

# 1853 Most Difficult Words

(for GRE, CAT, GMAT)

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## Word List with Meanings

(This word list is formatted narrow to make it suitable for printing)

### How to Use This Word List

The words are given in bold. The meaning is given after the equal sign (=) following a word. We have used the US spellings. The British spelling of a word, when different from the US spelling, is given in bracket after BRITISH as shown for the word **belabor** below.

**belabor** (BRITISH = belabour) = to assail verbally, to insist repeatedly or harp on

Wishing you best of success leading to worldwide opportunities for exciting career, great wealth, enriching travel, and family pride,

*-Tany*

**amphitheater** (BRITISH = amphitheatre) = oval-shaped theater

**anathema** = curse, ban

**annul** = cancel, nullify

**anodyne** = pain soothing

**anoint** = consecrate, to apply oil, especially as a sacred rite

**anonymity** = state of being anonymous, having no name

**antediluvian** = ancient, obsolete, pre historic **antithesis** =

direct opposite **apathetic** = unconcerned, indifferent

**aphasia** = inability to speak or use words **aphorism** =

maxim, old saying **aplomb** = poise, confidence

**apocryphal** = a doubtful authenticity, not genuine, fictional

**apostate** = one who abandons one's faith **apotheosis** =

Deification, glorification

**approbation** = praise, official approval **archaic** =  
Antiquated, from an earlier time **archipelago** = group of  
islands **ardor** (BRITISH = ardour) = great emotion or passion  
**arraign** = indict, to call to court to answer a charge **arrogate**  
= seize without right, to demand or claim arrogantly  
**ascendancy** = powerful state **ascribe** = to attribute **ashen** =  
resembling ashes, or deathly pale **asinine** = stupid  
**askance** = to view with suspicion, scornfully  
**askew** = crooked, tilted  
**aspersion** = slander, false rumor, damaging report **assail**  
= attack **assent** = to express agreement **assiduous** =  
hard-working, diligent, persistent **assuage** = lessen  
(pain), to make less severe, ease **astrigent** = causing  
contraction, severe, harsh **asunder** = apart, into different  
parts **atone** = make amends for a wrong **august** = noble,  
dignified, awe-inspiring, venerable **avow** = declare  
**awry** = crooked, askew, amiss **axiom** = self-evident  
truth, premise, postulate **bacchanal** = orgy, drunkenly  
festive **baleful** = hostile, malignant, harmful with evil  
intentions **balk** = hesitate, refuse, shirk, prevent **banal** =  
trite, overly common **bane** = poison, nuisance,  
something causing ruin **bastion** = fort, fortification,  
stronghold **beguile** = deceive, seduce, mislead  
**behemoth** = monster, huge creature  
**beleaguer** = besiege, to harass, plague  
**berate** = to scold harshly **bestial** =  
beast-like, brutal **bestow** = to give as  
a gift, grant **bevy** = group  
**bicker** = quarrel, to have a petty argument  
**bilious** = ill-tempered **bilk** = swindle,  
cheat, defraud **blandish** = to coax with

flattering, grovel **blight** = decay, afflict,  
destroy

**blithe** = Joyful, cheerful, or without appropriate thought

**bombast** = pompous speech

**bourgeois** = middle class

**broach** = bring up a topic of conversation

**brusque** = curt, rough and abrupt in manner

**burgeon** **bulwark** = fortification  
brawny

= sprout or flourish **burly** = husky,

**cabal** = plot, a secret group seeking to overturn something

**cadaver** = corpse, dead body **cajole** = encourage, coax,

flatter **calumny** = Slander, false and malicious accusation

**canard** = hoax, a lie

**candor** (BRITISH = candour) = frankness, honesty of expression

**canvass** = survey, examine thoroughly

**capricious** = fickle, impulsive, whimsical, without much thought

**careen** = swerve, to lean on one side **castigate** = criticize,

punish, chastise **cataclysm** = catastrophe, disaster **cathartic** =  
purgative, purifying, cleansing

**catholic** = universal, worldly

**caucus** = a small group within an organization or a meeting of such a group

**cavil** = quibble, raise trivial objections

**cede** = transfer ownership, to surrender possession of something

**ensorious** = condemning speech, severely critical **chagrin** =

shame, embarrassment, humiliation **chalice** = goblet, cup

**chary** = cautious, watchful, extremely shy

**cherubic** = sweet, innocent **chicanery** =

trickery, fraud, deception **chide** = scold, express

disapproval **chimerical** = imaginary, impossible

**choleric** = easily angered, short-tempered

**circumlocution** = roundabout expression

**circumspect** = cautious, wary **circumvent** = evade, avoid, to go around **citadel** = fortress or stronghold **clamor** (BRITISH = clamour) = noisy outcry **cleave** = to split or separate, to stick, adhere **clemency** = forgiveness, merciful leniency **cloister** = refuge, to confine, seclude **coalesce** = combine, to grow together **coddle** = to pamper, baby, treat indulgently **cogent** = well-put, convincing, logically forceful **cognate** = from the same source, related **cognomen** = family name, any name, nickname **colloquy** = conference

**collusion** = conspiracy, collaboration, complicity

**commodious** = spacious

**complicity** = guilt by association, knowing partnership in wrong doing

**compunction** = remorse, regret

**concur** = To agree

**conflagration** = large fire, big, destructive fire

**confluence** = flowing together, meeting of two streams, meeting place

**confound** = bewilder, to baffle, perplex

**congeal** = solidify, as a liquid freezing, to become thick or solid

**conjecture** = hypothesis, speculation, prediction **conjure** = summon, to evoke a spirit, cast a spell **consanguinity** = related by blood, kinship **consecrate** = make holy, dedicate to a goal, to declare sacred **construe** = interpret or to explain **continence** = self-control, self-restraint

**contrite** = apologetic, deeply sorrowful and repentant for a wrong

**contusion** = A bruise

**conundrum** = enigma, puzzle or problem with no solution, riddle

**convivial** = sociable, festive, fond of eating, drinking, and people

**convoke** = convene, summon, to call together

**coquette** = woman who flirts

**corroborate** = to confirm, verify

**coterie** = small group, group of people with a common interest or purpose

**countenance** = facial expression, to favor, support **cower** = showing fear,

to cringe in fear **crass** = crude, unrefined **craven** = cowardly

**credence** = Belief, acceptance of something as true or real

**creed** = Belief or principle **cringe** = cower, to shrink in fear

**culpable** = blameworthy, guilty, responsible for wrong

**cupidity** = greed **curmudgeon** = boor, cranky person

**dally** = procrastinate, to act playfully or waste time

**debase** = to degrade, or lower in quality or stature

**debauch** = to corrupt, seduce from virtue or duty

**debutante** = a girl debuting into society **decadence** = deterioration, decay (e.g. moral or cultural) **decapitate** = kill by beheading

**deciduous** = shedding leaves, short-lived, temporary **decorous** =

seemly, proper, tasteful, socially correct **decry** = castigate, to belittle,

openly condemn **deference** = courteously yielding to another, respect,

honor **defile** = pollute, to make unclean or dishonor **deft** = skillful,

dexterous **defunct** = extinct, no longer existing, dead **deleterious** =

harmful, destructive, detrimental **deluge** = a flood, to submerge,  
overwhelm **demagogue** = An unprincipled politician, leader **demean** =  
to degrade, humiliate, humble **demur** = take exception, to express  
doubts or objections **denigrate** = defame, to slur or blacken someone's  
reputation **depravity** = immorality, sinfulness **deprecate** = belittle,  
disparage **deride** = To ridicule, to mock, make fun of **desecrate** =  
profane, to abuse something sacred **desiccate** = dehydrate, to dry  
completely **despondent** = depressed, feeling discouraged and dejected  
**desultory** = without direction in life, at random, rambling, unmethodical  
**diatribe** = long denunciation, bitter verbal attack **dichotomy** = a  
division into two parts **didactic** = instructional **dilettante** = amateur,  
dabbler **disabuse** = correct, to free from a misconception **disburse** =  
pay out  
**disconsolate** = inconsolable, unable to be consoled, extremely sad  
**discrete** = separate, distinct  
**discursive** = rambling, wandering from topic to topic **disdain** = to regard with scorn and  
contempt **disingenuous** = deceptive, sly and crafty **disjointed** = disconnected, incoherent, being  
separated **disparage** = belittle, speak disrespectfully about **disparate** = various, dissimilar,  
different in kind **disparity** = difference, contrast, dissimilarity **dispirit** = discourage, to  
dishearten, make dejected **dissipate** = scatter **distend** = swell, inflate, bloat **distraught** =  
**dotage** = senility, mental decline  
**dour** = sullen and gloomy, stern and severe  
**droll** = amusing in a wry  
distressed, very worried **docile** **dulcet** = melodious, pleasant sounding =  
domesticated, trained, tame **duplicity** = deceit, treachery, dishonesty, double-dealing **duress** =  
coercion, imprisonment **ebb** = recede, to fade away  
**ebullient** = exuberant, full of enthusiasm and high spirits  
**eclectic** = joyful  
**edify** = instruct morally and spiritually  
**efface** = To obliterate **effrontery** = insolence  
**effulgent** = brilliant **elicit** = provoke

**elucidate** = make clear, clarify **emaciated** =  
underfed, gaunt **embroil** = involve, cause to  
fall into disorder **emend** = correct  
**encomium** = warm praise **encumber** =  
burden, to hinder, restrict motion **endemic** =  
Peculiar to some specified country or people  
**enervate** = weaken, sap strength from  
**engender** = generate, to produce **enigmatic**  
= puzzling, inexplicable **enjoin** = urge,  
order, command **ennui** = boredom, lack of  
interest and energy **enthrall** (BRITISH =  
enthrall) = mesmerize, to captivate, enchant  
**entreat** = plead, beg  
**epicure** = gourmet, person with refined taste in food and wine  
**epigram** = saying, short, witty saying or poem **epithet** =  
name, appellation, phrase **equine** = pertaining to horses **erode**  
= wear away, to diminish **errant** = wandering, mistaken  
**eschew** = avoid, to abstain from **espouse** = to support or  
advocate **estranged** = alienated, separated **euthanasia** =  
mercy-killing **evanescent** = fleeting, very brief, short-lived  
**evinced** = attest, demonstrate, to show clearly

**exacerbate** = worsen  
**exasperate** = irritate, vex  
**execrable** = very bad, abominable, utterly detestable  
**exemplary** = outstanding, serving as an example  
**exhort** = strongly urge **exhume** = uncover, to  
remove from a grave **exonerate** = free from blame

**exorcise** = to expel evil spirits **expedient** =  
advantageous, convenient, efficient **expiate** = atone,  
make amends for **expunge** = erase, eliminate  
completely **extenuate** = To diminish the gravity or  
importance of **extol** = praise highly **extraneous** = not  
essential, unnecessary **extricate** = Disentangle, free  
**exuberant** = joyous, happy **exude** = emit, ooze **exult**  
= rejoice **facetious** = joking, sarcastic, witty **facile** =  
very easy **fallow** = unproductive, unplowed **fealty** =  
Loyalty **fecund** = fertile, fruitful, productive **feign** =  
pretend, give a false impression **fetid** = foul-  
smelling, putrid, stinking **fickle** = always changing  
one's mind **fidelity** = Loyalty **filch** = steal something  
of little value **filial** = of a son or daughter **fitful** =  
**fastidious** = meticulous, careful with details  
**fathom** = understand, to measure the depth of  
**fatuous** = inane, stupid  
irregular **flagrant** = outrageous, shameless **fledgling**  
= just beginning, struggling **flippant** = Having a  
light, pert, trifling disposition **florid** = ruddy, with  
too much decoration **flout** = to show disregard for  
the law or rules  
**foible** = weakness, minor fault **foist** =  
pass off a fake **foment** = instigate  
**fortuitous** = happening by luck, fortunate  
**foster** = encourage **fracas** = noisy fight  
**fraught** = filled **frenetic** = harried,  
neurotic **frond** = bending tree **fulminate**  
= denounce, menace **fulsome** =  
excessive, insincere **furtive** = stealthy  
**gainsay** = to deny **gargantuan** = large



**garner** = gather **garrulous** = talkative,  
loquacious, wordy **gauche** = awkward,  
crude **genre** = kind, category **gibe** =  
heckle **glib** = insincere manner **glower** =  
stare angrily **goad** = encourage **gossamer**  
= thin and flimsy **gouge** = overcharge,  
scoop out **grimace** = expression of  
disgust **grovel** = crawl, obey **guile** =  
deceit, trickery **hackneyed** = trite  
**hapless** = unlucky **harangue** = a  
pompous speech **harbinger** = forerunner  
**haughty** = arrogant **hedonism** = the pursuit of pleasure in life **heinous** = shocking, wicked  
**hermetic** = airtight, sealed **hew** = to cut with an ax **hiatus** = interruption **hone** = sharpen  
**illimitable** = limitless **imbue** = infuse, dye, wet **immure** = build a wall around **impair** = injure  
**impassive** = calm, without feeling **impeccable** = faultless **impecu**  
**imperious** = domineering  
**impertinent** = insolent, rude  
**imperturbable** = calm  
**impervious** = Impenetrable **innis** = indigent, having no money **impetuous** = quick to act  
without thinking **implausible** = unlikely, inconceivable **impolitic** = unwise **importune** = urgent  
request **impregnable** = totally safe from attack **impugn** = criticize **inadvertent** = unintentional  
**inane** = vacuous, stupid **incandescent** = brilliant **incarcerate** = to put in a jail **incendiary** =  
burning easily, flammable **inchoate** = just begun **incipient** = beginning to exist  
**incisive** = keen, penetrating  
**incognito** = disguised  
**incommunicado** = unable to communicate with others  
**incontrovertible** = Indisputable **inculcate** = instill,  
indoctrinate, to teach **incumbent** = obligatory,  
required **incursion** = raid **indict** = charge with a crime  
**indigenous** = Native **indigent** = very poor **indolent** =

lazy **indomitable** = invincible, fearless **indubitable** =  
unquestionable **inexorable** = relentless, inflexible

**infallible** = incapable of making a mistake

**infernal** = hellish **infirmity** = ailment,

disease **ingrate** = ungrateful person

**ingratiating** = pleasing, flattering, endearing

**inimical** = adverse, hostile, unfriendly

**innocuous** = Harmless **innuendo** = indirect

and subtle criticism **inscrutable** = cannot

be fully understood **insinuate** = to suggest,

imply, say indirectly **insipid** = flat, dull,

lacking flavor **insolent** = insulting **insular**

= narrow-minded, isolated **insuperable** =

insurmountable **insurgent** = rebellious

**insurrection** = uprising, rebellion

**inter** = bury **interdict** = prohibit **interloper** =

intruder, meddler in others' affairs

**interminable** = unending **internecine** =

mutually destructive **intransigent** =

uncompromising **intrepid** = fearless **inundate**

= flood **invective** = verbal insult **inveigh** = to

rail against, protest strongly **inveterate** =

habitual, chronic, long-standing **invidious** =

**irascible** = irritable

**itinerant** = Wandering, unsettled

**jaded** = spent, bored with one's situation

**juggernaut** = unstoppable force

incurring ill-will **kismet** = fate **knell** = sound

of a funeral bell **lachrymose** = tearful

**lampoon** = satirize, to attack with satire

**larceny** = theft of property **largess** = generous

donation **legerdemain** = trickery **levity** =

Frivolity, humor **libertine** = one without moral

restraint **licentious** = lewd, immoral **limpid** =

transparent, clearly understood **lissome**

(BRITISH = lissom) = agile, supple **lithe** =

moving and bending with ease **loathe** = abhor,

hate **loquacious** = Talkative

**lugubrious** = sad, sorrowful **lurid** = glowing,

shocking **macabre** = gruesome **machination** = plot

or scheme **maelstrom** = whirlpool, agitated state of

mind **malapropism** = comical misuse of a word

**malcontent** = one who is forever dissatisfied

**malediction** = curse **malefactor** = evildoer, culprit

**malodorous** = fetid, foul-smelling **manifold** =

multiple, diverse **martial** = warlike, pertaining to the

military **martinet** = strict disciplinarian **masochist** =

one who enjoys pain **maudlin** = weepy, sentimental

**maverick** = a person who resists adherence to a group

**mawkish** = sickeningly sentimental **meander** = to

wander aimlessly without direction **mendicant** =

beggar **mercurial** = changeable, volatile, quick

**mettle** = courage, capacity for bravery **minatory** =

threatening **mirth** = jollity, laughter **miscreant** = one

who behaves criminally **missive** = letter or note

**modicum** = a small amount **mollify** = to calm or

make less severe **moot** = disputable, previously

decided **mordant** = biting, sarcastic **mores** = moral

standards, customs **moribund** = near death

**mote** = speck, small particle **motley** = diverse, many colored **multifarious** = diverse, many-sided **munificent** = generous **myriad** = innumerable **nascent** = incipient, coming into existence **natal** = related to birth **necromancy** = sorcery, black magic **Nemesis** = implacable foe, often victorious opponent **neologism** = new word or expression **neophyte** = beginner **nether** = located

**noisome** = harmful, stinking

**nonentity** = person of no significance

**obdurate** = unyielding

**obeisance** = homage, deference

under or below **nettle** = irritate **niggard** **obfuscate** = bewilder, muddle, to confuse **ly** =

stingy **oblique** = indirect **obliterate** = destroy **obloquy** = slander, abusive language **obsequious**

= fawning, servile, overly submissive **obsequy** = funeral ceremony **obstinate** = stubborn

**obstreperous** = noisy, unruly, troublesome **obtuse** = stupid, dull **occlude** = block, to shut **odious**

= despicable, hateful **onerous** = burdensome **opprobrious** = abusive, disgraceful

**ordain** = appoint **ossify** = harden

**ostensible** = apparent, seeming

**ostentatious** = pretentious, showy

**overweening** = arrogant, forward

**pacifist** = one who opposes all violence **paean**

= a song of praise **palaver** = babble, nonsense

**pall** = to become dull or weary **palliate** = to

make less serious, ease **pallid** = pale, sallow,

lacking color or liveliness **palpable** =

touchable, obvious, real **paltry** = scarce,

pitifully small or worthless **panache** =

flamboyance, flair

**pandemic** = spread over a whole area or country

**panegyric** = praise **panoply** = full suit of armor

**paragon** = model of excellence or perfection

**pariah** = outcast **parley** = conference,

discussion **parry** = avert, ward off, reflect

**partisan** = supporter **pathos** = emotion, feeling

of sadness **patrician** = aristocrat

**patrimony** = inheritance or heritage derived from one's father

**peccadillo** = a minor fault **pedagogue** = dull, formal teacher

**pedant** = a person who is too interested in formal rules and small unimportant details

**pejorative** = insulting, having bad connotations **pellucid** = transparent, easily understood

**penance** = voluntary suffering to repent for a wrong **penchant** = inclination **penitent** = repentant

**pensive** = sad **perdition** = damnation, complete ruin **peremptory** = dictatorial **perennial** =

enduring, lasting **perfidious** = treacherous ( of a person ) **perfunctory** = careless, done in a

routine way **peripatetic** = moving from place to place **pernicious** = destructive **pert** = flippant,

**philistine** = barbarian, narrow-minded person

**phlegmatic** = sluggish, someone who is calm

**pillory** = punish by ridicule

**pique** = sting, arouse interest

bold **pertinacious** = persevering **pertinent** **pithy** = concise, to the point

**nt** = Relevant, applicable **pittance** = alms, trifle **placid** = Serene, calm **platitude** = trite remark,

stale **plebeian** = common, vulgar **plethora** = overabundance **poignant** = pungent, sharp,

emotionally moving **polemic** = a controversy **portend** = omen

**portly** = large, dignified

**potentate** = sovereign, king

**prattle** = chatter, foolish talk

**precept** = principle, law

=

**precipice** cliff, edge **precipitous** = steep **precocious**  
= advanced **precursor** = forerunner **predilection** =  
inclination, preference **premeditate** = plan in  
advance **preponderance** = predominance  
**preposterous** = ridiculous, illogical **presage** = omen,  
indicate in advance **privation** = lack of usual  
necessities or comforts **probity** = integrity, complete  
honesty **proclivity** = inclination, tendency **prodigal**  
= wasteful **prodigious** = marvelous, enormous  
**quibble** = to argue about insignificant and irrelevant details  
**quiescent** = still, motionless, at rest  
**profligate** = licentious, prodigal, corrupt **progenitor**  
= ancestor **progeny** = children **prognosis** = forecast  
**prognosticate** = foretell **prolix** = long-winded,  
wordy **promontory** = headland, cape **promulgate** =  
publish, disseminate **propensity** = inclination  
**propinquity** = nearness, kinship **propitiate** = satisfy,  
to win over **propitious** = auspicious, favorable  
**prosaic** = uninspired, flat, dull **proscribe** = prohibit,  
to condemn **proselytize** (BRITISH = proselytise) =  
recruit, convert **protean** = changing readily **protract**  
= To prolong, extend  
**provident** = having foresight, thrifty  
**prude** = puritan **prudent** = cautious,  
careful **prurient** = exhibiting lewd  
desires **puerile** = Childish  
**pugnacious** = combative, quarrelsome  
**pulchritude** = beauty  
**punctilious** = careful in observing rules of behavior or ceremony  
**pungent** = sharp smell or taste **purport** = claim to be  
**pusillanimous** = cowardly **quaff** = to drink heartily **quagmire** =

difficult situation **quandary** = dilemma, difficulty **quell** =  
suppress, allay **querulous** = complaining

**Quixotic** = impractical, romantic **raconteur** =  
story teller **rampant** = unbridled, raging **rancor**  
(BRITISH = rancour) = resentment, dislike **rant** =  
rage, scold **rapacious** = grasping, avaricious,  
greedy **rapprochement** = reconciliation **raze** =  
destroy

**recalcitrant** = resisting authority or control

**recant** = retract a statement

**recidivism** = habitual criminal activity

**recondite** = known to only a few

**recreant** coward, betrayer of faith

**refractory** = obstinate **regal** = royal

**relegate** = assign to an inferior

position **renege** = break a promise

**replete** = complete **reprehensible** =

blameworthy, unacceptable **reproach**

= blame **reprobate** = morally

unprincipled person **reprove** = to

criticize or correct **repudiate** = to

reject as having no authority **requiem**

= rest, a mass for the dead **requite** =

to return in kind **rescind** = revoke,

cancel **respite** = interval or relief

**resplendent** = shining, splendid

**restitution** = act of compensating for

loss or damage **restive** = nervous,

=

uneasy **retort** = quick replay **retrench**  
= reorganize, to regroup **retrieve** =  
reclaim **retrograde** = regress **revelry**  
= merrymaking **revere** = honor **revile**  
= to criticize with harsh language  
**revulsion** = aversion **ribald** = coarse,  
vulgar **rife** = widespread, abundant  
**risque** = off-color, racy **rostrum** =  
stage for public speaking **ruminare** =  
reflect upon  
**rustic** = rural **sacrosanct** = sacred **sagacious** = wise  
**sallow** = sickly yellow in color **sanguine** = cheerful  
**sapient** = wise, shrewd **sardonic** = scornful **saunter**  
= walk in a leisurely manner **savant** = scholar **schism**  
= a division or separation **scintilla** = very small  
amount **scintillate** = sparkle **scoff** = ridicule  
**scurrilous** = abusive, insulting **secular** = worldly,  
nonreligious **sedition** = treason, resistance to  
authority **sententious** = concise, trying to appear wise  
**sequester** = to remove or set apart **seraphic** =  
angelic, pure **serendipity** = making fortunate  
discoveries **servile** = slavish, obedient **simian** =  
monkey like **simper** = smile foolishly, smirk  
**sinecure** = well paid position with little responsibility  
**skulk** = sneak about **slake** = to calm down or  
moderate **sloth** = laziness **slovenly** = sloppy **sobriety**  
= composed **sobriquet** = nickname **sodden** = soaked  
**sojourn** trip, visit **solace** = consolation  
**solecism** = ungrammatical construction  
**solicitous** = considerate, concerned  
**soliloquy** = A monologue **solstice** = furthest



point **somber** (BRITISH = sombre) = Gloomy  
**somnambulist** = sleepwalker **somnolent** =  
Sleepy **soporific** = sleep inducing **sordid** =  
foul, ignoble, dirty and unpleasant **spawn** =  
produce **specious** = false but plausible  
**sporadic** = occurring irregularly **sportive** =  
playful **spurn** = reject **squalid** = filthy **staid**  
**tawdry** = gaudy, cheap = demure,  
**temerity** = boldness sedate, boring  
**steadfast** = loyal, immovable **stentorian** =  
extremely loud **stigma** = mark of disgrace  
**stilted** = formal, stiff, unnatural **stoic** =  
indifferent to pain or pleasure **stolid** =  
impassive **stratagem** = trick **stricture** =  
negative criticism **stultify** = inhibit,  
enfeeble **stymie** = hinder, thwart **suave** =  
smooth **sublimate** = to repress impulses  
**sublime** = lofty, excellent  
**subterfuge** = cunning, ruse  
**succulent** = juicy, delicious  
**sully** = stain **supercilious** =  
arrogant **supplant** =  
replace **surly** = rude, crass  
**surmise** = to guess  
**surmount** = overcome  
**surreptitious** = secretive  
**sustenance** = supplying the necessities of life  
**swarthy** = dark (as in complexion) **Sybarite**  
= pleasure-seeker, lover of luxury **sycophant**  
= flatterer, flunky **taciturn** = who does not

=

talk much **talon** = claw of an animal

**tantamount** = equivalent

**ample** = enough, specious, abundant **amplify** =

enlarge, increase, intensify **ancillary** =

supplementary, subsidiary, subordinate **anomaly** =

deviation from the rule, irregularity

**artifact** (BRITISH = artefact) = an object made by human, of historical interest

**artisan** = a skilled craftsman **authoritarian** = dictator, extremely

strict, bossy **autocrat** = dictator or a high ranking government officer

**bifurcated** = divided into two branches, forked **blatant** = glaring, obvious,

showy **bountiful** = abundant, plentiful **brazen** = bold, shameless, impudent

**breach** = breaking of a rule, agreement, or law

**caricature** = cartoon, exaggerated portrait

**carnivorous** = meat-eating

**catalyst** = something that causes change without being changed

**centripetal** = tending toward the center **chaotic** = in utter disorder

**chauvinist** = a man who thinks men are better than women

**complement** = To make complete, perfect **composure** =

Calmness of appearance **compress** = to reduce, squeeze

**constituent** = electorate, component, part **constraint** =

something that limits what you can do **correlation** =

mutual relationship, association **corrugate** = to wrinkle or

draw into folds **depose** = testify, to remove from a high

position **depreciate** = To lessen the worth of **determinate**

= Definitely limited or fixed, conclusive **dexterous** =

skillful, adroit **dwindle** = To diminish or become less

**earthy** = crude **entity** = being, existence **equity** =

impartiality, justice **equivocal** = Ambiguous, open to two

interpretations **eulogy** = high praise **exotic** = Foreign,

romantic **extemporaneous** = unrehearsed **fabricate** =

construct **fallible** = Capable of erring **felicitous** = very

appropriate, pertinent **flair** = a natural aptitude **flaunt** = to

show off

**flora** = plants

**fraudulent** = Counterfeit

**fusion** = union, coalition

**germinate** = To begin to develop into an embryo or higher form

**heterogeneous** = composed of unlike parts, different

**hypothetical** = theoretical, speculative **immune** = Exempt, as

from disease **imprudent** = unwise **inception** = The beginning

**inconsequential** = Valueless **indefatigable** = never getting tired

**indicative** = suggestive, implying **indisputable** = not disputed, unquestioned **infantile** = childish, immature **ingenuous** = naïve and unsophisticated **injurious** = harmful **innovate** = to invent, modernize **integrity** = decency, honest, wholeness **intermittent** = starting and stopping **introspective** = looking within oneself **introvert** = To turn within **invoke** = request assistance or protection **iota** = A small mark or part **irreverent** = disrespectful

**jaundice** = disease of yellowish discoloration of skin

**lackluster** (**BRITISH** = lacklustre) = dull, dreary, colorless

**laudable** = Praiseworthy **lexicon** = A dictionary

**litigation** = lawsuit **lunar** = related to the moon

**luscious** = Rich, sweet, and delicious

**metaphor** = figure of speech comparing two different things

**microcosm** = The world on a small scale **migratory** = Wandering from place to place with the seasons **mishap** = Misfortune **mnemonic** = related to memory **monotony** = A lack of variation **omnivorous** = eating everything

**opportunist** = One who takes advantage of circumstances

**orifice** = a small opening **overt** = open to view **paradox** = seemingly in contradiction **parasite** = one who lives at another's expense **patent** = the right to make or sell a new invention **pediatrician** (**BRITISH** = paediatrician) = a child doctor **perusal** = reading carefully **plenitude** = Abundance

**polyglot** = Speaking several tongues **propagate** = To spread

**reactionary** = related to, or favoring reaction **reciprocate** = To give and take mutually **regimen** = government rule, systematic plan **rehabilitate** = To restore to a former status

**reminiscence** = remembrance of past events **renegade** = rebel, dissident **resilient** = the quality of springing back

**retroactive** = applying to an earlier time **sensual** = related to

the physical senses **strident** = rough, harsh, caustic, loud  
**subliminal** = subconscious, imperceptible **superannuated** =  
retired

**superficial** = shallow and phony **supple** = Easily

bent **synchronous** = happening at the same time

**tainted** = contaminated, corrupt **talisman** = an  
object supposed to bring good luck **theocracy** =

government by the priests **therapeutic** =

medicinal **tortuous** = with bends or turns

**transcend** = To surpass **transmute** = To change  
in nature or form **tribute** = a gift or statement

showing respect **turbulence** = violent agitation

**unobtrusive** = inconspicuous, not blatant **vent** =  
small opening, outlet **verisimilitude** =

appearance of being true **versatile** = adaptable,  
all-purpose **vicarious** = substitute, surrogate

**viscous** = sticky, gluey, thick **warranty** =  
guarantee of a product's soundness **wax** =

increase, grow

**weather** = endure the effects of weather or other forces

**yoke** = join together, unite

**temporal** = limited by time, secular, not lasting forever

**tenacious** = persistent **tendentious** = biased **tenet** =

doctrine, principle **tensile** = capable of being stretched

**tenuous** = thin, insubstantial **tepid** = lukewarm **terse** =  
concise, brief **tether** = tie down, tie with a rope

**thrall** = slave

**thwart** = to block or prevent from happening

**timorous** = fearful, timid **tirade** = scolding

speech **toady** = fawner, sycophant **torpid** =

lethargic, inactive **transient** = fleeting,  
temporary **translucent** = clear, lucid, almost  
transparent **travesty** = caricature, farce, parody  
**trenchant** = incisive, penetrating **trepidation** =  
fear **trite** = commonplace, insincere **truculent** =  
fierce, savage, tending to argue a lot **truism** =  
self-evident truth **tryst** = meeting, rendezvous  
**tumult** = commotion **turbid** = muddy, clouded  
**turgid** = Swollen, not flowing **turpitude** =  
Depravity, evil **tyro** = beginner **umbrage** =  
resentment **unctuous** = insincere **unkempt** =  
messy in appearance **unsullied** = spotless **usurp**  
= seize, to appropriate  
**usury** = overcharge, lending money at illegal rates of interest  
**vacillate** = To waver  
**vacuous** = inane, empty, not showing intelligence or purpose  
**vapid** = vacuous, insipid **venal** = willing to do wrong for  
money **vendetta** = grudge, feud  
**venerable** = respected because of age  
**verdant** = green, lush **vex** = annoy,  
to irritate **vicissitude** = changing  
fortunes **vie** = compete **vignette** =  
scene, decorative design **vilify** =  
defame **vindicate** = free from blame  
**virile** = manly **virulent** = deadly,  
poisonous **vitiate** = spoil, ruin  
**vitriolic** = scathing, burning  
**voluminous** = bulky, extensive, or great quantity  
**wallow** = indulge, luxuriate  
**vociferous** = adamant, clamoring  
**volition** = free will

**wan** = sickly pale **wane** =  
dissipate, wither **wary** = guarded,  
careful **welter** = confusion,  
hodgepodge **whet** = stimulate, to  
sharpen **wily** = shrewd, clever  
**winsome** = charming **wizened** =  
shriveled **wraith** = ghost **wry** =  
twisted, amusing **zephyr** = gentle  
breeze, west wind

**amphibian** = creature that lives on land and water **anachronism** =  
Anything occurring or existing out of its proper time **angular** =  
Sharp-cornered or sharp angled

**anthropomorphous** = Nonhuman having or resembling human form or quality

**apothegm** = a short saying **appraise** = assess, evaluate the value **arable** =  
suitable for cultivation **asperity** = roughness of temper **assay** = to analyze or  
estimate **audit** = formal examination of final records **augury** = prophecy or  
prediction of events **aver** = to declare to be true **aversion** = intense dislike  
**aviary** = cage where birds are kept **banter** = to tease playfully and in good  
humor **beatific** = supremely happy, angelic, saintly **benighted** = un  
enlightened **benison** = Blessing

**blanch** = bleach, whiten, to take the color out **bludgeon** = to  
hit someone several times with a heavy object **bolster** = To  
support or make something strong **burnish** = To make  
brilliant or shining

**canny** = clever and able to think quickly, especially about money or business

**carnal** = of the flesh, sensual **carp** = to find faults, complain constantly

**cavalcade** = a procession or sequence **celerity** = quick moving or acting

**cession** = Surrender, as of possessions or rights **champ** = to chew noisily

**chastise** = to criticize or punish someone **chattel** = piece of personal

property **churlish** = rude, ungracious **circumscribe** = To confine within  
bounds **clairvoyant** = who can see the future, having ESP  
**collate** = to sort or put in proper order  
**complaisant** = Agreeable, friendly  
**consequential** = important **contumacious**  
= rebellious **cuisine** = cookery, style of  
cooking **culmination** = climax, final stage  
**curator** = in charge of a library or museum  
**daunt** = to frighten, subdue  
**declivity** = a place that declines or slopes downwards  
**deranged** = insane, delirious, maniacal **derivative** =  
copied or adapted, not original **descry** = To discern,  
to discover or reveal **diffidence** = shyness, lack of  
confidence **dirge** = lament with music, funeral hymn  
**discomfit** = To put to confusion, discomfort  
**discordant** = harsh-sounding, badly out of tune  
**dissimulate** = to disguise **distaff** = the female branch  
of a family **dolt** = a stupid person  
**domineer** = to rule over something in a tyrannical way  
**doughty** = brave, dauntless **dross** = waste matter, worthless  
impurities **dyspeptic** = suffering from indigestion, gloomy  
and irritable **effluvium** = noxious smells **effusive** =  
expressing emotion without restraint **elation** = exhilaration,  
joy **eloquence** = fluent and effective speech **emollient** =  
cream for softening, making supple **ensconce** = to hide  
safely, settle comfortably **enunciate** = verbalize, articulate  
**epilogue** = The close of a narrative or poem



**epitome** A simplified representation **equestrian** = one who rides on horseback **excoriate** = to denounce  
**exculpate** = to clear of blame or fault **expatiate** = to discuss in detail, elaborate **expatriate** = who does not live in one's own country **expurgate** = to purify by removing obscenities **extrinsic** = not inherent or essential, coming from without **extrovert** = an outgoing person **fell** = to chop, cut down **fervid** = fervent, passionate **fetter** = to restrain, to bind **finicky** = meticulous, fussy **fissure** = a crack or break **flaccid** = limp, flabby, weak **flamboyant** = Characterized by extravagance **fluster** = confuse  
**forbearance** = Patient endurance or toleration of offenses  
**forte** = A strong point **fractious** = wayward, unruly, disorderly **frenzied** = feverishly fast, hectic **funereal** = mournful, appropriate to a funeral **gall** = bitterness, nerve  
**gambol** = Playful leaping or frisking **gaunt** = thin, emaciated **gustatory** = relevant to the sense of tasting  
**hallow** = to make holy **hoary** = white, old **holocaust** = widespread destruction **ignominious** = Shameful **impious** = not devout in religion  
**implacable** = doubtful, dubious **improvident** = lacking foresight or thrift **incarnadine** = blood-red in color  
**indenture** = bound to another by contract **interstice** = a small space between things **iridescent** = showing many colors **jettison** = to throw overboard, abandon **jingoism** = extremely aggressive and militant patriotism  
**lackadaisical** = Listless, idle **languor** = Lassitude of body or depression **lapidary** = relating to precious stones **latitude** = freedom from narrow limitations  
**lionize** = treat as a celebrity

=

**loiter** = dawdle, loaf

**lull** = moment of calm

**maritime** = Situated on or near the sea

**megalomania** = mental state with delusions of wealth and power

**mendacious** = Untrue **meretricious** = Alluring

by false or gaudy show **molt** = to shed hair, skin

periodically **monastic** = related to monks **morbid**

= abnormally gloomy **naiveté** = a lack of worldly

wisdom **nihilism** = a belief in nothing, extreme

skepticism **nomadic** = moving from place to

place **non sequitur** = an irrelevant conclusion

**nuptial** = relating to marriage **objurgate** = to

chide, scold **opalescent** = iridescent, displaying

colors **ornithologist** = scientist who studies birds

**orotund** pompously said

**palette** = board for mixing paints **pastiche** =

imitation of another's style **patricide** = murder of

one's own father **peculation** = theft of money or

goods **pediment** = triangular gable on a roof or

façade **penumbra** = partial shadow in an eclipse

**permeable** = penetrable **philology** = study of words

**plaintiff** = injured person in a lawsuit **plangent** =

plaintive, resounding sadly **politic** = expedient,

prudent, well devised **potable** = suitable for

drinking **presentiment** = sense of foreboding

**primordial** = existing at the beginning, rudimentary

**pummel** = beat, attack **putrid** = dirty, rotten

**quintessence** = The most essential part of anything

**ramshackle** = dilapidated, falling to pieces

**ratiocination** = reasoning **raucous** = Harsh

sounding **ravenous** = extremely hungry **rectitude**

= moral uprightness **refectory** = dining hall

**remediable** = capable of being corrected

**remonstrate** = to protest or object **retinue** = group

of attendants **rococo** = ornate, highly decorated

**roil** = to disturb or cause disorder **salubrious** =

healthy **serenity** = calm, peacefulness

=

**serrated** toothed, with a zigzag edge **sinuous**

= Curving in and out **slough** = to discard or

shed **sluggard** = lazy, inactive person **sophist**

= person good at arguing deviously

**sophomoric** = immature and overconfident

**staccato** = marked by abrupt, clear-cut sounds

**succinct** = Concise **synthetic** = artificial,

imitation **threnody** = a sad poem or song,

dirge **tremulous** = trembling, fearful

**tundra** = treeless plain found in Arctic or sub arctic regions

**upbraid** = to scold sharply **vagrant** = An idle wanderer

**variegated** = many-colored **vaunted** = boasted, bragged

**veracious** = truthful, accurate **verity** = Truth **vernal** =

related to spring **wrangle** = loud quarrel

**abase** = lower, humiliate **abash** = humiliate,

embarrass **abdicate** = give up power or position

**abeyance** = postponement, temporary suspension

**abhor** = detest, loathe

**abjure** = renounce, to formally reject or abandon

**ablution** = cleansing, washing **abortive** =

unsuccessful, interruptive while incomplete **abrogate**

= cancel, to abolish by authority **absolve** = acquit, to

forgive or free from blame **abstruse** difficult to

comprehend **abut** = touch, border on **abysmal** =

deficient, sub par **accede** = yield, express approval,

agree to **acclimate** = accustom oneself to a climate

**acclivity** = ascent, incline **accolade** = applause, praise

**accost** = to approach and speak to someone **accouter**

(BRITISH = accoutre) = equip **acme** = summit, highest

point **acquiesce** = to agree, comply passively **acrid** =

harsh, bitter, pungent, caustic **acrimonious** = caustic,  
bitter **actuate** = induce, start **acumen** = sharpness of  
insight **adamant** = insistent, uncompromising,  
unyielding **adduce** = offer as example  
**adjunct** = addition, something added, attached, or joined  
**admonish** = warn gently, caution, or reprimand **adroit** =  
skillful, accomplished, highly competent **adulation** =  
applause, high praise **advent** = arrival **adventitious** =  
accidental **aegis** = that which protects **affect** = influence  
**affray** = public brawl **agape** = openmouthed, wonder  
**aggrandize** = exaggerate, to make larger or greater in power  
**aghast** = horrified  
**alacrity** = swiftness, speed, cheerful willingness, eagerness  
**allay** = to reassure; to lessen, ease, or soothe  
**allege** = assert without proof **allegory** =  
fable, symbolic representation **alliteration**  
= repetition of the same sound **allude** =  
refer to indirectly **amenable** = agreeable  
**amiss** = wrong, out of place **amity** =  
Friendship  
**amorous** = strongly attracted to love; showing love  
**amorphous** = shapeless **amortize** = to diminish by  
installment payments **amuck** = murderous frenzy  
**anarchist** = terrorist **animadversion** = critical  
remark **apparition** = phantom **appellation** = title,  
**animus** = hate  
name  
**annals** = historical records  
**apocalyptic** = ominous, doomed **apposite** =  
**apoplexy** = stroke apt **apropos**  
**appall** (BRITISH = appal) = horrify =

=

Appropriate **arbiter** = judge **archetype** = original

model **argot** = slang **aria** = operatic song **array** =

arrangement **arroyo** = gully **artifice** = trick **aseptic**

= sterile **atelier** = workshop

**avuncular** = like an uncle **azure** = sky blue  
**badger** = To pester **badinage** = banter,  
teasing conversation **bagatelle** = nonentity,  
trifle **bandy** = discuss lightly **bard** = poet  
**baroque** = ornate **bask** = take pleasure in,  
sun **bauble** = A trinket, trifle **beatitude** =  
state of bliss **begrudge** = resent, envy  
**beholden** = in debt **bereft** = deprived of  
**beset** = harass, surround **besmirch** =  
slander, sully **bicameral** = having two  
legislative branches **bivouac** = encampment  
**blase** = bored with life **bode** = portend  
**bogus** = forged, false **brackish** = salty  
**bucolic** = rustic **burlesque** = farce **cache** =  
hiding place **cadaverous** = haggard **callow**  
= inexperienced **canine** = pertaining to dogs  
**captious** = fond of finding fault in others  
**carafe** = bottle  
**cardinal** chief

**carrion** = decaying flesh **cascade** = small  
waterfall **casuistry** = clever argument to  
trick people **cauterize** (BRITISH = cauterise)  
= to sear **chafe** = abrade **chaste** = pure,  
virgin **chasten** = castigate **cipher** = zero  
**cleft** = split **clique** = a small group **cloven**  
= split **codicil** = supplement to a will  
**cogitate** = ponder **cognizant** = aware  
**cohere** = To stick together **cohort** = an  
associate **comport** = to conduct oneself

=

**conch** = spiral shell **concordat** =

Agreement

**condescend** = patronize, talk down to, to treat someone as though you are better

**condiment** = seasoning

**condolence** = sympathy for the family or friends of a person who has recently died

**coniferous** = bearing cones **consort** = spouse **contagion** = infectious agent

**contingent** = conditional **contort** = twist **controvert** = dispute **cordon** = bond, chain **corollary** consequence

**corpulent** = fat **cortege** = procession

**coruscate** = sparkle **covenant** = agreement, pact

**crestfallen** = dejected **crevice** = crack

**cruet** = small bottle **cull** = pick out, select

**culvert** = drain **curry** = seek favor by flattery

**cynosure** = celebrity **dank** = damp **dauntless**

= courageous **deadpan** = expressionless

**dolorous** = gloomy **debonair** =

**dregs** = residue, ruffraff sophisticated,

affable **decant** = pour **decrepitude** =

enfeeblement **defamation** = slander **deflect** =

turn aside **defray** = pay **deign** = condescend

**delirium** = mental confusion, ecstasy **delve** =

dig, explore (of ideas) **demeanor** (BRITISH =

demeanour) = behavior **demented** =

deranged **demure** = sedate, reserved **denizen**

= dweller **denouement** = resolution

**deposition** = testimony **depredation** =

preying on, plunder **derelict** negligent

**desolate** = forsaken **desuetude** =

disuse **dialectic** = pertaining to debate

**diminution** = Reduction **disconcert** =

=



confuse **discretion** = prudence

**dishevel** = muss **disinter** = unearth

**disinterested** = Impartial

**disputatious** = fond of arguing

**disquisition** = elaborate treatise

**dissolute** = profligate, immoral

**dissonance** = Discord **distract** =

preoccupied, absent-minded **doggerel**

= poor verse

**drone** = speak in a monotonic voice **duenna** = governess

**ecclesiastical** = churchly **eclat** = brilliance **educe** = draw

forth, evoke **effete** = worn out **effusion** = pouring forth

**elegiac** = sad **emblazon** = imprint, brand **embryonic** =

rudimentary **emeritus** = retired, but retaining title

**enamored** (BRITISH = enamoured) = charmed, captivated

**enclave** = area enclosed within another region **engross**

captivate

=

**epoch** = era **escapade** =  
adventure **eviscerate** =  
disembowel **ex officio** = by  
virtue of position **excision** =  
removal **exegetis** =  
interpretation **exigency** =  
urgency **exiguous** = scanty  
**expletive** = oath **extant** =  
existing **extirpate** = seek out  
and destroy **extrude** = force out  
**facet** = aspect **factious** =  
causing disagreement **factitious**  
= artificial  
**factotum** = handyman **faux pas** =  
false step, mistake **febrile** = feverish,  
delirious **ferment** = turmoil **ferret** =  
rummage through **fervor** (BRITISH =  
fervour) = intensity **fester** = decay

**festive** = joyous **fete** = to  
honor **fiat** = decree  
**firebrand** = agitator  
**flagellate** = whip **flail** =  
whip **foray** = raid **fortitude**  
= patience, courage **fret** =  
worry **fritter** = squander  
**frivolity** = playfulness  
**fruition** = realization,  
completion **galvanize** =  
excite to action **gamut** =  
range **garnish** = decorate

**genealogy** = ancestry  
**genesis** = beginning  
**genuflect** = kneel in  
reverence **ghastly** = horrible  
**glean** = gather **gnome** =  
dwarf-like being **gorge** =  
stuff, satiate **gory** = bloody  
**grapple** = struggle **grisly** =  
gruesome **guffaw** = laughter  
**gusto** = Keen enjoyment  
**guttural** = throaty **haggard**  
= gaunt **halcyon** = serene  
**hale** = healthy **hamper** =  
obstruct  
**harbor** (BRITISH = harbour) = give shelter, conceal  
**harridan** = hag or an ugly old woman **harry** =  
harass **heedless** = careless **hegira** = a journey to a  
more pleasant place **hibernal** = wintry **histrionic**  
overly dramatic  
**homily** = sermon **horde** = group **hortatory** =  
inspiring good deeds **hovel** = shanty, cabin  
**hoysen** = tomboy, boisterous girl **hubris** =  
arrogance **hummock** = knoll, mound **humus** =  
soil **ichthyology** = study of fish **idyllic** =  
natural, picturesque **immolate** = sacrifice  
**impale** = pierce **impetus** = stimulus, spark  
**impinge** = encroach, touch **imponderable** =  
difficult to estimate **imprimatur** = sanction  
**impunity** = exemption from harm **impute** =  
charge **inalienable** = that which cannot be  
taken away **incantation** = chant **incapacitate** =

disable **inclement** = harsh **incriminate** =  
accuse **incubus** = nightmare **ineffable** =  
inexpressible **ineluctable** = inescapable **infidel**  
= nonbeliever **influx** = inflow **infraction** =  
violation **inimitable** = peerless **iniquitous**  
unjust, wicked

**inopportune** = untimely

**inordinate** = excessive

**insensate** = without feeling

**insouciant** = nonchalant

**insubordinate** = disobedient

**integument** = a covering

**inveigle** = lure **irresolute** =

hesitant, uncertain **jejune** =

barren **jostle** = push, brush

against **ken** = range of

comprehension **knave** = con

man **knead** = massage

**lacerate** = tear, cut

**lackey** = servant

**laity** = laymen

**lambent** = softly radiant

**lave** = wash **lax** = loose, careless

**lectern** = reading desk **limn** = portray,

describe **litany** = list **litotes** =

understatement for emphasis **lout** =

goon **lupine** = wolf-like **luxuriant** =

lush **maim** = injure **manacle** =

shackle **marauder** = plunderer

**masticate** = chew **matriarch** matron

**maul** = rough up **mausoleum**

= tomb **mayhem** = mutilation

**medley** = mixture **melee** =

riot **mellifluous** = sweet

sounding **menial** = humble,

degrading **mete** = distribute

**miasma** = toxin **mien** =

appearance, demeanor

**minion** = subordinate

**minutiae** = trivia **mire** =

marsh

**miscegenation** = intermarriage between races

**miscellany** = mixture of items **modish** = chic

**molten** = melted **monolithic** = large and

uniform **mortify** = humiliate **mottled** =

spotted **mountebank** = charlatan **muffle** =

stifle, quiet **mulct** = defraud **muse** = ponder

**muster** = to gather one's forces

**noncommittal** = neutral, circumspect

**nonplus** = bring to a halt by confusion **nubile**

= marriageable **nugatory** = useless, worthless

**oaf** = awkward person

**obelisk** = tall column, monument **obituary**

= eulogy **oblation** = offering, sacrifice

**obliquity** = perversity **odoriferous** =

pleasant odor **offal** = inedible parts of a

butchered animal **offertory** = church

collection **ogle** = flirt **onus** = burden

**opprobrium** = disgrace **opus** = literary

work of musical composition **orison** =

prayer

**paleontologist** (BRITISH = palaeontologist) = one who studies fossils

**palpitate** = beat, throb

**pandemonium** = din, commotion

**pander** = cater to people's baser instincts

**pantomime** = mime **papyrus** =

paper **paramour** = lover **parapet** =

rampart, defense **paroxysm** =

outburst, convulsion **parsimonious**

= stingy **parvenu** = newcomer,

social climber **passe** = outmoded

**pastoral** = rustic **peculate** =

embezzle, steal **pedantic** = bookish

**pell-mell** = in a confused manner

**penurious** = stingy **peregrination** =

wandering **perforce** = by necessity

**perigee** = point when moon is nearest to the earth

**perjury** = lying **peroration** = conclusion of an

oration **petrify** = calcify, shock **petty** = trivial

**petulant** = irritable, peevish **picaresque** =

roguish, adventurous **pied** = mottled, brindled

**piquant** = tart-tasting, spicy **platonic** =

nonsexual **plebiscite** = referendum **plumb** =

measure **polity** = methods of government

**poltroon** = coward **portend** = signify, augur

**prate** = babble **preamble** = introduction

**preternatural** = abnormal **prim** = formal,

prudish **primogeniture** = first-born child **primp**

= groom **proboscis** = snout **prod** = urge

**profusion** = overabundance **propellant** = rocket

fuel **prophylactic** = preventive **propound** =  
propose **proscenium** = platform, rostrum  
**prosody** = study of poetic structure **provender** =  
dry food, fodder **proviso** = stipulation  
**puissant** = strong **purblind** =  
obtuse, dim-sighted **purgatory**  
= limbo, netherworld **purloin** =  
To steal **purview** = range,  
understanding **putative** =  
reputed **quail** = shrink, cower  
**quaint** = old-fashioned **qualms**  
= misgivings **quarry** = prey,  
game **quay** = wharf **queasy** =  
squeamish **quip** = joke **quirk** =  
eccentricity **quizzical** = odd  
**quorum** = majority

**rabid** = mad, furious **raiment** = clothing  
**rankle** = cause bitterness, resentment  
**realm** = kingdom, domain  
**reconnaissance** = surveillance  
**recrimination** = countercharge, retaliation  
**recumbent** = reclining **redolent** =  
fragrant **redoubtable** = formidable,  
steadfast **redundant** = repetitious **reek** =  
smell **refraction** = bending, deflection  
**regale** = entertain **remiss** = Negligent  
**remnant** = residue, fragment **remorse** = guilt  
**rend** = to tear apart **render** = deliver, provide  
**rendezvous** = a meeting **rendition** = version,  
interpretation **reparation** = amends, atonement

**repartee** = witty conversation **repellent** =  
causing aversion **repercussion** = consequence  
**repine** = fret **reprieve** = temporary suspension  
**reprimand** = rebuke **reprisal** = retaliation  
**retaliate** = revenge **retribution** = reprisal  
**reverent** = respectful **reverie** = daydream **rigor**  
= harshness **rime** = white frost **risible** =  
laughable **roseate** = rosy, optimistic **roster** =  
list of people **rout** = vanquish **rubicund** =  
ruddy, having healthy reddish color **ruffian** =  
brutal person, bully **rummage** = hunt **ruse** =  
trick **sacerdotal** = priestly **salutary** = good,  
wholesome **sanctimonious** = self-righteous  
**sang-froid** = coolness under fire **sanguinary** =  
gory, murderous **sapid** = interesting  
**sarcophagus** = stone coffin **sartorial** =  
pertaining to clothes **sate** = satisfy fully  
**saturnine** = gloomy **satyr** = demigod, goat-man  
**savoir-faire** = tact, polish **savor** (BRITISH =  
savour) = enjoy **scarify** = criticize **scurry** =  
move briskly **scuttle** = to sink **sebaceous** = like  
fat **seclusion** = solitude **sedulous** = diligent  
**seethe** = fume, resent **semblance** = likeness  
**senescence** = old age **sepulcher** (BRITISH =  
sepulchre) = tomb **sequacious** = eager to follow,  
ductile **serried** = saw-toothed **shibboleth** =  
password **shoal** = reef **shrew** = virago **sidereal**  
= pertaining to the stars **sinewy** = fibrous,  
stringy **skinflint** = miser **skittish** = excitable  
**skullduggery** (BRITISH = skulduggery) = trickery  
**slander** = defame



**sleight** = dexterity **slither** = slide  
**smattering** = superficial knowledge  
**smirk** = smug look **snivel** = whine  
**solvent** = financially sound **somatic**  
= pertaining to the body **spasmodic**  
= intermittent **spate** = sudden  
outpouring **spectral** = ghostly  
**splenetic** = peevish **spry** = nimble  
**spume** = foam **stanza** = division of  
a poem **stoke** = prod, fuel **stratum**  
= layer **stupor** = lethargy **sub rosa**  
= in secret **substantiate** = verify

**substantive** = substantial **succor** (BRITISH  
= succour) = help, comfort **succumb** =  
yield, submit **suffuse** = pervade, permeate  
**sultry** = sweltering **sunder** = split **sundry**  
= various **supernumerary** = subordinate  
**suture** = surgical stitch **sylvan** = rustic  
**tantalize** = tease  
**taper** = candle **tarn** = small lake **tarry** =  
linger **taurine** = bull-like **taut** = tight,  
stretched **temperate** = moderate **tempo** =  
speed **tentative** = provisional **tenure** =  
status given after a period of time **terrapin**  
= turtle **testy** = petulant **thespian** = actor  
**throes** = anguish **throng** = crowd  
**timbre** = tonal quality, resonance  
**Titanic** = huge  
**tithe** = donate one-tenth

**titular** = in name only, figurehead  
**tocsin** = alarm bell, signal  
**touchstone** = standard **traduce** =  
slander **travail** = work, drudgery  
**tribunal** = court **troglydyte** =  
cave dweller **truckle** = yield  
**tutelage** = guardianship **tyranny**  
= oppression **unassuming** =  
modest **uncouth** = uncultured,  
crude **undulate** = surge, fluctuate  
**uniformity** = sameness  
**unsavory** (BRITISH = unsavoury) = distasteful, offensive  
**unscathed** = unhurt **unseemly** = unbecoming,  
improper **untenable** = cannot be achieved **ursine** =  
bear-like **uxorious** = a doting husband **vagary** = whim  
**vainglorious** = conceited **valor** (BRITISH = valour) =  
bravery **vanguard** = leading position **vassal** = subject  
**vehement** = adamant **veneer** = false front, façade  
**venial** = excusable **venturesome** = bold, risky **viand** =  
food **victuals** = food **visage** = facial expression **viscid**  
= thick, gummy **vitreous** = glassy **vituperative** =  
abusive **votary** = fan, aficionado **vouchsafe** = confer,  
bestow **vulpine** = fox-like **waggish** = playful **wastrel** =  
spendthrift **waylay** = ambush **wean** = remove from  
nursing, break a habit **wheedle** = coax **whimsical** =  
capricious **wince** = cringe  
**winnow** = separate  
**wither** = shrivel  
**wont** = custom  
**wrath** = anger, fury  
**wreak** = inflict

**wrest** = snatch

**writhe** = contort

**yen** = desire **yore** =

long ago

**aberration** = different from normal or usual

**abettor** = encourager **abnegation** =

repudiation, self-sacrifice

**abominate** = to hate

**abrade** = to rub off a surface

**abstemious** = Characterized by self denial or abstinence

**accretion** = grow in size or increase in amount

**acerbity** = bitterness of speech or temper

**acetic** = related to vinegar

**acidulous** = sour in taste or manner

**acquiescence** = Passive consent **acquittal** =

release from blame (as by a court) **actuarial**

= calculating **acuity** = sharpness **addiction** =

compulsive, habitual need **addle** = To make

inefficient or unable to think **adjuration** =

solemn urging **adjure** = to request solemnly

**admonition** = Gently point out mistake

**agility** = nimbleness **agitation** = excitement,

uneasiness **alimentary** = supplying

nourishment **allure** = appeal, attract **allusion**

= indirect reference **alluvial** = soil deposits

left by rivers

**amalgamate** = To mix or join together to become one

**amazon** = female warrior

**ambrosia** = food of the Greek gods that provided immortal youth & beauty, anything sweet and pleasing

**andirons** = metal supports in a fireplace

**anneal** = to gradually heat and cool in order to soften, reduce brittleness

**annuity** = An annual payment or income **antecede** = To precede

**anthropoid** = manlike

**apiary** = A place where bees are kept

**apogee** = The climax

**apothecary** = One who keeps drugs for sale and puts up prescriptions

**appurtenances** = subordinate possessions **aquiline** = like an eagle,

bent, booked, curved **arcade** = a roofed passage between shops

**archaeology** = the study of ancient cultures by looking for and examining their buildings, tools

**aromatic** = fragrant **arrant** = Notoriously bad **asceticism** = doctrine of self-denial **assessment**  
= estimation

**astronomical** = enormously large or extensive

**athwart** = across, opposition **aureole** = sun's

corona, halo

**auroral** = pertaining to the aurora borealis

**auscultation** = act of listening to the heart or lungs to discover abnormalities

**austerity** = quality of being self disciplined **baffle** = to frustrate or unable to  
understand **bandanna** = large, bright-colored handkerchief

**barb** = sharp projection from fishhook **barrage** = a lot

of questions or criticism **barter** = to give in exchange

rather than paying money **bassoon** = reed instrument

of the woodwind family **bate** = let down, restrain

**bawdy** = indecent, obscene **bedizen** = dress with

vulgar finery **bedraggle** = wet thoroughly **befuddle** =

confuse thoroughly **behoove** = to be fit, to be right

**benignant** = Benevolent in feeling, character

**bereavement** = state of being deprived of something valuable or beloved **blazon**

**bete noire** = aversion

**betrothal** = Engagement to marry

**bibulous** = Fond of drinking

**bigotry** = discrimination, prejudice

**blasphemous** = profane, impious = print or decorate something in a very noticeable way

**blurt** = to say something suddenly and without thinking, especially when you are excited or nervous

**boorish** = Rude **bouillon** = clear beef soup

**Bowlerize** = To expurgate in editing

**braggadocio** = someone who boasts

**brazier** = An open pan or basin for holding live coals

**brindled** = tawny or grayish with streaks or spots

**brittle** = Fragile **brocade** = rich, gaudy fabric

**brooch** = a piece of jewelry for women which is fastened onto clothes with a pin

**buffoonery** = coarse jokes, etc **bugaboo** = bugbear, object of baseless terror

**bumptious** = full of offensive self-conceit

**bungle** = to do something wrong in a very careless or stupid way

**buskin** = thick-soled half boot worn by actors of Greek tragedy

**buxom** = plump, vigorous, jolly

**cameo** = when someone famous appears for a short time in a film or play

**canker** = any ulcerous sore, any evil **canto** = part of an extended poem

**caparison** = showy harnesser, ornamentation for a horse

**caprice** = A whim

**carillon** = a set of bells capable of being played

**carmine** = rich red

**carousal** = To drink deeply and in boisterous or jovial manner

**carte blanche** = complete freedom to do what you want

**caryatid** = sculptured column of a female figure **caste** = one

of the hereditary classes in Hindu society **catapult** = slingshot

**catechism** = book for religious instruction **cancel**

= to prohibit publication by law **centaur** =

mythical figure, half man and half horse

**celebration** = thought **chaff** = worthless products

of an endeavor **chasm** = a long, deep, narrow hole

in rock or ice **chiropractist** = one who treats

disorders of the feet **chivalrous** = courteous to

ladies

**ciliated** = having minute hairs, one-celled animal

**circlet** = small ring, band

**clangor** (BRITISH = clangour) = loud, resounding noise

**clarion** = shrill, trumpet like sound **clavicle** =

collarbone **climactic** = relating to the highest point

**clime** = region, climate

**coadjutor** = assistant, colleague **cockade** = decoration

worn on hat **coeval** = living at the same time as

contemporary **cog** = a spoke in a wheel, a small and

unimportant person **cohesion** = consistency

**colander** = utensil with perforated bottom used for straining **collage** = a

picture made by sticking small pieces of paper or other materials **collier** =

worker in coal mine, ship carrying coal **colossal** = huge

**comely** = a woman who is attractive in appearance **comestible** = something

fit to be eaten **comeuppance** = rebuke, one's deserved fate or punishment

**conclave** = private meeting

**condign** = adequate, deservedly severe

**connivance** = pretence of ignorance of something wrong, assistance or permission to offend

**connubial** = related to marriage or matrimony

**cormorant** = greedy, rapacious bird

**comity** = courteousness, civility **cornice** = a decorative border around the

walls of a room close to the ceiling **corsair** = pirate ship

**covetous** = very desirous of something, avaricious, greedy

**coy** = shy, modest **cozen** = cheat, hoodwink, swindle

**crabbed** = sour, peevish **credo** = a set of beliefs

**crepuscular** = pertaining to twilight **crone** = hag

**crotchet** = a fancy, a whim, an eccentricity

**cul-de-sac** = a blind alley, a trap **dappled**

= spotted **dastard** = A base coward

**daub** = to paint carelessly, to smear **dawdle** = to

waste time by trifling, to move slowly **debenture**

= bond issued to secure a loan **decollete** = having

a low-necked dress

**decrepit** = Enfeebled, as by old age or some chronic infirmity

**deducible** = derived by reasoning **defalcate** = to misuse

money put in trust **defection** = desertion **deify** = To regard as

a god

**deliquescent** = capable of absorbing moisture from air and becoming liquid

**delusion** = Mistaken conviction **delusive** = deceptive, raising vain hopes

**demesne** = domain **demolition** = destruction

**demoniacal** = related to evil spirits, devilish

**denotation** = the exact literary meaning of a word, designation, definition

**depilate** = remove hair **derision** = Ridicule

**dermatologist** = one who studies the skin and its diseases

**descant** = discuss fully **desideratum** = that which is

desired **despoil** = to bereave, rob, plunder, strip of

possessions **despotism** = Any severe and strict rule

**detergent** = cleansing agent **detonation** = explosion

**devolve** = to roll down, to hand down **diadem** = crown

**dint** = means, effort

**dipsomaniac** = a person having an uncontrollable desire for alcohol, inebriate

**disapprobation** = rejection, disapproval **disavowal** = Denial

**dishabille** = in a state of undress

**dishearten** = discourage, lose spirit

**dismember** = cut into small parts **disport**

= amuse **dissuasion** = advise against

**divergent** = Tending in different directions

**divination** = The forecast of future events or discovery of what is lost or hidden

**docket** = a list of cases to be dealt with **doddering** = shaky, infirm from old age

**doff** = take off

**dorsal** = belonging to the back side, posterior, tail

**douse** = to plunge into water, to extinguish

**drudgery** = Hard and constant work in any dull occupation

**durance** = confinement

**eclipse** = The obstruction of Sun by moon, or of moon by earth

**dowdy** = slovenly, untidy **eerie** = weird

**efflorescent** = opening in flower **elusory**

= tending to deceive expectations **elysian**

= relating to paradise, blissful

**emanate** = to express a feeling or quality through the way one looks

**emendation** = corrections of errors **emetic** = a medicine that causes

vomiting

**emolument** = salary or fees for a job, remuneration, pay scale

**empyrean** = celestial, fiery **encomiastic** = praising, eulogistic