundant: (*adj*) having ideas that are repeated unnecessarily

The first two months of sophomore French class seemed redundant, as we had already covered the material as freshmen.

Word Forms: redundantly, redundancy

Related Word: redone

reminiscence: (*n*) recalling of the past; a memory

Grandpa would often share his reminiscences at family gatherings, relating stories about Grandma when she was young.

Word Forms: reminisce, reminiscent

remorse: (*n*) a feeling of deep regret (usually for some misdeed)

Ramona felt such deep remorse after smashing the children's jack-o-lantern that she replaced their holiday pumpkin.

Word Forms: remorseful, remorsefully, remorsefulness

Antonym Forms: remorseless, remorselessly, remorselessness

renown: (*n*) fame

Ren quickly gained renown throughout the city after throwing the winning touchdown pass on Friday night.

Word Forms: renowned (*adj.*), renownedly, renownful, renownedness

Antonym Form: renownless

resolute: (*adj*) firm and determined

I faced a resolute opponent in my last wrestling match; he refused to lose.

Word Forms: resolutely, resoluteness

Antonym Forms: irresolute, irresolutely, irresoluteness

Related Words: resolution, resolve

scarce: (*adj*) lacking in supply

Spices were scarce in Europe in the 1400s, which is why explorers searched for shorter routes to the Spice Islands.

Word Forms: scarcely, scarceness, scarcity

sentimental: (*adj*) characterized by tender feelings, such as love and nostalgia

Sandy kept a box filled with ticket stubs, love notes, and other sentimental items that reminded her of Tim.

Word Forms: sentimentally, sentimentalize, sentimentality

Antonym Form: unsentimental

Related Word: sentiment

serene: (*adj*) calm and peaceful

The sea was usually choppy and turbulent but without the wind today it was flat and serene.

Word Forms: serenely, sereneness, serenity

speculative: (*adj*) based on careful consideration or contemplation rather than fact

Local theories about the girl's disappearance were all speculative; only she herself knew what really happened.

Word Forms: speculatively, speculativeness, speculate, speculation, speculator

stifle: (*vb*) to stop or hold back

I stifled a yawn so Grandpa wouldn't know that I was bored by his story.

Word Forms: stiflingly, stifler

susceptible: (*adj*) easily affected

Because of her vulnerable immune system, Susie is susceptible to colds and flu.

Word Forms: susceptibly, susceptibleness, susceptibility

Antonym Form: unsusceptible

tedious: (*adj*) long, boring, and tiring

Creating these SAT flashcards was a tedious process that involved carefully reading 60 tests, sorting over 6000 terms, and defining the 700 selected words.

Word Forms: tediously, tediousness, tedium

Therapeutic: (*adj*) tending to cure or restore to health

Thea took a therapeutic bath of honey and buttermilk which she believed would cure her cold.

Word Forms: therapeutically, therapist

Antonym Form: nontherapeutic

Related Word: therapy

thwart: (*vb*) to hinder or prevent

The high winds and isolated thunderstorms thwarted the spaceshuttle launch.

Word Forms: thwartedly, thwartingly, thwarter

tranquil: (*adj*) calm and peaceful

Walking through the tranquil countryside each evening helps me release the tension from my busy day in the bustling city.

Word Forms: tranquilly, tranquility, tranquillity

Antonym Form: intranquility

Related Word: tranquilize

treacherous: (*adj*) untrustworthy or unstable

The treacherous footing threatened to give out while I was rock climbing.

Word Forms: treacherously, treacherousness, treachery, traitor

turmoil: (*n*) a scene of great commotion, confusion, and disorder

The school board meeting descended into turmoil when three hundred students arrived to protest the new uniform rules.

vengeance: (*n*) the act of taking revenge

When the police failed to arrest the arson suspect, the victim sought vengeance by setting fire to the suspect's house.

Word Forms: vengeful, vengefully, vengefulness

Related Word: revenge

vigilant: (*adj*) on the lookout for possible danger

The vigilant guard carefully searched the horizon for approaching vehicles.

Word Forms: vigilantly, vigilance

Antonym Form: unvigilant

Related Words: vigil, vigilante

vulgar: (*adj*) tastelessly indecent

Vance was sent to detention for using vulgar language in front of his teacher

Word Forms: vulgarly, vulgarness, vulgarize, vulgarity, vulgarian

warrant: (*vb*) to authorize or justify

My dad says that my car accident warrants punishment; he's taking the car away for six months.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Forms: warrant (n.), warrantable

Antonym Forms: warrantless, unwarranted, unwarrantable

weary: (*adj*) tired

After working on the farm all day, I was weary and worn out.

Word Forms: weary (vb.), wearily, weariness, wearily

Antonym Forms: weariless, unweary

Note: weary is often confused with wary, which means distrustful

PowerScore's Top 100 Medium Repeat Offenders

In the survey of previously administered SATs and PSATs, these intermediate vocabulary words appeared frequently.

abhor: (*vb*) to hate; to regard as horrible

Abigail loves to garden, but she abhors snakes so she has given up her passion for fear of finding a snake while weeding.

Word Forms: abhorrent, abhorrently, abhorrence, abhorrer

Related Word: horror

acute: (*adj*) sharp

(1) *The patient complained of acute pain in his lower right abdomen, leading the doctor to test for appendicitis.*

(2) *The acute student quickly solved the difficult puzzle.*

Word Forms: acutely, acuteness

adept: (*adj*) highly skilled

The adept juggler was able to juggle a golf ball, an orange, a volleyball, and a bowling ball all at the same time.

Word Forms: adept (n.), adeptly, adeptness

adroit: (*adj*) highly skilled, especially with one's hands

The adroit mechanic was able to fix Addy's old car, even though six other mechanics said it couldn't be repaired.

Word Forms: adroitly, adroitness

affable: (*adj*) friendly

In the fable, the affable princess was adored by all except for her three stepsisters who were angered by her friendliness.

Word Forms: affably, affability, affableness

Antonym Forms: inaffable, inaffibility

agile: (*adj*) moving quickly and lightly

The agile monkey entertained the onlookers by effortlessly swinging from tree to tree in the enclosure.

Word Forms: agilely, agileness, agility

apathy: (*n*) an absence of emotion or enthusiasm

The teacher was disappointed in the students' apathy toward the field trip; she had mistakenly believed that this trip would finally excite them about learning.

Word Forms: apathetic, apathetical, apathetically, apathist

Related Words: sympathy, empathy, antipathy

archaic: (*adj*) so extremely old as seeming to belong to an earlier period

The college cannot have sorority or fraternity houses because of an archaic town law that does not allow unmarried people to live together.

Word Forms: archaically, archaism, archaistic, archaist

Related Word: archaeology

ardor: (*n*) intense passion

Mrs. Armstrong, my English teacher, is known for her ardor for the literature William Faulkner; last summer she even visited his hometown in Mississippi in order to better visualize the settings of his books.

arid: (*adj*) dry; lacking rainfall

My grandmother claims that Arizona's arid climate helps her arthritis, while Alabama's humidity makes her hands swell.

Word Forms: aridity, aridness, aridly

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

belligerent: (*adj*) characteristic of an enemy or one eager to fight

The belligerent student seemed to enjoy arguing with the teacher.

Word Forms: belligerently, belligerence

Antonym Forms: nonbelligerent

cajole: (*vb*) to influence by gentle urging, caressing, or flattering

Caleb cajoled his mother into letting him borrow the car by telling her how young and pretty she looked today.

Word Forms: conjolement, conjolingly, conjolery, conjoler

caustic: (*adj*) burning or stinging

Cathy's caustic remark stung Kent; he could handle criticism about his job, but her bitter words were personal.

Word Forms: caustically, causticly, causticness, causticity

cerebral: (*adj*) involving intelligence rather than emotions or instinct

Although Sarah was so angry that she wanted to quit her job, she decided to take a cerebral approach and weigh the costs before making a decision.

Word Form: cerebrally

Related Word: cerebrum

circumvent: (*vb*) to go around; to avoid

I circumvented the construction on the highway by taking the bypass that goes around the city.

Word Forms: circumvention, circumventive, circumventer

Related Word: circle, circumference

concession: (*n*) the act of giving in or the actual thing that was given up

When the principal revoked our privilege to eat lunch off campus, she made a concession and allowed pizza to be delivered to the school once a week.

Word Forms: concessional, concessionary

Related Word: concede

confound: (*vb*) to confuse

Conan was confounded by the difficult SAT question.

Word Forms: confoundable, confoundedly, confoundingly, confounder

conspicuous: (*adj*) obvious

The realtor put the "For Sale" sign in a conspicuous spot in the front yard so that people in traffic could easily see it.

Word Forms: conspicuously, conspicuousness, conspicuity

Antonym Forms: inconspicuous, inconspicuously, inconspicuousness

conspire: (*vb*) to work together, often in secret, to commit wrongful behavior

A small group of students conspired to steal the rival school's mascot, but their plan was foiled by the police.

Word Forms: conspiringly, conspiracy, conspiratory, conspiritorial, conspirator, conspirer

consummate: (*adj*) perfect and complete

Constantine is the consummate host; he greets his guest, makes sure they are comfortable and enjoying themselves, and introduces new friends to everyone.

Word Forms: consummate (*vb.*), consummately, consummatory, consummation, consummator

cordial: (*adj*) friendly and polite

When I met Cordell, he was very cordial; he properly introduced himself and politely asked questions about my family and schooling.

Word Forms: cordially, cordialness, cordiality

Antonym Form: uncordial

curtail: (vb) to cut short or restrict

The public service message is intended to curtail drinking and driving.

Word Forms: curtailedly, curtailment, curtailer,

daunt: (vb) to cause to lose courage

Don had finally worked up the courage to ride the roller coaster when he was daunted by the pale faces of the riders who had just completed the ride.

Word Forms: dauntingly, dauntingness

Antonym Forms: dauntless, dauntlessly, dauntlessness, undaunted, undauntedly, undauntedness

debilitate: (vb) to make weak

Debbie was debilitated by the unusual virus; she had difficulty sitting up and was too weak to walk.

Word Forms: debilitating, debilitation, debilitating, debility

Related Words: habilitate, rehabilitate

decimate: (vb) to destroy a large portion of

In the fourteenth century, the plague decimated the population of Europe.

Word Forms: decimation, decimator

delineate: (vb) to outline

In her speech, Delilah clearly delineated her plans for changing several policies should she be elected class president.

Word Forms: delineable, delineative, delineation, delineament, delineatory, delineator Antonym Form: undelineated

despondent: (adj) feeling or expressing hopelessness

Dessa became despondent when she received her rejection letter from the college.

Word Forms: despondently, despondence, despond, despondingly, desponder

destitute: (adj) completely wanting or lacking (usually money, food, and shelter)

The homeless man wasn't always destitute; he once had a job, but poor money management led to bankruptcy.

Word Forms: destitutely, destituteness, destitution

discord: (n) disagreement

The school board's refusal to accept the terms of the contract created discord among the administrators and teachers.

Word Forms: discordance, discordant, discordantly

Antonym Forms: concord, accord

dissent: (vb) to express a difference of opinion

Most of the class agreed that dogs could feel sadness, but Dionne dissented; she believed that dogs did not experience human emotions.

Word Forms: dissent (n.), dissenting, dissension, dissentious, dissenter

Antonym Forms: assent, assentingly, assentation, assentor

docile: (adj) easily taught or managed

Although the tiger cub is docile, he will grow into a 600 pound beast that is difficult to manage and impossible to trust.

Word Forms: docilely, docility

Antonym Forms: indocile, indocility

doctrine: (n) a belief that is taught, usually by a church or government

The religion's doctrine teaches that the good of the community is a higher personal priority than self satisfaction.

Word Forms: doctrinal, doctrinally, doctrinality, doctrinarian Related Word: indoctrinate

earnest: (adj) serious; sincere

The earnest student took the SAT seriously; he bought several study guides, and dedicated two hours a day to practice.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

effusive: (*adj*) excessive enthusiasm or emotion

Effie's effusive praise was so excessive and over-the-top that it almost seemed insincere.

Word Forms: effusively, effusiveness

Related Word: effuse, infuse

embroil: (*vb*) to bring into an argument or negative situation

Emory is embroiled in a lawsuit with his former landlord over the condition of the apartment when he moved out.

Word Forms: embroilment, embroiler

erratic: (*adj*) unpredictable or inconsistent

Ericka's attendance was erratic; there was no clear pattern between the days she went to school and the days she missed.

Word Forms: erratical, erratically, erraticism

Antonym Form: inerratic

expedient: (*adj*) serving a purpose or personal interest

It was expedient to flatter Mrs. Jameson; it was rumored that the more compliments you paid her, the higher your semester grade would be.

Word Forms: expedient (n.), expediently, expedience, expediential, expedientially

Antonym Forms: inexpedient, inexpediently, inexpedience

extraneous: (*adj*) not relevant or essential

When studying for the SAT, be sure to ignore the extraneous information in the book, such as the history of the test.

Word Forms: extraneously, extraneousness

Related Word: extra

fallacy: (*n*) a false idea

Many textbooks teach the fallacy that George Washington cut down a cherry tree; it is widely believed that an author made up that story to increase the sales of his book.

Word Forms: fallacious, fallaciously, fallaciousness

flippant: (*adj*) disrespectful; lacking seriousness

Floyd was grounded for making flippant remarks about the new rules his father set for him.

Word Forms: flippantly, flippantness, flippancy

florid: (*adj*) excessively decorated; flowery

Flora's penmanship is florid; she uses a lot of swirls and waves to decorate each letter.

Word Forms: floridly, floridness, floridity

Related Word: flower, Florida:

flourish: (*adj*) to do well or grow well

When I moved the plants to the windowsill, they suddenly began to flourish; the lack of direct sunlight must have really inhibited their growth.

Word Forms: flourish (n.), flourishingly, flourisher

Related Word: flower

formidable: (*adj*) causing fear due to powerful strength

Forrest is a formidable opponent on the tennis court; he has not lost a set in his last twenty games.

Word Forms: formidably, formidableness, formidability

frivolous: (*adj*) not serious; silly

The author's new novel is a frivolous look at life in the city; although it lacks the serious tones of his previous novels, it's a fun and enjoyable story.

Word Forms: frivolously, frivolousness, frivolity, frivol, frivoler

furtive: (*adj*) sneaky

Frank devised a furtive plan in which he would sneak onto the rival's campus and steal their school flag.

Word Forms: furtively, furtiveness

genial: (*adj*) polite and friendly

It's important for a kindergarten teacher to be genial; young children respond positively to a friendly adult.

Word Forms: genially, genialness, geniality

Related Word: congenial

guile: (*n*) a skillful deception

The sneaky woman used guile to get close to the withdrawn millionaire; she pretended to have known his brother who died in the war.

Word Forms: guileful, guilefully, guilefulness

Antonym Forms: guileless, guilelessly, guilelessness

Related Word: guise, disguise

imperceptible: (*adj*) difficult or impossible to sense

The differences between the real money and the counterfeit money are imperceptible, so it was no surprise that the cashier did not notice the fake bill.

Word Forms: imperceptibly, imperceptibleness, imperceptibility

Antonym Forms: perceptible, perceptibility, perceptibleness, perceptibility

Related Word: perceive, perceptive

indictment: (*n*) an accusation of wrongdoing

Ingrid made an indictment against Tony, claiming that he purposely miscounted the votes for Prom Queen.

Word Forms: indict, indictable, indictably

insular: (*adj*) narrow-minded; isolated

The culture is criticized for its insular ideas, such as the belief that women should not be allowed to attend school.

Word Forms: insularly, insularism, insularity

inundate: (*vb*) to flood

After the newspaper ran the controversial story, the editor was inundated with calls from hundreds of angry subscribers.

Word Forms: inundation, inundatory, inundator

itinerant: (*adj*) traveling from place to place to work

The itinerant pastor was transferred to our church from a ministry in Ohio; he will stay with us for six months before going to New Hampshire.

Word Forms: itinerant (*n.*), itinerantly, itinerate, itineration

Related Word: itinerary

jaded: (*adj*) having become dull or worn out from overexposure

Jackson had become jaded throughout his travels as a child; he had visited so many countries that new cultures no longer seemed interesting.

Word Forms: jade (*vb.*), jadedly, jadedness

laud: (*vb*) to praise, glorify, or honor

Landon was lauded for his achievements at the laboratory; he had made more progress in a year than most scientists had made in a decade.

Word Forms: laudable, laudably, laudation, laudative, laudatory, laudator

lavish: (*adj*) very generous or extravagant

The lavish wedding reception had a steak and lobster dinner, several intricate ice sculptures, and a famous jazz band.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Forms: lavishly, lavishness, lavishment, lavisher

lucid: (*adj*) clear; easy to understand

If your directions had been more lucid, I might have made it to the party on time.

Word Forms: lucidly, lucidness, lucidity

Related Word: elucidate

malice: (*n*) a desire to make others suffer

Malika's sharp comment was delivered with malice; she knew that her words would hurt her mother's feelings.

Word Forms: malicious, maliciously, maliciousness

Antonym Form: unmalicious

mitigate: (*vb*) to make less intense or severe

Mitch was grounded for a week when he broke curfew, but his mom mitigated his punishment by several days when she learned that he had been late because he was taking a sick friend to the hospital.

Word Forms: mitigable, mitigatedly, mitigation, mitigative, mitigatory, mitigator

Antonym Forms: immitigable, immitigably, immitigability, unmitigable, unmitigated, unmitigatedly

monotony: (*n*) tiresome routine; lack of variety

Monica was bored with the monotony of her job; every day was the same, from emails she sent to data she entered.

Word Forms: monotonous, monotonously, monotonousness

Related Word: monotone

nuance: (*n*) a subtle difference

The nuances between the two fonts are often missed by the untrained graphic designer.

Word Forms: nuanced

obstinate: (*adj*) extremely stubborn

Mr. O'Brien was obstinate about eating at the bistro; he refused to eat anywhere else.

Word Forms: obstinately, obstinateness, obstinace, obstinacy Word Forms:

ominous: (*adj*) threatening or foreshadowing evil

The dark clouds in the distance were ominous and threatened to ruin the picnic.

Word Forms: ominously, ominousness

Related Word: omen

oration: (*n*) a formal speech

The political candidate delivered an oration about the benefits of her universal health care plan.

Word Forms: orate, oratorical, orator

ornate: (*adj*) highly decorated

The ornate palace had colorful paintings and intricate wood carvings in every room.

Word Forms: ornately, ornateness

Related Word: ornament

overt: (*adj*) open and observable; not secret or hidden

The candidate's overt support of stem cell research was unusual; he made it clear that if elected, he would work to increase research efforts.

Word Forms: overtly, overtness

Antonym Forms: covert, covertly, covertness

paradox: (*n*) a statement that contradicts itself but nevertheless may still be true

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Parker said, "I always lie," but this is a paradox; if the statement is true, then he must be lying.

Word Forms: paradoxal, paradoxical, paradoxically, paradoxicalness, paradoxicality, paradoxology

paragon: (n) a perfect example

Parmida is a paragon of professionalism; she arrives on time, treats co-workers with respect, and refrains from gossip.

Word Forms: paragon (vb.), paragoned

parody: (n) a humorous imitation

The awards show opened with a parody of a movie; all of the characters were played by monkeys dressed like the actors.

Word Forms: parody (vb.), parodiable, parodic, parodist

patronize: (vb) to treat someone as if they are not as intelligent or important

Patrick was constantly patronizing me during the movie; he kept pausing it to explain what happened in a scene, even though I understood it as well as he did.

Word Forms: patronizable, patronizingly, patronization, patronizer

penchant: (n) a strong liking

Penny has a penchant for poetry; she has filled two notebooks with poems and poetic lines.

penitent: (adj) feeling or expressing remorse for misdeeds

The penitent criminal asked for forgiveness from the family he had robbed.

Word Forms: penitently, penitence

Antonym Forms: impenitent, impenitently, impenitence

Related Words: repentant, penance, penitentiary

peril: (n) danger

Our planet is in peril of running out of certain natural resources if something is not done to conserve them.

Word Forms: perilous, perilously, perilousness

Related Words: imperil

pervasive: (adj) spreading or spread throughout

The pervasive odor of garlic quickly spread throughout the entire house.

Word Forms: pervasively, pervasiveness, pervade, pervadingly, pervadingness, pervasion, pervader

Related Words: invade, invasive

placid: (adj) calm

When the wind died down, the lake became placid, with hardly a ripple disturbing the surface.

Word Forms: placidly, placidness, placidity

pliant: (adj) capable of being bent or capable of being influenced

The pliant plastic can be easily molded into any shape, size, or design.

Word Forms: pliantly, pliantness, pliancy

Related Word: pliable

precipitate: (vb) to bring about abruptly

Prescott's sudden decision to move to a smaller apartment was precipitated by the loss of his job.

Word Forms: precipitate (adj.), precipitately, precipitateness, precipitative, precipitator Related Word: precipitous

prolific: (adj) highly productive

The prolific author had written over 60 books during her career.

Word Forms: prolifically, prolificness, prolificity, prolificacy

Antonym Form: improlific

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

propensity: (n) a natural tendency

Mrs. Petty loved to talk to friends and neighbors, so it was no surprise that she had a propensity to gossip.

raze: (vb) to tear down

The old abandoned buildings were razed in preparation for the construction of the new baseball stadium.

Word Forms: razer

rebuke: (vb) to sharply criticize or reprimand

The principal rebuked the three students who wandered away from their chaperone on the field trip.

Word Forms: rebuke (n.), rebukingly, rebukable, rebuker

remiss: (adj) careless and neglectful

Rebekkah was criticized for being remiss in her work; she had made many careless mistakes this week.

Word Forms: remissly, remissness

reproach: (vb) to blame; to express criticism towards

The board of directors reproached the company president for falling profits and decreased revenue.

Word Forms: reproach (n.), reproachingly, reproachable, reproachableness, reproachably

Antonym Forms: irreproachable, unrepachable, reproachless

Related Word: reproachful

sanction: (vb) to approve

The school board sanctioned the new elementary school playground, so construction will begin next week.

Word Forms: sanction (n.), sanctionable, sanctionative, sanctioner

Antonym Forms: unsanctioned, sanctionless

scoff: (vb) to laugh at and show open disrespect

Scott scoffed at the skate park rules; after the park closed, he hopped the fence and continued to skate until dark.

Word Forms: scoff (n.), scoffingly, scoffer

solemn: (adj) intensely serious

Saul was angry that his cousin would make jokes at such a solemn event as their grandmother's memorial service.

Word Forms: solemnly, solemnness, solemnity, solemnify, solemnize

stagnant: (adj) not moving, flowing, or progressing

When the feeder creek ran dry, the small pond became stagnant; algae began to thrive in the motionless water.

Word Forms: stagnantly, stagnance, stagnancy, stagnate, stagnation, stagnatory

stymie: (vb) to stump or hinder

The warden was stymied by the escape; the prisoners' cell doors were still locked, and there were no holes in the walls.

Word Form: stymie (n.)

subversive: (adj) supporting the overthrowing of a government

The subversive group was arrested when one of the members told of the group's plot to overthrow the king.

Word Forms: subversive (n.), subversively, subversiveness, subversivism, subvert, subversion

sully: (vb) to make dirty or unpure

Mrs. Sullivan's reputation was sullied by accusations that she was embezzling money from the PTA.

Word Form: sulliable

Antonym Form: unsullied

tact: (n) consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offense

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

When breaking a commitment, such as a date or a dinner party, it is important to use tact to avoid hurting feelings.

Word Forms: tactful, tactfully, tactfulness

Antonym Forms: tactless, tactlessly, tactlessness, untactful

tactile: (*adj*) having to do with the sense of touch

Braille is a tactile code; you must touch it in order to decipher it.

Word Forms: tactilely, tactility

transcend: (*vb*) to rise above or exceed the limits

Beethoven transcended his deafness to become one of the most famous composers of all time.

Word Forms: transcendingly, transcendence, transcendent, transcendental

Related Word: ascend, descend

transient: (*adj*) passing quickly or staying briefly

The most transient years of your life are those spent in high school; someday when you realize how quickly your time there passed, you'll wish you had spent more time enjoying your youth.

Word Forms: transient (n.), transiently, transientness, transience

Antonym Form: intransient

Related Word: transitory

trite: (*adj*) repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse

Be sure to avoid trite expressions in your essay; instead of writing clichés like "I learned my lesson the hard way," choose original sentences such as "It was a difficult lesson to learn."

Word Forms: tritely, triteness

vacillate: (*vb*) to waver or move back and forth

Vanessa vacillated between the two universities; one minute she was attending the in-state school, and the next she was going to the college three states away.

Word Forms: vacillatingly, vacillation, vacillant, vacillator

Related Word: oscillate

vanquish: (*vb*) to defeat

In the debate, Vanna vanquished her opponent by successfully pointing out the weaknesses in the other girl's examples.

Word Forms: vanquishable, vanquishment, vanquisher

Antonym Forms: unvanquished, unvanquishable

verbose: (*adj*) using or containing too many words

At the graduation ceremony, the valedictorian gave a verbose speech that caused many people to fall asleep.

Word Forms: verbosely, verboseness, verbosity

Related Words: verbal

vicarious: (*adj*) experienced through another person

Although Vicki had never been on a roller coaster, she experienced a vicarious thrill when Zach described the descent down the big hill.

Word Forms: vicariously, vicariousness, vicariism

wane: (*vb*) to grow smaller

Wayne's interest in basketball began to wane after he played hockey; he even sold his basketball shoes to buy skates.

Antonym: wax

Note: These two words are often used to describe the fullness of the moon.

wistful: (*adj*) expressing longing or yearning

Willie gave the car one last wistful look before he left the dealership; if wished he had the money to buy it.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Forms: wistfully, wistfulness

PowerScore's Top 100 People Repeat Offenders

In the survey of previously administered SATs and PSATs, these vocabulary words naming people appeared frequently.

agnostic: (n) a person who believes the existence of God is impossible to prove

Agatha is an agnostic; she doesn't deny the existence of a god, but she doesn't believe in one, either.

Word Forms: agnostic (adj.), agnostical, agnostically, agnosticism

amateur: (n) a person who pursues a study or sport as a pastime rather than as a profession

Amos was a great golfer, but he was still just an amateur; he had no interest in pursuing the sport professionally.

Word Forms: amateur (adj.), amateurish, amateurishly, amateurishness, amateurism, amateurship

anarchist: (n) a person who encourages revolt against established laws or government

On campus, the anarchist preached against the university's government, advocating revolt by the students.

Word Forms: anarchy, anarchistic, anarchic, anarchical, anarchically, anarch

aristocrat: (n) a person who belongs to the highest or most privileged class in a society

As an aristocrat, Ari was used to preferential treatment in the most expensive hotels and restaurants in the city.

Word Forms: aristocracy, aristocratic, aristocratical, aristocratically, aristocraticalness, aristocraticness

ascetic: (n) a person who practices self-denial as a spiritual discipline

To prove his devotion to the religion, the ascetic did not own anything that might provide comfort or pleasure, such as a mattress or television set.

Word Forms: ascetic (adj.), ascetical, ascetically, asceticism

authoritarian: (n) a person who expects unquestioned obedience

The timid girl's father was an authoritarian; she was expected to obey his every order without question or hesitation.

Word Forms: authoritarian (adj.), authoritarianism

Related Words: authority, authoritative

autocrat: (n) a person who rules with complete power and authority

The autocrat was an oppressive ruler, dictating all laws and rules for the citizens of the nation.

Word Forms: autocratic, autocratical, autocratically, autocracy

Antonym Forms: democrat, democratic, democratical, democratically, democracy

avenger: (n) a person who seeks justice or revenge

Ava saw herself as an avenger, the only person who could find justice for the little boy injured in the fire.

Word Forms: avenge, avengeful, avengingly

Related Words: vengeance, revenge

bard: (n) a poet

The bard recited several of his poems at the book signing.

Word Forms: bardic, bardish, bardlike, bardship

Note: William Shakespeare is referred to as the bard.

belittler: (n) a person who takes away the importance of another person or situation

Bella is using her natural tendency as a belittler to win the science fair; by criticizing the other projects, she hopes to draw attention to her own.

Word Forms: belittle, belittlement

Related Word: little

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

benefactor: (n) a person who helps people or institutions (especially with financial help)

The museum was supported by an anonymous benefactor who donated money for its upkeep.

Word Forms: benefaction, benefactive, benefactress

Antonym Forms: malefactor, malefaction, malefactress

Related Words: benefit, beneficial, beneficiary

beneficiary: (n) a person or group that receives funds or other benefits

The old man selected his alma mater as the beneficiary of his estate; someday the university will inherit millions of dollars through his will.

Related Words: benefit, beneficial, benefactor

boor: (n) a person who is rude, clumsy, and lacking social manners

Boris was a boor at the dinner party; after telling the host that her house was cheaply decorated, he ate his steak with his fingers and burped during the meal.

Word Forms: boorish, boorishly, boorishness

Note: Be careful not to confuse a boor (a rude person) with a bore (a boring person).

bourgeois: (n) a person who belongs to the middle class

Brody considered himself a bourgeois, with middle class values and goals, even though his promotion qualified him for membership in the upper class.

Word Forms: bourgeois (adj.), bourgeoisie, bourgeoisify, bourgeoisification

buffoon: (n) a person who amuses others by joking or clowning around

In the movie, the buffoon lightens the more serious scenes by making jokes about the main character's predicament.

Word Forms: buffoonish, buffoonery

bureaucrat: (n) an official in a government or other administrative group (often who is concerned with details and order)

Although I told the clerk I was in a hurry, she was a bureaucrat and insisted I complete every field on the form, even though she already had my information.

Word Forms: bureaucratic, bureaucracy, bureaucratism

cartographer: (n) a person who makes maps

Amerigo Vespucci was one of the first cartographers to create a map of North America.

Word Forms: cartography, cartograph, cartographic, cartographical, cartographically

cavalier: (n) a man who is chivalrous and gallant

The young cavalier was rewarded for his gallant behavior when he was chosen to escort the princess to the ball.

Word Forms: cavalier (adj.), cavalierly, cavaliness, cavalierism

charlatan: (n) a person who falsely claims to possess skills or knowledge; an imposter

The charlatan tricked the unsuspecting customers out of money by pretending to be able to predict the future.

Word Forms: charlatanic, charlatanish, charlatanical, charlatanically, charlatanistic, charlatanry, charlatanism

chronicler: (n) a person who keeps a record of events

The reporter was hired by the army to serve as a chronicler during the war; without his employment, we would never have known the true order of events during the conflict.

Word Forms: chronicle

Related Word: chronological

clairvoyant: (n) a person who can see the supernatural, such as spirits or the future

The carnival had a clairvoyant, who predicted that I would marry a red-head and have three red-headed children.

Word Forms: clairvoyant (adj.), clairvoyantly, clairvoyance

colleague: (n) a person that one works with in the same field or profession
The doctor was afraid that her colleagues would disagree with her diagnosis.
Word Form: collegueship
Related Word: college

combatant: (n) a person who fights
The referee was forced to separate the combatants at the end of the third round of fighting.
Word Forms: combat, combative, combatively, combativeness, combatable

compatriot: (n) a person from your own country
While traveling through Italy, I met a compatriot from Michigan and we promised to keep in touch after returning home.
Word Forms: compatriotic, compatriotism
Related Word: patriot

connoisseur: (n) a person who is an expert critic in a certain field
Having earned a masters degree in art history, Connor is a connoisseur of historical paintings.
Word Form: connoisseurship

constituent: (n) a citizen who is represented in a government by an elected official
The senator knew that his constituents were counting on him to lower the sales tax.
Word Forms: constituently, constituency
Related Words: constitute, constitution

courtier: (n) a member of a royal court or a person who seeks favor through excessive flattery
The homecoming queen had several courtiers, who helped her put on her tiara and velvet robe.
Related Words: court, courtly

curator: (n) a person who manages a museum
The curator arranged a special exhibit for the local school children who visited the museum.
Word Forms: curate, curatorial, curatorship

defector: (n) a person who deserts a country or group in order to join another country or group
The defector fled the Confederate army and joined the Union forces when he realized the strength of the northern enemy.
Word Forms: defect, defectible, defectibility, defective, defection

demagogue: (n) a political leader who seeks support by appealing to popular passions and prejudices
Hitler was a demagogue who gained power by exploiting religious prejudices in Germany.
Word Forms: demagoguery, demagogism, demagogic, demagogical, demagogically

derelict: (n) a person without a home, job, or property
The derelict spent his days begging on the street corner and his nights sleeping in the alley.
Word Forms: derelict (adj.), derelictly, derelictness, dereliction Related Word: relinquish

despoiler: (n) a person who steals goods
The despoilers from the pirate ship stripped the village members of all their possessions.
Word Forms: despoil, despoilment
Related Word: spoils (n.)

despot: (n) a ruler with complete power
The despot was a harsh ruler who imposed outrageous taxes and unreasonable restrictions against his subjects.
Word Forms: despotic, despotical, despotically, despotism

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

devotee: (n) an ardent follower and admirer

Devon is a devotee of professional football; she follows her favorite team every weekend and knows more player statistics than most other fans.

Related Words: devote, devotedness

dignitary: (n) a person who has a high-ranking position

The foreign dignitary was meeting with the President to discuss improving relations between the two countries.

Word Form: dignitarianial

Related Words: dignify, dignity

dilettante: (n) a person who engages in an activity (such as art) without serious intentions or inquiry

Although Dylan started painting, he was merely a dilettante; his paintings were amateur attempts at a part-time hobby.

Word Forms: dilettantish, dilettanteism

dissembler: (n) a person who conceals his real feelings by professing false beliefs

The dissembler pledged allegiance to the rebel group, but he was really working undercover for the opposing army.

Word Forms: dissemble, dissemblingly, dissemblance

Related Words: resemble, semblance

egotist: (n) a person who is conceited, boastful, and self-centered

Igor is an egotist; he brags about every aspect of his life, but has no interest in hearing similar stories from his friends.

Word Forms: egotistic, egotistical, egotistically, egotism

Related Words: ego, egoist, egoistic, egomania

emancipator: (n) a person who frees others from bondage

Once freed, the hostages felt a great appreciation for their emancipators, who risked their lives to save strangers.

Word Forms: emancipate, emancipative, emancipatory, emancipation, emancipationist

emissary: (n) a person sent on a mission to represent the interests of someone else

The general sent an emissary to the enemy's camp to inquire about the terms of surrender.

Related Words: emission, emissive, emit

entrepreneur: (n) a person who organizes a business venture and assumes the risk for it

Andrea was an entrepreneur; by the age of thirty, she had already started three successful businesses.

Word Forms: entrepreneurial, entrepreneurially, entrepreneurialism, entrepreneurism, entrepreneurship

Related Word: enterprise

expatriate: (n) a person who lives outside his own country, often to renounce allegiance

The little village in Costa Rica is filled with American expatriates who moved there for a more relaxed lifestyle.

Word Forms: expatriate (vb.), expatriation

Related Word: patriot

explicator: (n) a person who explains or interprets

My attorney was an excellent explicator; he clearly interpreted each clause of the legal contract.

Word Forms: explicate, explication, explicative, explicatively, explicatory

Related Word: explicit

glutton: (n) a person who eats too much or who has an extreme capacity for something

Glenn was a glutton at the buffet; he ate two hamburgers, three slices of pizza, six cookies, and four slices of cake.

Word Forms: gluttony, gluttonize, gluttonous, gluttonously, gluttonousness, glut

gourmand: (n) a person who enjoys eating good food

A gourmand all his life, it was only natural that Goren became a professional food critic after culinary school.

Word Forms: gourmandism, gourmandize

Related Word: gourmet

hedonist: (n) a person dedicated to the pursuit of pleasure

After working for years as a hospice nurse, Heidi had no respect for the hedonist who lived next door; by only seeking pleasure, he left the more unpleasant activities to caretakers like Heidi.

Word Forms: hedonist (adj.), hedonistic, hedonistically, hedonism, hedonic, hedonically

iconoclast: (n) a person who attacks cherished ideas or traditional institutions

Many religious leaders accused the author of being an iconoclast for presenting evidence that contrasted with the religion's long-standing beliefs.

Word Forms: iconoclastic, iconoclastically, iconoclasm

ingenue: (n) an artless, innocent young girl (especially as portrayed on the stage)

The young actress will play the part of the ingenue, an innocent girl who becomes caught up in the plot in Act II.

Related Word: ingenuous

insinuator: (n) a person who gives hints or suggestions in a sly manner

After rumors surfaced of Chad's cheating on the SAT, Kelly acted as an insinuator and told his parents that most students found the test much more difficult than Chad did.

Word Forms: insinuate, insinulative, insinuatively, insinuatory, insinuatingly, insinuation

interlocutor: (n) a person who takes part in a conversation

At the apartment complex, the two interlocutors continued to debate the merits of television outside my bedroom window until well after midnight.

Word Forms: interlocution, interlocutory, interlocutorily

Related Words: locution, eloquent

layperson: (n) a person who is not a member of the clergy or a particular profession

Doctors need to remember that a layperson cannot understand medical jargon, so they must speak in simple terms.

Word Forms: layman, laywoman

lobbyist: (n) a person who persuades legislators to vote in favor of a specific cause

The environmental company hired several lobbyists to persuade the senators to vote in favor of the energy bill.

Word Forms: lobby (n.), lobbyism

martinet: (n) a person who rigidly demands that rules are followed; a strict disciplinarian

Marty realized that the drill sergeant was a martinet, so his best course of action was to closely follow all the rules.

Word Forms: martinetish, martinetism

matriarch: (n) the female head of a family

As the matriarch of the family, Grandma sat at the head of the Thanksgiving dinner table.

Word Forms: matriarchal, matriarchic, matriarchalism, matriarchy

Antonym Forms: patriarch, patriarchal, patriarchic, patriarchalism, patriarchy

Related Words: ma, maternal

maverick: (n) a person who chooses to be independent in behavior or thought

Even though the other ranchers were branding their cattle, Sam was a maverick who believed he did not need to follow the rules set by his associates.

Word Form: maverick (adj.)

mediator: (n) a person who negotiates or settles disagreements between parties

Megan and Melody brought in a peer mediator to settle their fight over the purple sweater.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Forms: mediatorship, mediate, mediately, mediateness, mediation

Related Word: medium (n.)

mercenary: (n) a person hired to fight for a country other than his own

During the American Revolution, Great Britain hired thousands of German mercenaries to fight against the colonists.

Word Forms: mercenary (adj.), mercenarily, mercenariness

misanthrope: (n) a person who hates and distrusts mankind

The main character is a bitter misanthrope who learns to trust again through her friendship with the children next door.

Word Forms: misanthropist, misanthropic, misanthropical, misanthropically, misanthropy

miscreant: (n) a person who is evil or villainous

The miscreant came to town with the intention of creating strife and commotion, as he enjoyed watching others argue.

Word Forms: miscreant (adj.), miscreance, miscreancy

miser: (n) a stingy person who lives in miserable conditions in order to save money

The old miser lives in a rat-infested apartment even though he has more than enough money to live in a nice home.

Word Forms: miserly, miserliness

Related Words: misery, miserable

missionary: (n) a person who is sent on a religious or charitable mission

During the expansion of the United States, missionaries were sent west to spread Christianity to the native peoples.

Word Forms: missionary (adj.), missioner, missionize

Related Word: mission

mogul: (n) a very wealthy or powerful person

The movie mogul has produced over twenty successful films from his very own studios in Hollywood.

muse: (n) the person who is the source of an artist's inspiration

Muriel had always been Michael's muse, so he found it difficult to write his next book after their divorce.

narcissist: (n) a person who has excessive love or admiration of himself

Nancy is a narcissist who is unable to love her husband or her children as much as she loves herself.

Word Forms: narcissist, narcissism, narcissistic, narcissistic, narcissistically

naysayer: (n) a person who always expresses a negative attitude

Although the forecast for the day was good, Nathan was a naysayer and predicted the ceremony would be ruined by rain.

Word Form: naysay

nomad: (n) a person without a permanent home, who wanders from place to place

Norman was a nomad, moving from city to city and finding short-term jobs to fund his travels.

Word Forms: nomadism, nomadic, nomadically, nomadize

obstructionist: (n) a person who purposely blocks progress

Alberta worried that obstructionists would interfere with her environmental bill, ending her efforts to save the eagles.

Word Forms: obstructionistic, obstructionism

Related Words: obstruct, obstruction, obstructive

oracle: (n) a person who can see the future

In the ancient civilization, warriors could consult the oracle to learn their fate in the conflict before going off to war.

Word Forms: oracular, oracularly, oracularity, oracularness

Related Word: orate

pariah: (n) a person who is rejected; an outcast

Pamela became the pariah of the company when he was caught stealing money from his co-workers.

Word Forms: pariahdom, pariahism

patriarch: (n) the male head of a family

As the oldest of the seven, Uncle Pat was the patriarch of the family and thus gave the toasts at all family gatherings.

Word Forms: patriarchal, patriarchic, patriarchalism, patriarchy

Antonym Forms: matriarch, matriarchal, matriarchic, matriarchalism, matriarchy

Related Words: pa, paternal

patron: (n) a customer

The waiter looked forward to noon, when his favorite patron always came in for lunch.

Word Forms: patronal, patronly, patronage, patronism, patronship, patronize

philanthropist: (n) a person who makes charitable donations intended to increase human well-being

As a young philanthropist, Phillip used to donate his allowance to the homeless shelter.

Word Forms: philanthropy, philanthropic, philanthropical, philanthropically

popularizer: (n) a person who makes something popular with the general public

Edward Lear, the popularizer of the limerick, published his first book of the five-lined poems in 1846.

Word Forms: popularize, popularization

Related Words: popular, popularity

populist: (n) a person who supports the rights and powers of the common people

The candidate is a populist who believes in promoting the causes of the working classes.

Word Forms: populist (adj.), populist, populism

prig: (n) a person regarded as arrogant and annoying

Prissy was a prig who found fault with the landscaping of all of her neighbors' homes.

Word Forms: priggish, priggishly, priggishness, priggery, priggism

prodigy: (n) a person, often a child, who is extraordinarily gifted or talented

The musical prodigy could play the most complicated Mozart composition on a piano by the time he was five years old.

Related Word: prodigious

proponent: (n) a person who supports a cause; an advocate

The senator, a proponent of alternative fuels, created a bill which would help decrease dependency on oil.

Antonym Form: opponent

Related Words: propone, propose

proprietor: (n) the owner of a business

The proprietor had owned the inn for sixty years and had the honor of serving many celebrity guests over the years.

Word Forms: proprietorial, proprietorially, proprietorship, proprietary Related Word: property

protégé: (n) a person who receives training, protection, or care from an influential person

The successful businessman chose his niece as a protégé in order to teach her about the family business.

Word Form: protégée

prude: (n) a person who is excessively concerned about proper behavior

Prudence is a prude so it is unlikely that she will be willing to sneak into the neighbor's pool for a late night swim.

Word Forms: prudelike, prudish, prudishly, prudishness, prudery

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

pugilist: (n) a person who fights with his fists; a boxer
The two pugilists entered the ring for the first round of the boxing match.
Word Forms: pugilistic, pugilistically, pugilism

pundit: (n) a critic or expert
The political pundits are employed by newspapers and television networks to evaluate the actions of the President.
Word Forms: punditic, punditically, punditry, punditocracy

reactionary: (n) a person who is extremely conservative; an opponent of progress or liberalism
The congressman was a reactionary who favored the laws of the “good ol’ days,” when there was less gun control and more censorship.
Word Forms: reactionist, reactionism, reactionaryism, reactionarism

recluse: (n) a person who withdraws from society to live in seclusion
The recluse lived in a home deep in the forest, far away from the town and its inhabitants, where he preferred to be alone.
Word Forms: recluse (adj.), reclusive, reclusively, reclusiveness, reclusion
Related Words: secluded, seclusion

reformist: (n) a person who favors reform
The school board hired a reformist as the new principal, hoping he could change the negative image of the high school.
Word Forms: reformist (adj.), reformistic, reformism, reform, reformer

reviler: (n) a person who uses abusive language
Reva’s husband was a reviler who constantly criticized her appearance and behavior.
Word Forms: revile, revilement, revilingly
Related Word: vile

ruffian: (n) a tough, violent person
The police were on the lookout for a gang of ruffians who had robbed several people downtown.
Word Forms: ruffianly, ruffianism

rumormonger: (n) a person who spreads rumors and gossip
Rachel was a rumormonger who hoarded gossip and spread rumors about everyone in school.
Related Words: rumor, monger

sage: (n) a person who is very wise
Villagers who have seemingly unsolvable problems often seek the advice of the sage.
Word Forms: sage (adj.), sagely, sageness
Related Words: sagacious

savant: (n) a person who has learned extensive knowledge
When it comes to math, Savannah is a savant; she can solve complicated equations that stump most mathematicians.
Note: In recent times, savant is often used to refer to a person who has diminished mental capabilities while at the same time exhibiting a special intellectual skill or ability. However, the definition here applies to the SAT.

scribe: (n) a journalist or other writer
The police chief was interviewed by a scribe who wanted details about the arrest of the suspect for tomorrow’s story.
Word Forms: scribe (vb.), scribal
Related Words: inscribe, prescribe, describe, scribble

sycophant: (n) a person who flatters others in order to gain personal favor; a brown-noser
Sidney is a sycophant who compliments our English teacher in order to get a better grade on his assignments.
Word Forms: sycophantic, sycophantical, sycophantically, sycophantish, sycophantishly, sycophantism

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

toady: (n) a person who flatters others in order to gain personal favor; a brown-noser

The professional athlete has several toadies who play to his ego in order to enjoy the perks of being in his entourage.

Word Forms: toady (vb.), toadyish, toadyism

totalitarian: (n) a leader of a government that has total control and authority over the people

The leader of the small country is a totalitarian who has complete control over his people, from the types of cars they can drive to the jobs they can retain.

Word Forms: totalitarian (adj.), totalitarianism, totalitarianist, totalitarianize

Related Words: total, authoritarian

troubadour: (n) a traveling singer

The troubadour traveled from city to city, entertaining people with his folk songs about life on the road.

understudy: (n) an actor able to replace a regular performer when required

The understudy learned the dialogue for three different roles in case any of the three actors could not perform.

Word Form: understudy (vb.)

usurper: (n) a person who wrongfully or illegally seizes and holds the place of another

The usurper overthrew the reigning queen in a bloody rebellion and took power immediately.

Word Forms: usurp, usurpingly, usurpation, usurpative, usurpatory

utilitarian: (n) a person who believes that the value of something depends on its usefulness

As a strict utilitarian, Mr. Uitley had no use for the horse with the limp; even though she was his favorite horse, he would not keep her if she couldn't help with the plowing.

Word Forms: utilitarian (adj.), utilitarianism

Related Word: utility

utopian: (n) a person who believes (often impractically) in an ideal society achieved through social reform

As a utopian, Eunice believes that she can end homelessness by teaching money management to homeless people.

Word Forms: utopian (adj.), utopia, utopianism, utopianist

virtuoso: (n) a person who has mastered a certain skill or field

Tonight I am attending a free concert in the park that features a young virtuoso on the violin.

Word Forms: virtuoso (adj.), virtuosic, virtuosically, virtuosity

Related Words: virtue, virtuous

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

PowerScore's Top 100 Hard Repeat Offenders

In the survey of previously administered SATs and PSATs, these higher-level vocabulary words appeared frequently.

abstruse: (*adj*) hard to understand

Mr. Abbott tried to teach us how to solve an abstruse math problem, but it was too complicated for us to understand.

Word Forms: abstrusely, abstruseness, abstrusity

adulation: (*n*) excessive admiration

Adele's adulation of the television star began to worry her parents when she started sending him letters every day.

Word Forms: adulate, adulatory, adulator

alacrity: (*n*) liveliness and eagerness

Alaina impressed her new boss by accepting the task with alacrity; she was both eager and excited to get started.

Word Form: alacritous

ameliorate: (*vb*) to make better

Amelia was an outstanding caregiver; she could ameliorate a patient's discomfort just by smiling kindly.

Word Forms: ameliorable, ameliorableness, ameliorant, ameliorative, amelioratory, ameliorator

anachronistic: (*adj*) out of chronological order

Today's announcement about the impending demolition of the baseball stadium is anachronistic; the stadium was razed early last week.

Word Forms: anachronistically, anachrony, anachronic, anachronism, anachronous, anachronously

Related Word: chronological, chronology

arboreal: (*adj*) relating to trees

The emerald tree boa is an arboreal snake; it spends all of its life in the trees of the Amazon rainforest.

Word Forms: arboreally, arboreous

Related Word: arbor

assiduous: (*adj*) constant and attentive

Ashley is an assiduous researcher; she was able to find articles on the poet that even the librarian could not locate.

Word Forms: assiduously, assiduousness, assiduity

auspicious: (*adj*) favorable; fortunate

Austin waited for an auspicious time to ask his father to borrow the car; he finally had his chance on the day that his dad received a sizable raise at work.

Word Forms: auspiciously, auspiciousness

austere: (*adj*) 1. strict; disciplined; serious 2. simple; undecorated

Mr. Aston is the most austere teacher at school; he does not tolerate any talking nor does he accept late assignments.

Word Forms: austereity, austereness, austerly

avarice: (*n*) extreme greed for material wealth

Avery amassed million-dollar homes, luxury cars, and exquisite jewelry to satisfy her avarice, but still wanted more.

Word Forms: avaricious, avariciously, avariciousness

banal: (*adj*) repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse

The plot of the movie is banal; everything that takes place in this film has happened in a dozen other movies.

Word Forms: banally, banalize, banality

bombast: (*n*) pompous or pretentious talk or writing
Be sure that your speech isn't pretentious or inflated, as the audience has no time to listen to bombast.
 Word Forms: bombastic, bombastically, bombaster

castigate: (*vb*) to criticize or punish severely
Cassie was castigated by her parents and the school principal for her role in the cheating scam.
 Word Forms: castigation, castigative, castigatory, castigator

cataclysm: (*n*) a violent upheaval
The political uprising against the dictator is a cataclysm that will hopefully result in a more democratic regime.
 Word Forms: cataclysmic, cataclysmically, cataclysmal
 Related Word: catastrophe

cathartic: (*adj*) inducing a release of tense emotions
Painting was a cathartic exercise for Cathy; through her paintings she was able to release anger and fear.
 Word Forms: cathartically, catharticalness

clandestine: (*adj*) secret
The school administrators held clandestine meetings about the school uniform policy; they were afraid that if the public knew they were contemplating a new policy, the outcry would squash the issue.
 Word Forms: clandestinely, clandestineness, clandestinity

conflagration: (*n*) a destructive fire
The fire department determined that the conflagration in the old warehouse was a result of faulty wiring.
 Word Forms: conflagrative, conflagrate, conflagrant

conscientious: (*adj*) characterized by extreme care and great effort
Connie was the most conscientious student in class; her project was free of mistakes and turned in on time.
 Word Forms: conscientiously, conscientiousness
 Antonym Form: unconscientious
 Related Word: conscience

contrite: (*adj*) feeling guilty and remorseful
The contrite criminal broke into sobs as he apologized to the victim's family for the suffering he had caused.
 Word Forms: contritely, contriteness, contrition

dalliance: (*n*) the deliberate act of delaying and playing instead of working
Dalton's dalliance at the basketball court kept him from working on the term paper that was due tomorrow.
 Word Forms: dally, dallyingly, dallier
 Related Word: dilly-dally

decorous: (*adj*) proper and dignified
The decorous host made sure that she had proper table settings; each was arranged correctly for the five-course meal.
 Word Forms: decorously, decorousness
 Antonym Forms: indecorous, indecorously, indecorousness
 Related Word: decorum

deleterious: (*adj*) harmful
The deleterious effects of cigarette smoking, such as lung cancer, are highlighted in the public service campaign.
 Word Forms: deleteriously, deleteriousness Related Word: delete

denigrate: (*vb*) to damage the reputation of
The candidate hoped to denigrate his opponent's character by exposing the embezzlement scandal.

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Word Forms: denigration, denigrative, denigratory, denigrator

didactic: (*adj*) educational

The children's book is not only entertaining, but also didactic; the story teaches the dietary habits of marine animals.

Word Forms: didactical, didactically, didacticism, didact

Related Words: autodidactic, autodidact

dilatory: (*adj*) intending to delay

Dillon asked nearly twenty dilatory questions at the start of class in an attempt to postpone the scheduled math test.

Word Forms: dilatorily, dilatoriness

Related Word: delay

disseminate: (*vb*) to spread widely

The police hoped the information about the suspect would disseminate quickly; the more people who knew, the better chances of apprehending the wanted man.

Word Forms: dissemination, disseminative, disseminator

ebullient: (*adj*) extremely excited or enthusiastic

The ebullient child clapped her hands and jumped up and down as she waited to ride the pony at the party.

Word Forms: ebulliently, ebullience

eclectic: (*adj*) made up of choices from diverse sources

Mrs. Eckert has an eclectic music collection; her albums span from classic jazz to hip hop to disco.

Word Forms: eclectically, eclecticist

Related Word: select

efficacious: (*adj*) effective

The pest repellent was efficacious in keeping the mosquitoes away; none of the guests were bothered by the bugs.

Word Forms: efficaciously, efficaciousness, efficacy, efficacify

Antonym Forms: inefficacious, inefficaciously, inefficaciousness, inefficacy, inefficacity

Related Words: effect, effective

eminent: (*adj*) distinguished and prominent

The eminent professor has taught at distinguished colleges, which is why he is such a remarkable addition to the faculty.

Word Forms: eminently, eminence

Note: eminent is often confused with imminent, which means about to occur.

empirical: (*adj*) resulting from an experiment

As a scientist, Emmie relied on empirical data every day, which is why it was hard for her to trust her intuition.

Word Forms: empirically, empiricalness

enervated: (*adj*) lacking strength or vigor

After an entire weekend of moving furniture, Enrico was enervated; he would need to rest to get his strength back.

Word Forms: enervate (*vb.*), enervation, enervative, enervator

enigma: (*n*) a puzzle

The dog's escape from the pen is an enigma; no one can figure out how she broke out of the locked enclosure.

Word Forms: enigmata (*plural*), enigmatic, enigmatical, enigmatically

equanimity: (*n*) steadiness of mind under stress

Eva made an excellent emergency room doctor because she handled trauma with equanimity; she was clear-headed during the most stressful situations.

Word Forms: equanimous, equanimously, equanimousness

Related Word: longanimity

equivocate: (*vb*) to be deliberately ambiguous or unclear in order to mislead or withhold information
When asked whether there were any arrests, the sheriff equivocated by saying that the suspect has been located.
Word Forms: equivocatingly, equivocation, equivocatory, equivocator
Related Word: equivocal

esoteric: (*adj*) intended for a select group of people; secret or confidential
Esteban was the member of an esoteric club, whose membership consisted strictly of men over fifty who lived in the city.
Word Forms: esoterically, esotericism, esotericist
Antonym Forms: exoteric, exoterically, exotericism

espouse: (*vb*) to adopt or marry (such as an idea or cause)
Although Esmerelda had never practiced a formal religion, she espoused her fiancé's faith in order to join his church.
Word Forms: espousal, espouser
Related Word: spouse

evanescent: (*adj*) vanishing
Many people believe that youth is evanescent, quickly vanishing before it can be truly appreciated.
Word Forms: evanescently, evanesce, evanescence
Related Word: vanish

exonerate: (*vb*) to clear from blame
The use of DNA helped exonerate the innocent man; twenty years after he was sent to prison, he was released.
Word Forms: exoneration, exonerative, exonerator

exorbitant: (*adj*) greatly exceeding bounds of reason or moderation
I am forced to stop shopping at that grocery store until the owners lower the exorbitant prices on meats and produce.
Word Forms: exorbitantly, exorbitance

exuberant: (*adj*) overflowing, especially with joy
The young wife was exuberant when her husband returned safely from the military after a year-long tour of duty.
Word Forms: exuberantly, exuberance, exuberate

facetious: (*adj*) not intended to be taken seriously
Fatima, who hated getting her teeth cleaned, was being facetious when she said, "I love going to the dentist!"
Word Forms: facetiously, facetiousness

fastidious: (*adj*) giving careful attention to detail; hard to please
Mrs. Foster, my teacher, is a fastidious grader; she deducts points for any error in grammar, punctuation, or spelling.
Word Forms: fastidiously, fastidiousness
Antonym Forms: unfastidious

felicity: (*n*) pleasing and appropriate style
The book review highlighted both the felicities and the imperfections of the novel.
Word Forms: felicitous, felicitously, felicitousness
Antonym Forms: infelicity, infelicitous, infelicitously

garrulous: (*adj*) excessively talkative or wordy
The garrulous hairdresser talked the entire time he cut my hair.
Word Forms: garrulously, garrulousness, garrulity

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

gratuitous: (*adj*) free; given without reason

On Monday, our supervisor announced that all employees were receiving two gratuitous tickets to this weekend's concert.

Word Forms: gratuitously, gratuitousness, gratuity

gregarious: (*adj*) sociable

Greg is a gregarious student who finds it difficult to avoid socializing during class.

Word Forms: gregariously, gregariousness

Antonym Forms: ungregarious

hackneyed: (*adj*) repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse

Instead of relying on hackneyed clichés in your essay, try to create original metaphors and similes.

Word Forms: hackney (vb.)

harangue: (*n*) a long, pompous speech

At the assembly, the principal delivered a harangue on the merits of perfect attendance and good behavior.

Word Forms: harangue (vb.), harangueful, haranguer

impervious: (*adj*) not capable of being affected

Ima was impervious to Jack's insults; nothing he said seemed to affect her.

Word Forms: imperviously, imperviousness, imperviable

Antonym Forms: pervious, perviously, perviousness

impugn: (*vb*) to attack as false or wrong

The candidate impugned his opponent's voting record, proving that she voted against reform she now supported.

Word Forms: impugnable, impugnability, impugnement, impugner

Related Word: oppugn

incongruity: (*n*) the quality of disagreeing; being unsuitable and inappropriate

Inga's incongruity made it difficult to reason with her; she seemed to find fault with every logical position.

Word Forms: incongruent, incongruently, incongruence, incongruous, incongruously, incongruousness

Antonym Forms: congruity, congruent, congruently, congruence, congruous, congruously, congruousness

incorrigible: (*adj*) incapable of being corrected or punished

The incorrigible child continued to throw his vegetables even after the mother threatened to send him to his room.

Word Forms: incorrigibly, incorrigibleness, incorrigibility

Antonym Forms: corrigible, corrigibly, corrigibleness, corrigibility

indigenous: (*adj*) native to

Although the flower can now be found all over the eastern United States, it is indigenous to Florida.

Word Forms: indigenously, indigenouslyness, indigenity, indigen, indigene

ineffable: (*adj*) incapable of being put into words

Effie's joy at being reunited with her long-lost brother was ineffable; words could not explain her happiness.

Word Forms: ineffably, ineffableness, ineffability

Antonym Form: effable

innocuous: (*adj*) harmless

No one had to be evacuated after the tanker spill, as the gas released was innocuous.

Word Forms: innocuously, innocuousness, innocuity

Antonym Forms: noxious, noxiously, noxiousness

Related Word: inoculate

insipid: (*adj*) bland, dull, or uninteresting

When I left for college, the insipid cafeteria food made me miss my father's home-cooked meals.

Word Forms: insipidly, insipidness, insipidity

Antonym Forms: sipid, sipidity

insolence: (*n*) rudeness

The headmaster said that insolence would not be tolerated; rude behavior towards a teacher would result in suspension.

Word Forms: insolent (n.), insolently, insolence

intransigent: (*adj*) refusing to yield or compromise

When it came to Edgar's hunting trophies, Enid was intransigent; she refused to hang the deer heads on the wall.

Word Forms: intransigent (n.), intransigently, intransigence, intransigency

juxtapose: (*vb*) to place side by side

When Justin's picture was juxtaposed with his father's picture, the resemblance between the two was remarkable.

Word Forms: juxtaposition

Related Word: pose

machination: (*n*) a crafty plot

The fairy tale follows the machinations of an evil stepsister who is out to steal the prince from the heroine.

Word Forms: machinate, machinator

magnanimous: (*adj*) noble and generous in spirit

The magnanimous donor has given over ten million dollars to children's charities in the city.

Word Forms: magnanimously, magnanimousness, magnanimity

malevolent: (*adj*) evil

The malevolent old man plotted the demise of his neighbor's barking dog.

Word Forms: malevolently, malevolence, malevolency

malleable: (*adj*) capable of being shaped or influenced

Mallory worried that her malleable son would learn inappropriate behavior from the older boys he played with at school.

Word Forms: malleably, malleableness, malleability

Antonym Forms: unmalleable, unmalleability

mendacious: (*adj*) lying, false, or untrue

The mendacious girl said that she didn't take her mother's lipstick, but the bright red evidence was all over her face.

Word Forms: mendaciously, mendaciousness, mendacity

meritocracy: (*n*) a form of social system in which power goes to those with superior abilities

Critics argue that a meritocracy cannot be fairly created, as intelligence and ability are difficult to measure accurately.

Word Form: meritocratic

Related Word: merit

morose: (*adj*) gloomy

After his girlfriend moved away, Morris became morose and depressed.

Word Forms: morosely, moroseness, morosity

nefarious: (*adj*) extremely wicked

In the novel, the nefarious character plotted to financially destroy the hero.

Word Forms: nefariously, nefariousness

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

obdurate: (*adj*) stubborn

The obdurate child refused to eat his vegetables and sat at the dinner table with the untouched broccoli until bedtime.

Word Forms: obdurately, obdurateness, obduracy

Related Word: indurate

obsequious: (*adj*) overly flattering or obedient

The new employee was distrusted by his co-workers because of his obsequious behavior; he agreed with everything the boss said and laughed at all of her bad jokes.

Word Forms: obsequiously, obsequiousness, obsequence

opulent: (*adj*) rich and luxurious

The opulent kitchen had marble counter tops and solid gold fixtures.

Word Forms: opulently, opulence, opulency

ostensible: (*adj*) pretended

Austin's ostensible excuse for missing school was that his grandmother was in the hospital; the real reason, however, was that he went to the beach.

Word Forms: ostensibly, ostensive

Related Word: ostentatious

pedagogical: (*adj*) relating to education or teaching

The course for new teachers taught the pedagogical principal that all children could learn.

Word Forms: pedagogy, pedagogic, pedagogically, pedagogism, pedagogery, pedagogish, pedagog, pedagogue

pedantic: (*adj*) overly focused on small details while teaching or learning

It was difficult to be Penny's partner because she was pedantic about recording every single step of the scientific method.

Word Forms: pedantical, pedantically, pedanticalness, pedanticism, pedantism, pedantry, pedant, pedantesque

perspicacity: (*n*) intelligence manifested by being astute

My accountant's perspicacity saved me thousands of dollars on my tax returns because he found hidden rebates.

Word Forms: perspicacious, perspicaciously, perspicaciousness

Related Words: perspicuity, perspicuous

petulant: (*adj*) easily irritated over small issues

The petulant actress stormed off the set when she discovered that her dressing room did not have bottled water.

Word Forms: petulantly, petulance, petulancy

Related Word: petty

precocious: (*adj*) advanced in development or maturity (especially in mental aptitude)

The precocious little boy was able to solve the algebraic equation without any help from his teacher.

Word Forms: precociously, precociousness, precocity

pristine: (*adj*) pure, clean, or unused

The interior of the old car was in pristine condition; the upholstery was spotless and the equipment worked perfectly.

proliferate: (*vb*) to grow rapidly

The franchise has proliferated; there were just two restaurants ten years ago, but now there are more than two hundred.

Word Form: pristinely

prosaic: (*adj*) dull and lacking excitement

Pam claimed the movie was predictable and prosaic, causing her to fall asleep halfway through.

Word Forms: prosaic, prosaically, prosaicness, prosaicism

querulous: (adj) complaining

Quentin's querulous tone irritated Nina; he always found something about which to complain.

Word Forms: querulously, querulousness

quiescent: (adj) being quiet or still or inactive

When the mine closed, the once-bustling town became quiescent and forlorn.

Word Forms: quiescently, quiescence, quiescency

Related Word: quiet

rancorous: (adj) showing deep-seated resentment

In the fairy tale, the rancorous stepmother is jealous of the young maiden's beauty, youth, and innocence.

Word Forms: rancor, rancorously, rancorousness

Related Word: rancid

raucous: (adj) unpleasantly loud and harsh

Rachel's raucous laughter often drove people away.

Word Forms: raucously, raucousness, raucity

repudiate: (vb) to reject

The celebrity repudiated claims that she had undergone plastic surgery.

Word Forms: repudiable, repudiative, repudiation, repudiatory, repudiator

repugnant: (adj) offensive

The spoiled eggs that had sat in the hot car for several weeks offered the most repugnant smell I had ever experienced.

Word Forms: repugnantly, repugnance, repugnancy

sagacious: (adj) acutely insightful and wise

The sagacious teacher was quickly able to pinpoint Sarah's learning disability, and thus tailor lessons to better help the child comprehend the material.

Word Forms: sagaciously, sagaciousness, sagacity

Related Word: sage

sanctimonious: (adj) being hypocritically religious or righteous

The principal gave me a sanctimonious lecture about my tardiness, even though he was late to our last two meetings.

Word Forms: sanctimoniously, sanctimoniousness, sanctimony, sanctimonial

Related Words: sanctity, sanctify

sanguine: (adj) confidently optimistic and cheerful

Dr. Sanchez enjoyed working with Sandy, his most sanguine patient; she was always confident that her test results would be good, and if they weren't, she was optimistic about her treatment.

Word Forms: sanguinely, sanguineness, sanguinity

scintillating: (adj) brilliantly clever or flashy and exciting

The animated movie has been praised for its scintillating dialogue, which is intended more for adults than children.

Word Forms: scintillatingly, scintillate, scintillant, scintillantly, scintillation

sedulous: (adj) marked by care and persistent effort

Siera was impressed by Wayne's sedulous pursuit of a date; every day for the last three weeks, he had sent her a flower.

Word Forms: sedulously, sedulousness, sedulity

solicitous: (adj) anxious, eager, or worried

The solicitous applicant was forced to wait three months before he received a response from the college.

Word Forms: solicitously, solicitousness

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

spurious: (*adj*) false; not legitimate

The applicant made spurious claims about attending a prestigious private school, but when the college learned the truth, they denied his application.

Word Forms: spuriously, spuriousness

subterfuge: (*n*) something intended to deceive

Susan used the subterfuge of homework to avoid going to her grandmother's house with the rest of her family.

Related Word: fugitive

surreptitious: (*adj*) stealthy and secret

Before the colonists declared independence, they held a series of surreptitious meetings to secretly discuss their plan.

Word Forms: surreptitiously, surreptitiousness

tacit: (*adj*) unspoken and implied

Although she never commented on our performance, the principal gave her tacit approval of our band by asking us to play at the next school function.

Word Forms: tacitly, tacitness

Related Word: taciturn

tenuous: (*adj*) very thin; lacking substance

"The dog ate my homework," is a tenuous excuse that no teacher will believe.

Word Forms: tenuously, tenuousness, tenuity

truculence: (*n*) brutal cruelty and aggressiveness

After the fight in school, Truman was expelled; the school board said that his truculence was a danger to the others.

Word Forms: truculent, truculently, truculency

tumultuous: (*adj*) characterized by unrest, commotion, or agitation

Tommy's and Gina's relationship had always been tumultuous; they often broke up after explosive arguments, only to get back together hours later.

Word Forms: tumultuously, tumultuousness, tumult, tumultuary

vociferous: (*adj*) marked by loud outcry

When the newspaper ran an article on the benefits of a dress code, there were vociferous complaints from the students.

Word Forms: vociferously, vociferousness, vociferate, vociferation, vociferant, vociferator Related Word: voice

PowerScore's Top 100 Extreme Repeat Offenders

In the survey of previously administered SATs and PSATs, these vocabulary words were among the most difficult.

abstemious: (*adj*) sparing in consumption, especially of food and drink

Abby's emaciated figure was the result of her abstemious lifestyle; she never ate breakfast or lunch, and rarely ate dinner.

Word Forms: abstemiously, abstemiousness

Related Word: abstinent

amalgamation: (*n*) a combination

Amy's new dance routine is an amalgamation of styles, including ballet and jazz.

Word Forms: amalgam, amalgamate, amalgamable, amalgamative, amalgamator

analgesic: (*adj*) capable of relieving pain

Although Andy was in the most painful stages of the disease, his daughter's visit was analgesic; he was so happy to see her that his pain was significantly reduced.

Word Forms: analgesic (*n.*), analgetic

Related Word: analgesia

anthropocentrism: (*n*) theory that regards humans as the central element of the universe

People who support the theory of anthropocentrism have a difficult time believing in intelligent life on other planets.

Word Forms: anthropocentric, anthropocentrically, anthropocentricity

Related Word: anthropology

avuncular: (*adj*) resembling an uncle in kindness or indulgence

Mr. Avery developed an avuncular affection for his neighbor's children after having spent so many years next door.

Word Forms: avuncularly, avuncularity

Related Word: uncle

bromide: (*n*) a common saying

As true as the old bromides are, such as "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all," none of them are much comfort to a newly-broken heart.

Word Forms: bromidic, bromidically

byzantine: (*adj*) highly complex or intricate

In a home loan, the byzantine language and unfamiliar terminology can be intimidating to a first-time home buyer.

cacophony: (*n*) harsh, jarring sound

On the first day of school, the band's output was a cacophony of trumpets and horns; however, by the end of the year, the horn section blended well with the rest of the ensemble.

Word Forms: cacophonic, cacophonous, cacophonously

calumny: (*n*) a false statement intended to harm someone's reputation

Callie delivered the calumny about Brittany to an audience in the cafeteria; she hoped the lie would keep the other girl from becoming Prom queen.

Word Forms: calumniate, calumination, calumnious, calumniously, calumniation, calumniator

canonical: (*adj*) authorized or accepted

Pluto is no longer a canonical planet; due to its small mass, it was reclassified as a "dwarf planet" in 2006.

Word Forms: canonically, canon, canonic

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

Antonym Forms: uncanonical, uncanonically

chicanery: (n) the use of tricks to deceive someone

The con artist relied on chicanery to get his victims to reveal their Social Security numbers; he promised them a tropical vacation for simply listing their personal information.

Word Forms: chicane, chicaner

churlish: (adj) rude and vulgar

Cheryl did not think the man's churlish jokes were appropriate, and asked that he apologize for his vulgarity.

Word Forms: churlishly, churlishness, churl

circumlocution: (n) an indirect way of expressing something

Sergio hoped that his circumlocution would stall the reporters long enough to think of a better answer to their question.

Word Forms: circumlocutory, circumlocutorily, circumlocutional, circumlocutionary

concomitant: (adj) existing or occurring at the same time

Building a home can be an exciting process, but it also has concomitant stress associated with difficult decisions

Word Forms: concomitant (n.), concomitantly, concomitance

corpulent: (adj) excessively fat

The corpulent man purchased two adjacent airline seats in order to have a more comfortable flight.

Word Forms: corpulently, corpulence, corpulency

cumbersome: (adj) clumsy, awkward, and heavy

The old television set was cumbersome, making it difficult to move into the other room.

Word Forms: cumbersomely, cumbersomeness

Related Words: cumber, encumber

demarcate: (vb) to set, mark, or draw the boundaries of something

The twins demarcated the room after their fight; Demarcus was only allowed access to the right side of their room, while Demonte had to stay on the left side.

Word Forms: demarcation, demarcator

disenfranchise: (vb) to deprive of voting rights

American citizens who are convicted of a felony are disenfranchised, losing their right to vote in any election.

Word Forms: disenfranchisement, disfranchise

Antonym Forms: enfranchise, franchise

draconian: (adj) harsh and severe

In the novel, the king used draconian forms of punishment—such as torture or starvation—on any one caught plotting against the monarchy.

Word Forms: draconic, draconically

egalitarian: (adj) characterized by the belief in equal rights for all people

Edgar's egalitarian beliefs made him an excellent husband; he divided the housework equally, helping his wife with cooking, cleaning, and childcare.

Word Forms: egalitarian (n.), egalitarianism, equality

Related Word: equality

egregious: (adj) outrageously bad or offensive

Edie made the egregious mistake of asking the slightly overweight woman if she were expecting a baby.

Word Forms: egregiously, egregiousness

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

emollient: (n) having a softening or soothing effect, especially to the skin
Emmaline applied an emollient lotion to the rough calluses on her hands.
Word Forms: emollient

ephemeral: (adj) lasting a very short time
Effie's sadness over her breakup is ephemeral; she will quickly find a new boyfriend to help her forget the last.
Word Forms: ephemeral (n.), ephemeralness, ephemerality, ephemeral, ephemeralness

epistolary: (adj) relating to letters
The couple has an epistolary relationship; although they have never met, they communicate regularly through letters.
Word Forms: epistle, epistolary, epistolical, epistolize, epistoler, epistolist

erudition: (n) knowledge gained from study
Erik's erudition is sure to help him win a lot of money on the trivia-based quiz show.
Word Forms: erudition, erudite, eruditely, eruditeness

exculpate: (vb) to clear from blame
The arson suspect was exculpated when forensics revealed that the fire had been the result of faulty wiring.
Word Forms: exculpable, exculpation, exculpatory
Related Words: culpable, culprit
Antonym Forms: inculpate, inculpable, inculpation, inculpably, inculpatory, inculpability, inculpableness

exegesis: (n) an explanation or critical interpretation (especially of the Bible)
The minister is delivering an exegesis on the first two books of the Bible, where he will interpret the lessons from Genesis and Exodus and apply them to modern times.
Word Forms: exegetic, exegetical, exegetically, exegete, exegetist

flotsam: (n) 1. floating wreckage 2. useless, discarded items
In the filthy city, the gullies are filled with flotsam that finds its way into the sewer after a heavy rain.
Related Word: jetsam
Note: Flotsam originally referred to the floating wreckage of a boat, while jetsam referred to the items discarded by a ship in distress. Both are loosely used today to refer to useless, discarded items.

foible: (n) a minor flaw or weakness of character
Foster's only foible is his inability to make a decision.
Related Word: feeble

fomentation: (n) a push for trouble or rebellion
The juniors would not have participated in skip day if it weren't for the fomentation of their senior friends.
Word Forms: foment, fomenter

foppish: (adj) affecting extreme elegance in dress and manner
The foppish fellow wore a three piece suit and a top hat to the wedding.
Word Forms: foppishly, foppishness, foppery, fop

gustatory: (adj) relating to the sense of taste
The restaurant provides a gustatory experience by offering skewers of beef, pork, and poultry marinated in exotic oils.
Word Forms: gustatorily, gustation, gustative, gustativeness

halcyon: (adj) joyful, peaceful, or prosperous
During the company's halcyon days, the employees were making higher than average wages and enjoying benefits unmatched by other corporations.
Word Forms: halcyonian, halcyonic

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

histrionic: (*adj*) overly dramatic

The histrionic patient pretended to faint when he saw the needle used for the vaccination.

Word Forms: histrionic (n.), histrionics, histrionical, histrionically

ignominious: (*adj*) disgraceful and shameful

Izzy's ignominious crime brought shame and embarrassment to her entire family.

Word Forms: ignominiously, ignominiousness, ignominy

impious: (*adj*) lacking respect or devotion, usually for a god or religion

Imogene had a difficult time convincing her impious husband to attend church with the family.

Word Forms: impiously, impiousness

Antonym Forms: pious, piously, piousness

impute: (*vb*) to attribute or credit to

The doctors imputed her sudden weight loss to a problem with her thyroid gland.

Word Forms: imputable, imputably, imputative, imputatively, imputativeness, imputedly, imputer Related Word: putative

inchoate: (*adj*) in the early stages of development

Your inchoate plan for the fund-raiser has a lot of potential, but we need to discuss some details before moving forward.

Word Forms: inchoately, inchoateness, inchoation, inchoative, inchoatively

inimical: (*adj*) harmful or hostile

Oscar cast an inimical sneer at Melissa when she took credit for his idea.

Word Forms: inimically, inimicalness, inimicality, inimicable

Related Word: enemy

insidious: (*adj*) intended to entrap, deceive, or harm

Sid devised an insidious plan to get the witness to admit he hadn't really witnessed the crime.

Word Forms: insidiously, insidiousness

invidious: (*adj*) intended to hurt, offend, or discriminate

Ivan's invidious remarks to his wife shocked their guests; they had no idea that he could be so cruel.

Word Forms: invidiously, invidiousness

irascible: (*adj*) quickly aroused to anger

The irascible old lady caused a scene at the restaurant by yelling at the manager when her hamburger was overcooked.

Word Forms: irascibly, irascibleness, irascibility

Related Word: ire

lexicography: (*n*) the act of writing dictionaries

Noah Webster's career in lexicography developed from his dissatisfaction with British school books; he wrote his first dictionary to help his elementary students learn to spell.

Word Forms: lexicographic, lexicographical, lexicographically, lexicographer

Related Words: lexicon, dyslexic

loquacious: (*adj*) extremely talkative

Lance was disappointed in his loquacious date; she talked so much that she never had time to listen to any of his stories.

Word Forms: loquaciously, loquaciousness, loquacity

Related Words: eloquent, ventriloquist, soliloquy

lugubrious: (*adj*) excessively mournful; sad and gloomy

Lucy's lugubrious behavior has started to annoy her friends; it has been two months since her breakup with Josh, but she

is still as gloomy as if it had happened yesterday.

Word Forms: lugubriously, lugubriousness, lugubriosity

malediction: (n) a curse

The members of the team feared that the old woman had placed a malediction upon their season because they hadn't won a game since accidentally shattering her windshield with a foul ball.

Word Forms: maledictive, maledictory, maledict

Antonym Forms: benediction, benedictive, benedictory

Related Words: diction, dictate, dictionary

malodorous: (adj) having an unpleasant smell

My malodorous shoe smelled so terrible that my mom threw it away.

Word Forms: malodorously, malodorousness

Related Words: odor, odorously

melange: (n) a mixture

Melanie's walls are decorated with a mélange of surfing posters and beach photographs.

mendicant: (adj) begging

In the poverty-stricken country, mendicant children approach tourists to ask for food and money.

Word Forms: mendicancy, mendicity

morass: (n) 1. a swamp 2. a difficult situation

After Morgan accepted Jill's invitation to the dance, he found himself in a morass; his friend offered him a ticket to a concert that he really wanted to see, but it happened to be on the same night as the dance.

moratorium: (n) suspension of an ongoing activity

When many students were late returning from lunch, the principal placed a moratorium on off-campus lunch privileges.

Word Forms: moratory

munificent: (adj) very generous

The munificent donor gave the hospital enough money to build a specialized center for heart patients.

Word Forms: munificently, munificentness, munificence

myopic: (adj) lacking long-term vision

Maya has a myopic outlook when it comes to investment; she complains about the money she is investing now, rather than focusing on the money she will make in the future.

Word Forms: myopically, myopia

nascent: (adj) being born or beginning

The nascent hockey team did not have much experience, as this was their first year in the league.

Word Forms: nascence, nascency

neophyte: (n) a beginner

Neil is a neophyte at downhill skiing, so he should stick to the smaller hills today.

Word Forms: neophytic, neophytish, neophytism

nihilism: (n) belief in the rejection of rules and the destruction of social and political order

During the rebellion, the followers of nihilism were the first to break the laws in the city.

Word Forms: nihilistic, nihilistically, nihility, nihilist

obfuscate: (vb) to confuse or make unclear

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

If a solution to a math question requires units to be in inches, the test makers may obfuscate the question by using feet.

Word Forms: obfuscation, obfuscatory

obstreperous: (*adj*) noisily defiant or aggressive

The obstreperous students crowded the school board meeting to protest the new dress code.

Word Forms: obstreperously, obstreperousness, obstreperosity

panacea: (*n*) a cure for all diseases, or a solution to all problems

The manager believed the new software was a panacea for all of the company's computer problems, but Pam was skeptical of its ability to improve the entire system.

Word Form: panacean

parsimonious: (*adj*) extremely reluctant to spend money; frugal and stingy

The parsimonious woman told her grandchildren that the gumballs in the candy machine were too expensive.

Word Forms: parsimoniously, parsimoniousness, parsimony

paucity: (*n*) an insufficient quantity or number

Pam realized there was a paucity of hamburger buns.

penurious: (*adj*) extremely reluctant to spend money; stingy and frugal or extremely poor

The penurious old man refused to donate his spare change to the charity.

Word Forms: penuriously, penuriousness, penury

perfidious: (*adj*) tending to betray

The perfidious soldier was selling classified secrets to the army's enemies.

Word Forms: perfidiously, perfidiousness, perfidy

pernicious: (*adj*) exceedingly harmful

The pernicious rumor could ruin several lives if permitted to spread.

Word Forms: perniciously, perniciousness

perquisite: (*n*) a payment or benefit in addition to one's regular pay

While working at the marina, my perquisites included free boat storage, a discount at the tackle shop, and daily tips.

picayune: (*adj*) small and of little importance

The man is a fool to let a picayune argument destroy his friendship with his neighbor.

Word Forms: picayunish, picayunishly, picayunishness

polyglot: (*adj*) able to speak, read, or write in many languages

The polyglot woman was an asset to the company; she could speak with customers in Japan, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

Word Forms: polyglot (*n.*), polyglotism

Related Word: monoglot

potentate: (*n*) a powerful ruler

The potentate was born into the power of the monarchy; his family had ruled the country for over six hundred years.

Related Word: potent

progenitor: (*n*) a direct ancestor or originator

Although dogs now come in all shapes, sizes, and temperaments, the progenitor of their species was the wild wolf.

Word Forms: progenitorial, progenitorship

Related Word: genitor

proletarian: (*adj*) of the working class

Education is an important proletarian value; working class parents believe that a college degree will offer their children many more career choices.

Word Forms: proletarian (n.), proletarianly, proletarianness, proletarianism, proletary, proletariat

proselytize: (*vb*) to convert someone to another belief, religion, party, or cause

Prewitt spent the summer proselytizing for the governor's re-election campaign.

pugnacious: (*adj*) tending to quarrel or fight easily

Paul cannot walk his pugnacious dog in the park because she always starts fights with the other dogs.

Word Forms: pugnaciously, pugnaciousness, pugnacity

Related Word: pugilistic

punctilious: (*adj*) marked by precise accordance with details

Mr. Putnam is punctilious about punctuation; all of his students must correctly use periods, commas, and semicolons.

Word Forms: punctiliously, punctiliousness, punctilio

Related Word: punctual

quixotic: (*adj*) not sensible about practical matters; idealistic and unrealistic

I let Quincy make his quixotic plans for our summer vacation; he would soon realize that his itinerary was too expensive and unrealistic.

Word Forms: quixotical, quixotically, quixotism, quixote

Related Name: Don Quixote

raiment: (*n*) clothes

Raymond brought a change of raiment with him so that he could shower and dress after basketball practice.

Related Word: array

recalcitrant: (*adj*) stubbornly resistant to authority or control

The recalcitrant protesters were not fazed by the presence of the campus security officer, and only a handful of them disbanded when the police arrived.

Word Forms: recalcitrant (n.), recalcitrance, recalcitrancy, recalcitrate, recalcitration

remuneration: (*n*) payment

Each of the workers received remuneration for helping Remy paint his house.

Word Forms: remunerate, remunerable, remunerability, remunerably, remunerative, remuneratively, remunerativeness, remuneratory, remunerator

rhapsodize: (*vb*) to talk with great enthusiasm

The saleswoman rhapsodized about the benefits of her company's product.

Word Forms: rhapsody, rhapsodic, rhapsodical, rhapsodically, rhapsodist

schism: (*n*) division of a group into opposing factions

The disagreement in the teacher's lounge created two schisms in the school: teachers who approved of the rule change, and those who opposed it.

Word Forms: schismatic, schismatically, schismaticalness, schismatize, schismaticist

Antonym Form: schismless

sentient: (*adj*) experiencing sense perception and consciousness

In the film, the robot becomes sentient, experiencing human emotions and senses.

Word Forms: sentiently, sentience, sentiency

Antonym Forms: insentient, insentience, insentiency

VOCABULARY: REPEAT OFFENDERS

sibilant: (*adj*) having a hissing sound

The patient's respiration was weak and sibilant, the result of smoking for so many years.

Word Forms: sibilantly, sibilance, sibilancy

somnolent: (*adj*) sleepy or drowsy

The somnolent truck driver had been awake all night and was anxious to find a rest area so she could sleep.

Word Forms: somnolently, somnolence, somnolency, somnolescent

Antonym Forms: insomnia, insomnolent, insomnolently, insomnolence, insomnolency

sonorous: (*adj*) full and loud and deep, as a sound

The sound from the sonorous bell echoed throughout the cathedral.

Word Forms: sonorously, sonorousness, sonority

Antonym Form: insonorous

sophistry: (*n*) a false argument meant to trick someone

The mayor used sophistry to trick most of the town residents into believing that the property tax increase was necessary.

Word Forms: sophism, sophist, sophister

soporific: (*adj*) tending to make sleepy or drowsy

Sophie sang the soporific lullaby to help her young daughter fall asleep.

Word Forms: soporifically, soporiferous, soporiferously, soporiferousness

Related Words: soporose, soporous

specious: (*adj*) 1. plausible but false 2. deceptively pleasing

The merits of the diet are specious; while we want to believe we can eat unlimited protein, there are many health risks associated with the high-cholesterol plan.

Word Forms: speciously, speciousness, speciosity

stevedore: (*n*) a laborer who loads and unloads vessels in a port

Before the ship left port, the stevedores loaded it with nearly four tons of food and supplies for the long voyage.

Word Form: stevedore (*vb.*)

stricture: (*n*) a criticism

The film critic made several strictures about the movie's poor dialogue.

Word Form: strictured

stultify: (*vb*) to make one appear foolish, stupid, or useless

The high school student stultified herself by insisting that Pittsburgh was in Tennessee.

Word Forms: stultifyingly, stultification, stultifier

supercilious: (*adj*) arrogantly disdainful

Sue, who always wore designer clothes, glanced at my generic shoes with a supercilious sneer.

Word Forms: superciliously, superciliousness

temerity: (*n*) fearless daring

Tim jumped from the plane with temerity; he seemed so fearless and relaxed that it was difficult to tell that this was his first skydiving experience.

Word Forms: temerarious, temerariously, temerariousness

tinder: (*pos*) easily combustible material used for starting a fire

The scout leader found dried grass and dried leaves to use as tinder when starting the camp fire.

Word Forms: tindery

Related Word: tinderbox

treacly: (*adj*) overly sweet or sentimental

The movie is treacly, with several emotional scenes; it should be viewed with a box of tissues instead of a box of popcorn.
Word Forms: treacle

truncated: (*adj*) shortened by cutting off a part

The author published a truncated version of the original novel, as he knew most people would not want to read a book with so many pages.

Word Forms: truncate, truncately, truncation

Related Word: trunk

turpitude: (*n*) vile, shameful behavior

In the play, the character's turpitude exceeds the villainous behavior exhibited by typical antagonists.

unctuous: (*adj*) unpleasantly and excessively suave

The unctuous salesman winked at the ladies and flashed his college football ring at the men; ironically, his "charm" chased most customers away.

Word Forms: unctuously, unctuousness, unctuousity

vainglorious: (*adj*) feeling excessive self-importance or pride for one's own accomplishments

The vainglorious actor brushed aside the reporter's question about the charity event in order to talk about the oscar he won.

Word Forms: vaingloriously, vaingloriousness, vainglory

Related Word: vain:

verisimilitude: (*n*) the appearance of truth; the quality of seeming to be true

Even though the movie was based on a true story, the film lacked verisimilitude.

Word Forms: verisimilitudinous, verisimilar, verisimilarly

Related Words: veracity, similitude

vitiate: (*vb*) to make imperfect; to corrupt

The king was vitiated by power; soon after his coronation, he began to abuse his subjects and destroy the fair laws his father had enacted.

Word Forms: vitable, vitiating, vitiator

vitriolic: (*adj*) harsh or corrosive in tone

The orchestra teacher's vitriolic criticism stung Victoria; she had practiced all week only to be harshly critiqued in front of the entire class.

Word Forms: vitriolically, vitriol