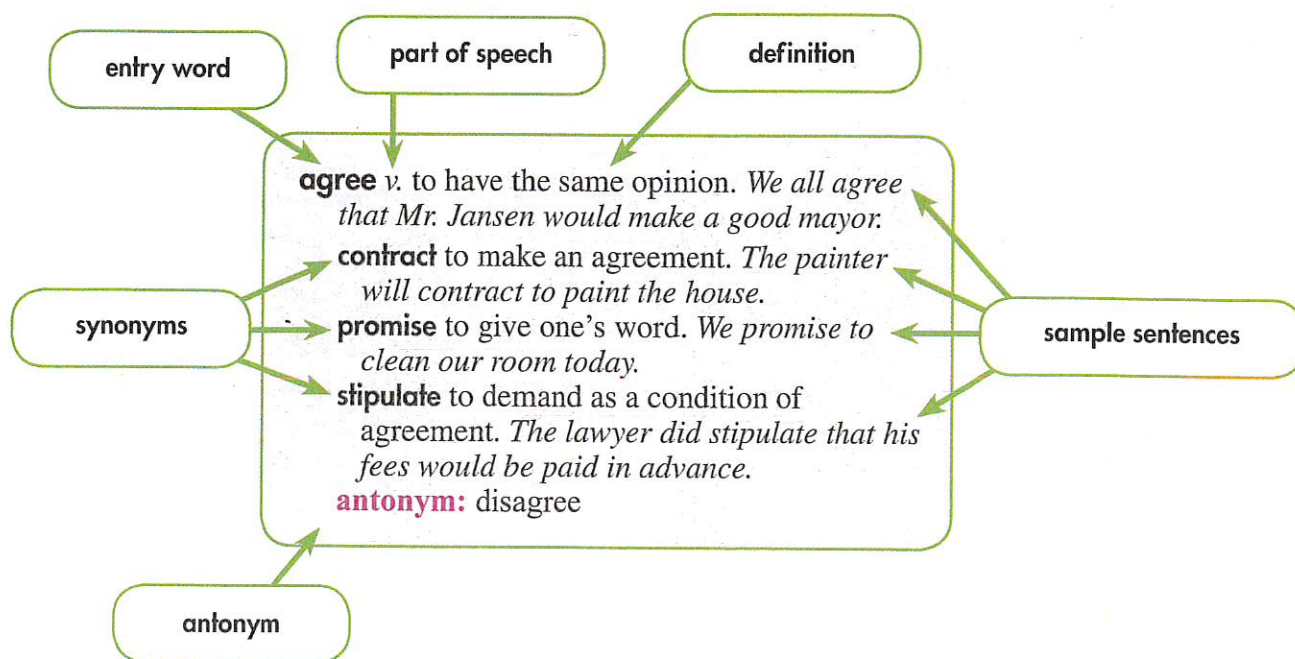


The **Writing Thesaurus** provides synonyms—words that mean the same or nearly the same—and antonyms—words that mean the opposite—for your spelling words. Use this sample to identify the various parts of each thesaurus entry.

- **Entry words** are listed in alphabetical order and are printed in boldface type.
- The abbreviation for the **part of speech** of each entry word follows the boldface entry word.
- The **definition** of the entry word matches the definition of the word in your **Spelling Dictionary**. A **sample sentence** shows the correct use of the word in context.
- Each **synonym** for the entry word is listed under the entry word. Again, a sample sentence shows the correct use of the synonym in context.
- Where appropriate, **antonyms** for the entry word are listed at the end of the entry.





abrupt *adj.* 1. unexpectedly sudden. *The abrupt silence in the middle of his speech made us wonder what had happened.* 2. surprisingly curt; brusque.

brusque discourteously blunt. *She thought her brusque behavior was businesslike, but others thought it was rude.*

curt rudely brief; short. *Linda's curt reply hurt Hector's feelings.*

steep nearly perpendicular. *Above the desert there loomed a steep rock face.*

sudden happening without warning. *The sudden thunderstorm caught us unprepared.*

violent marked by or resulting from great physical force or rough action. *A violent turn of the steering wheel sent the car into the ditch.*

antonyms: gradual, expected, polite

abundant *adj.* 1. in plentiful supply; ample.

2. abounding with; rich. *The north sector of this national forest is a region abundant in wildlife.*

ample in abundant measure. *The Wongs offered an ample reward to anyone who found their lost cat.*

plentiful abundant; more than enough. *Because of ideal growing weather, apples are plentiful this year.*

rich abounding with natural resources. *Areas rich in minerals are sometimes exploited for those riches.*

antonyms: scarce, poor

academic *adj.* of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a school. *My father enjoys the academic life of a professor.*

educational of or relating to education or learning. *We often watch television programs on the educational channel.*

scholarly characteristic of scholars or serious study. *The book is a scholarly treatment of the culture of the Navajo.*

scholastic of, pertaining to, or characteristic of schools. *This file is a record of your scholastic achievement.*

adjourn *v.* to suspend until a later stated time. *The meeting was adjourned after two hours and was reconvened in the afternoon.*

defer to put off until a later time. *They deferred making a decision about the vacation until all of the travel brochures had arrived.*

delay to postpone. *The game was delayed because of rain.*

postpone to put off. *The mayor asked the reporters to postpone the interview until the next day.*

suspend to stop for a period; interrupt. *The judge suspended the trial while a new jury was chosen.*

antonyms: convene, reconvene, continue, begin, proceed

adjust *v.* 1. to change so as to match or fit; cause to correspond. 2. to bring into proper relationship. 3. to adapt or conform, as to new conditions. *When our family moved from New Mexico to Montana, we had to adjust to snowy winters.* See **reorganize**.

adapt to adjust or change to meet a specific need. *The engineers adapted the design of the car to meet the air pollution standards.*

correct to adjust to meet a standard. *The scientists corrected the rocket's course shortly after lift-off.*

rearrange to adjust the arrangement of. *She rearranged her schedule to allow for an additional appointment.*

reconcile to adjust; settle. *The team members reconciled themselves to defeat.*

advocate *v.* to speak in favor of; recommend. *The senator advocated tax reform.*

champion to defend or support. *That organization champions animal rights.*

support to aid a cause by approving, favoring, or advocating. *The Student Council supports the change in sports eligibility rules.*

antonym: oppose

agenda *n.* a list of things to be done, especially the program for a meeting. *Everyone received an agenda prior to the meeting so that they would be prepared to discuss the listed topics.*

plan a detailed method worked out beforehand for attaining a specific goal. *The plan for the meeting included discussion of the club's new bylaws.*

program a listing of the order of events and other details of a public presentation. *According to the program, the orchestra will perform three works by Beethoven.*

schedule a listing of events or appointments. *The schedule for the tournament shows time allocated for halftime entertainment.*

analysis *n.* the process of separating a subject into its parts and studying them in order to determine the nature of the whole. *The analysis of the water showed that pollution had been reduced.*

examination inspection or analysis. *The Health Department conducted a complete examination to find the source of the virus.*

investigation process of inquiry, study, or analysis. *The committee presented the results of their investigation to the whole organization.*

anarchy *n.* absence of any form of political authority. *Anarchy followed the king's death.*
See **chaos**.

antique *adj.* belonging to, made in, or typical of an earlier period. *A Model T is an antique car.*
See **out-of-date**.

ancient very old; aged. *The ancient Roman coin was the most valuable part of her collection.*

antiquated very old; aged. *The antiquated law required that the school supply a slate for every child.*

old having existed for a long time. *The old pottery jar was used for canning fruits and vegetables.*

antonyms: modern, new, up-to-date, current, fresh, recent. See **up-to-the-minute**.

ascend *v.* 1. to go or move upward; rise. 2. to move upward upon or along; climb. *The campers ascended the mountain to reach their campsite.*

climb to go upward or along. *They will climb to the top of the fire tower to see the beautiful fall colors of the trees.*

mount to climb or ascend. *The lawyers, determined to win the case, mounted the courthouse steps.*

rise to go up. *When the air is still, smoke will rise straight from a campfire.*

antonym: descend

aspiration *n.* a strong desire for high achievement. *His aspiration was to read every book in the library.* See **objective**.

ambition a strong desire to achieve something. *Strong ambition is often a major ingredient in achieving high political office.*

desire something longed for. *It was their desire to visit China.*

dream an aspiration or ambition. *Sequoya realized his dream of giving his people, the Cherokee, a written language.*

assistance *n.* aid, help. *The clerk offered assistance to the customers.*

aid assistance. *Today, college students must search for sources of financial aid.*

help assistance. *In a disaster, we have come to expect help from the Red Cross.*

patronage support; encouragement. *During the eighteenth century the patronage of wealthy families enabled musicians such as Mozart to create great music.*

support assistance or encouragement. *The friends offered each other moral support in times of stress.*

antonyms: hindrance, obstruction

astonish *v.* to fill with sudden wonder or amazement; confound. *She astonished the crowd with her beautiful dives.* See **startle**.

amaze to cause surprise or great wonder. *The magician's tricks amazed us.*

astound to strike with sudden wonder. *The price of the new car astounded them.*

confound to overwhelm or confuse. *The many changes in the school building confounded the students.*

stun to overwhelm, as with emotional impact of an experience. *Even people who lost nothing were stunned by the tornado.*

stupefy to amaze or astonish. *He was stupefied by the sudden wealth winning the contest brought him.*

surprise to catch unawares. *They will surprise her with a party this year.*

antonyms: expect, anticipate

B

bazaar *n.* a fair or sale at which miscellaneous articles are sold, often for charitable purposes. *We donated usable items and crafts for the YMCA bazaar to raise money for new sports equipment.*

fair a place for buying and selling items. *There was a booth at the fair where you could buy, sell, or trade baseball cards.*

flea market a place for buying and selling antiques, used household items, etc. *Tanya searched the flea market for a good secondhand lamp for her desk.*

market a place where merchandise is sold.

Early Saturday morning, the farmers bring their produce to the market just south of the town square.

benefactor *n.* one who gives financial or other aid. *An opera company must have many benefactors to cover its financial needs.*

donor one who contributes to a cause. *Many donors are necessary to make a successful blood drive.*

patron one who supports, protects, or promotes. *All of the museum's patrons were invited to preview the new exhibit.*

philanthropist one who hopes to improve the world through donations or good works. *An anonymous philanthropist set up a series of scholarships for needy students.*

volunteer one who contributes time to a cause. *The Committee for a Clean City is looking for volunteers to help with the recycling effort.*

benign *adj.* tending to promote well-being; beneficial. *Moderate exercise is a benign activity.* See **hospitable**.

affable mild; gentle; benign. *Aunt Rosa's affable nature cheered us up when we were depressed.*

beneficent characterized by or performing acts of kindness. *The school hoped to promote a beneficent atmosphere.*

beneficial promoting well-being. *They thought a week at the ocean would be beneficial.*

humane having the finer qualities of human beings, such as kindness, mercy, and the like. *The organization worked for humane treatment of all animals.*

kind of a friendly nature; benign. *The kind stranger gave us directions to the airport.*

merciful compassionate; lenient. *Be merciful to yourself when you make mistakes.*

antonyms: evil, malignant, unkind, inhumane, merciless, harsh, dangerous

bias *n.* 1. a preference or inclination, especially one that inhibits impartial judgment; prejudice. *The lawyer dismissed the prospective juror because of possible bias.* 2. a specified instance of this.

inclination a tendency. *The dog shows an inclination toward violence.*

narrow-mindedness bias. *The sudden display of narrow-mindedness in the newspaper caused many people to cancel their subscriptions.*

preconception a prejudice. *His decision was based on a preconception of how things should be done.*

prejudice a preconceived idea; preference; bias. *The court decided that the company's hiring practices reflected prejudice.*

proclivity an inclination or tendency; predisposition. *Joe's proclivity for wasting time will be his downfall.*

tendency a demonstrated inclination to think or behave in a certain way. *I have a tendency to believe that all people are basically good.*

antonyms: open-mindedness, receptiveness, tolerance, broad-mindedness

bizarre *adj.* strikingly unconventional or far-fetched, as in style or appearance; odd. *The couple's bizarre costumes caused passersby to turn and stare.* See **extraordinary**.

curious singular; odd. *The curious combination of events made him wonder what was going on.*

eccentric departing from the normal or expected. *Walking down the sidewalk backward is eccentric behavior.*

peculiar unusual or strange. *All of the shoes on sale were either very small, very large, or some peculiar color.*

uncommon not common; rare or strange. *At our house, it is uncommon to have dinner before seven o'clock.*

unusual out of the ordinary. *The dog's unusual behavior was attributed to an illness.*

weird of an odd or unexplainable character. *The weird lighting on the stage gave everything a greenish cast.*

antonyms: usual, common, ordinary, expected, humdrum

boulevard *n.* a broad city street, often tree-lined and landscaped. *Handsome mansions lined the wide boulevards in the historic section of the city.*

avenue a wide street or thoroughfare. *Although they were designed for horse-and-buggy traffic, the city's avenues now handle the flow of motorized vehicles.*

parkway a broad landscaped highway sometimes having a planted median. *The state was proud of its system of beautiful parkways that allowed for a smooth flow of traffic.*

brilliant *adj.* 1. full of light; shining. 2. superb; wonderful. *The pianist gave a brilliant performance.* 3. marked by extraordinary powers of intellect or invention. See **intelligent**, **extraordinary**.

bright shining. *The bright sunlight made me squint.*

creative having the ability to create. *The creative child amazed his teachers with his original ideas.*

intellectual relating to the intellect. *The club appealed to the intellectual types who enjoy wide-ranging conversations.*

luminous full of light. *David's luminous smile brightened the gloomy day.*

magnificent grand; outstanding. *The architect's plan would result in a magnificent new building.*

splendid brilliant; glorious. *The painting was a splendid example of the new brushstroke technique.*

antonyms: dull, dark, boring, ordinary

brusque *adj.* abrupt and curt in manner or speech, often to the point of rudeness; blunt. *She thought that her brusque behavior was businesslike, but others thought it was rude.* See **abrupt**, **succinct**.

blunt having an abrupt and candid manner. *Rather than avoid the issue, Mr. Smith decided to be blunt.*

gruff brusque or stern in manner or speech. *His gruff reply to the invitation startled his relatives.*

insensitive unfeeling. *Insensitive passersby didn't stop to help the injured cat.*

rude ill-mannered; harsh. *That rude remark was not necessary.*

antonyms: gentle, gracious, polite, sensitive



calamity *n.* an extraordinarily serious event marked by terrible loss, lasting distress, and affliction. An airplane crash was the latest calamity in the news. See **catastrophe**.

caper *v.* to leap or frisk about; frolic. *The clown capered across the stage.*

cavort to bound or prance; to caper. *The cheerleaders cavorted on the sidelines.*

dance to leap or skip about in excitement. *The children danced about when they heard that they had won the contest.*

frolic to behave playfully; romp. *The colt frolicked in the tall grass.*

gambol to leap about playfully; frolic. *The kittens gamboled across the porch and fell into the bushes.*

romp to play boisterously; frolic. *The boys romped through the house and woke the baby.*

catastrophe *n.* a great and sudden calamity; disaster. *The stock market's plunge was a catastrophe for many investors.* See **fiasco**.

calamity a disaster. *One calamity after another befell the unlucky family.*

cataclysm a violent upheaval. *The revolution was an unexpected cataclysm to the many citizens.*

disaster a grave misfortune. *The hurricane was a major disaster for the Gulf Coast region.*

misfortune a distressing occurrence. *After the earthquake, it took a while to assess the magnitude of the misfortune.*

antonyms: boon, blessing, success, good luck

chaos *n.* a condition or place of total disorder or confusion. *The earthquake left the area in a state of chaos.*

anarchy absence of any form of political authority. *Anarchy followed the king's death.*

confusion a state of bewilderment. *When the electricity went out, the town fell into confusion.*

disarray a state of disorder or confusion. *After the burglary, the shop was in total disarray.*

disorder a lack of order or logical arrangement. *After hurriedly completing the difficult assignment, his desk was in complete disorder.*

pandemonium wild noise and uproar. *Pandemonium broke out when they announced the winner of the contest.*

tumult a disorderly commotion or disturbance. *The tumult of the angry crowd could be heard for blocks.*

antonyms: order, regularity, stability

circuit *n.* 1. a closed, usually circular curve. 2. a regular or accustomed course from place to place, as that of a salesman; round. *In pioneer times a preacher often followed a circuit and visited churches on a regular, but infrequent, basis.* 3. an association of teams, clubs, or arenas of competition.

circle a closed curve. *The flower beds were laid out in circles.*

course the customary sequence of events. *During the course of the service, the participants were to remain silent.*

league an association of teams or clubs who compete with each other. *Competition was tough because all of the teams in the league were playing well.*

orbit the path of one body as it circles another. *The satellite's orbit takes it directly over this city.*

round a series of acts, events, or the like, ending where they began. *Letter carriers' rounds begin and end at the post office.*

tour a circular journey. *The tour of the western states began and ended in Wyoming.*

confident *adj.* 1. marked by assurance, as of success. *His confident smile as he left the meeting let us know that the deal was made.* 2. marked by confidence in oneself; self-assured.

assured confident. *The actor, knowing that he would get the part, walked onto the stage with an assured air.*

certain definite. *He was certain that he had put the tickets in his coat pocket.*

dauntless self-assured. *We marveled at the dauntless way she managed the crowd.*

self-assured confident. *The self-assured child was not at all shy with adults.*

sure without doubt. *Kim was sure that she would win the match.*

antonyms: uncertain, timid, shy, unsure, daunted, self-effacing

confidential *adj.* 1. done or communicated in confidence; secret. 2. entrusted with the confidence of another. 3. denoting confidence or intimacy. *He told me the news in a confidential tone of voice.*

covert hidden; secret. *All the spies in the novel were involved in covert activities.*

private concealed or secluded from view. *The private drive began with a locked gate.*

secret kept from general view. *The secret message described the location of the treasure.*

antonyms: open, public

contrary *adj.* opposed, as in character or purpose; completely different. *They held contrary ideas about how the room should be decorated.*

conflicting in opposition. *The three journalists on the panel held conflicting views of how to help the economy grow.*

contradictory opposite; conflicting. *The statement the mayor made on Monday and the one he made on Wednesday were contradictory.*

opposite completely different. *Our two cats have opposite personalities—one is aggressive and the other is shy.*

antonyms: similar, alike, complementary

control *v.* 1. to exercise authority or dominating influence over; direct; regulate. *This switch controls the flow of water.* 2. to hold in restraint; check.

direct to control; manage. *That officer directs traffic here every afternoon.*

manage to direct or control. *She manages a retail business.*

regulate to control or direct. *A thermostat regulates the furnace.*

restrain to hold back; control. *You must use a leash to restrain your dog.*

corporation *n.* 1. a body of persons granted a charter, legally recognizing them as a separate entity having its own rights, privileges, and liabilities distinct from those of its members. *The headquarters of the corporation was moved to a suburban location.* 2. a group of people combined into or acting as one body. See **enterprise**.

business any commercial establishment.

That business specializes in car accessories.

company a business enterprise; firm. *Who owns that company?*

conglomerate a large corporation made up of many companies that operate in different fields. *A conglomerate bought up many small, independent companies.*

firm a commercial partnership of two or more persons. *After passing the bar examination, he hoped to join a large law firm.*

organization a group of persons having specific responsibilities and joined for some purpose or work. *Mr. Cusack joined an organization specializing in real estate.*

cosmopolitan *adj.* at home in all parts of the world or in many spheres of interest. *Travel gave her a cosmopolitan outlook.*

sophisticated having worldly knowledge or refinement. *Cole Porter wrote music about sophisticated people.*

worldly sophisticated or cosmopolitan. *The worldly man was at home wherever he went.*

antonyms: provincial, rustic, unsophisticated, bucolic

criterion *n.* a standard, rule, or test on which a judgment or decision can be based. *The single criterion for winning was speed.*

model a pattern or standard to be followed. *Use this report as a model for your homework assignment.*

norm a standard. *Our teacher explained how test norms work.*

rule an established standard. *Learn the rules for playing chess from this book.*

standard an acknowledged measure of comparison. *Babe Ruth set a standard for hitting that few baseball players could live up to.*

test a criterion or standard. *Endurance is the real test for triathletes.*

yardstick a criterion or standard. *He considered productivity the only important yardstick for his employees.*

criticism *n.* 1. a critical comment or judgment.

2.a. The art, skill, or profession of making discriminating judgments and evaluations, especially of literary or other artistic works.

2.b. A review or other article expressing such judgment and evaluation. *The criticism of the play focused on the director.*

commentary a series of explanations and interpretations. *A lengthy commentary about the current show of Picasso's early works appeared in the newspaper on Sunday.*

notice a printed criticism of an artistic or literary event. *The cast of the new play waited anxiously for the notices in the early editions of the newspapers.*

review an analysis of a new work or performance. *All of the reviews of the new film agree that it is not worth seeing.*



data *n.* information, especially organized for analysis or used as the basis for a decision.

The newspaper collected data from the past twenty years to analyze voting patterns.

evidence information on which a decision is based. *The researcher collected evidence to help the city government decide what to do about downtown traffic.*

facts things known with certainty. *They verified the facts with experiments.*

information knowledge gained through study or experience. *An almanac is a collection of information on many subjects.*

statistics numerical data. *The Census Bureau collects statistics about the makeup of the country's population.*

deceive *v.* to cause a person to believe what is not true; mislead. *How did they deceive him about the value of the necklace?*

cheat to trick or deceive. *The sudden thunderstorm cheated us out of our picnic in the park.*

con to swindle or defraud. *The swindlers conned us into believing that the coins were genuine.*

defraud to cheat or swindle. *They tried to defraud the investors in a phony stock deal.*

fool to deceive or misinform. *I fooled Ann by putting her tiny gift in a huge box.*

hoax to deceive by trickery. *The UFO report hoaxed many people.*

hoodwink to deceive or take in. *The old lady hoodwinked the salesman into believing that she was not at home.*

mislead to lead in the wrong direction. *Don't let the sunny sky mislead you; it's cold outside.*

swindle to cheat or defraud. *The unscrupulous man swindled the family out of their savings.*

decipher *v.* 1. to read or interpret something ambiguous, obscure, or illegible. *I could barely decipher his terrible handwriting.* 2. to convert from a code or cipher to plain text; decode.

decode to convert from a code into regular language. *A cryptographer's job is to decode messages.*

interpret to clear up the meaning of. *They interpreted the directions to mean that they should turn left at the next corner.*

solve to figure out; answer. *Sue solved the crossword puzzle in fifteen minutes.*

translate to explain or put in simpler terms. *He translated the complicated directions into simple steps.*

unscramble to straighten out; decipher. *He unscrambled the secret message in record time.*

dictator *n.* a ruler having absolute authority and supreme jurisdiction over the government of a state. *Joseph Stalin was a dictator in the Soviet Union during the first half of the twentieth century.* See **monarch**.

autocrat an absolute ruler. *The autocrat shared none of his power; even his so-called friends bent to his every whim.*

despot an absolute ruler; tyrant. *The despot lived in luxury while his people starved.*

tyrant any ruler having absolute power. *The tyrant was not concerned with the needs of the people.*

dilemma *n.* 1. a situation that requires one to choose between two equally balanced alternatives. 2. a predicament that seemingly defies a satisfactory solution. *He had been invited to two holiday parties, and deciding which to attend presented a real dilemma.*

difficulty something not easily solved. *Her difficulty arose from her inability to decide on a topic for her report.*

impasse a dilemma. *The discussion reached an impasse, and no one would compromise.*

plight a situation of difficulty. *Losing his job only made his plight worse.*

predicament an embarrassing or troublesome situation. *Her predicament began when her car ran out of gas.*

problem a situation or question that presents a difficulty. *Since the two bicycles cost the same, deciding which one to buy was a problem.*

quandary a condition of uncertainty. *Because of their many obligations, they were in a quandary about how to fit anything else into their schedule.*

dismal *adj.* 1. causing gloom or depression; dreary. 2. characterized by lack of hope. *The locker room was a dismal place after the loss of the game.*

bleak gloomy and somber. *Injuries made his future as a basketball player look bleak.*

cheerless without cheer; gloomy. *The decorator thought new wallpaper might brighten the cheerless room.*

depressing causing sadness or depression. *The depressing atmosphere at school was related to a streak of bad luck.*

dreary gloomy, dismal. *Three days of rain were a dreary beginning for the week.*

gloomy dark; dreary; dismal. *The gloomy basement was a poor place to have a party.*

melancholy gloomy. *The singer sang only melancholy songs until we asked for something more upbeat.*

somber melancholy; dismal. *He chose a red sweater to brighten up his somber mood.*

sorrowful full of sadness. *The actor used a sorrowful voice to tell of the catastrophe.*

antonyms: cheerful, bright, happy, gay, joyful, merry, light

dissimilar *adj.* unlike; different. *Both ideas for solving the problem were good, although they were quite dissimilar. See distinct.*

different distinct; separate. *We took a different route to school because of the traffic.*

mismatched unmatched; different. *Kevin didn't discover his mismatched socks until physical education class.*

antonyms: alike, similar

distinct *adj.* 1. distinguishable from all others; separate. *The suspect was observed at the scene on two distinct occasions.* 2. easily perceived by the senses or intellect; clear. *See dissimilar.*

clear easily perceived by the senses; distinct.

Her clear pronunciation helped the people in the back of the auditorium to understand her.

definite clearly defined. *There had been a definite break in the progress toward completing the building.*

explicit clear or distinct. *Explicit written directions with diagrams helped them assemble the desks quickly.*

separate dissimilar or distinct. *Although they are identical twins, they lead completely separate lives.*

antonyms: overlapping, indistinct, unclear, muted, blurred, indefinite, fuzzy

docile *adj.* 1. easily taught; teachable. 2. submissive to training or management; tractable. *Sheep are usually docile animals. See peaceable.*

manageable able to be controlled. *The small group of sheep was more manageable for the dog than the larger group was.*

meek easily imposed upon. *A meek person may fail to get needed attention.*

obedient dutiful; controllable. *The obedient dog waited outside the store.*

quiet calm; making no noise. *Blue jays are seldom quiet birds.*

teachable able to be taught. *I might learn slowly, but I am teachable.*

antonyms: wild, unmanageable, disobedient, bold

dominate *v.* to control, govern, or rule by superior authority or power. *The Cardinals dominated their league for three years.*

control to exercise dominating influence over.

The small girl controlled her horse amazingly well in the jumps.

govern to control the behavior or actions of. *I will not baby-sit for them again because I cannot govern the children.*

manage to direct or control. *The dog managed the flock of sheep with ease.*

rule to exercise control over. *The queen ruled with an iron fist.*

subdue to bring under control; quiet. *The guards finally subdued the rioting prisoners.*

subjugate to conquer or control. *The rebels were easily subjugated by the army.*

tyrannize to control with power, especially arbitrarily. *The Airedale tyrannized all the neighborhood cats.*

antonyms: obey, submit, yield, surrender



elated *adj.* exultant; joyful. *The elated fans held an impromptu party after their team won the national tournament.*

delighted filled with happiness. *A delighted expression filled the child's face when he found the lost teddy bear.*

ecstatic of, or relating to, a state of extreme delight. *The couple was ecstatic when their first grandchild was born.*

happy having or demonstrating pleasure. *She was happy when her best friend won the spelling bee.*

jubilant joyful or very happy. *Jubilant supporters surrounded the mayor when the election results were announced.*

overjoyed filled with joy or happiness. *The dog was overjoyed when its owners returned.*

antonyms: unhappy, depressed, miserable

endeavor *n.* a conscientious or concerted effort toward a given end; an earnest attempt. *Making the debating team was the next endeavor she planned. See **enterprise**.*

attempt try or endeavor. *The first attempt for a goal was unsuccessful.*

try an effort made toward a goal. *The high jumper prepared to make his final try for a world record.*

undertaking an attempt. *Climbing the rock face was an ambitious undertaking.*

enterprise *n.* 1. an undertaking, especially one of some scope, complication, and risk. *The new business they set up was a risky enterprise.* 2. a business organization. 3. readiness to venture; initiative. See **corporation**.

ambition strong desire to accomplish something. *Is his ambition sufficient to complete this difficult project?*

business any commercial undertaking. *They went into business together willing to share risks and hoping to share profits.*

drive energy; aggressiveness; initiative. *Ms. Green's drive helped her climb the corporate ladder quickly.*

initiative the instinct, power, or ability to begin or follow through on a project; enterprise or determination. *They chose him to head the project because he has a lot of initiative.*

project an undertaking requiring effort. *The new real estate project will bring jobs to the community.*

undertaking enterprise or venture. *The landscaping business was an ambitious undertaking.*

venture an undertaking that is daring or of doubtful outcome. *Their new business venture required a lot of capital.*

antonyms: timidity, fearfulness, diffidence

epidemic *n.* 1. an outbreak of contagious disease that spreads rapidly. *An epidemic of measles broke out in the city.* 2. a rapid spread, growth, or development.

contagion a disease transmitted by direct or indirect contact. *Polio is a contagion that has been controlled in this century.*

pestilence a plague or epidemic. *The story told of an evil pestilence in the land.*

plague a pestilence, affliction, or calamity. *A plague called the Black Death struck Europe in the middle of the fourteenth century.*

scourge a cause of widespread and dreaded affliction, such as war or pestilence. *Cancer is a scourge of the twentieth century.*

essential *adj.* 1. constituting a part of the nature of something; inherent. 2. basic or indispensable; necessary. *Vegetables are essential to a healthy diet.*

indispensable necessary; required. *The ability to type is almost indispensable when learning word processing.*

necessary needed for the existence or functioning of something. *Before beginning a job, collect all necessary tools.*

vital of immediate importance; essential; indispensable. *Firefighters and medics provide a vital service to the city.*

antonyms: inessential, unnecessary, unimportant, dispensable

evident *adj.* easily seen or understood; obvious. *It was quite evident that the Clinton team would win the Quiz Bowl.*

apparent readily seen or understood. *The apparent reason for the delay was the stormy weather.*

clear plain or evident. *The clear intention of the statement was to stop rumors.*

manifest clearly apparent to sight or understanding. *After a long discussion, the solution to the problem became manifest.*

obvious easily seen or understood. *Because of his ability as a leader, Mr. Ito was an obvious choice for foreman of the jury.*

patent obvious; plain. *The patent insincerity of the many compliments was offensive.*

plain clearly understood. *It was plain that he was upset by the unpleasant incident.*

antonyms: unclear, complicated, hidden, invisible, obscure, doubtful, uncertain. See **subtle**.

exceed *v.* to go beyond the limits of. *We hope to exceed last year's total in the fund drive.*

beat to go beyond. *Attendance at the ball game Saturday beat the stadium record.*

outdistance to surpass by a wide margin. *Marco routinely outdistanced his brother and his cousin in cycling events.*

outdo to surpass in performance. *We were trying to outdo last month's total in glass for recycling.*

outstrip to exceed or surpass. *The Western Region outstripped the Northeastern Region in sales.*

surpass to go beyond the limits of. *I hope to surpass the local marathon record.*

transcend to surpass or exceed. *The costume party was great; it transcended our expectations.*

antonyms: lag, trail, fall short, underachieve

exhaust *v.* 1. to use up; consume. 2. to wear out completely; tire. 3. to deal with comprehensively. *After three days of discussion, we had completely exhausted the topic.*

deplete to use up or exhaust. *We depleted the firewood supply at the camp during the cold spell.*

fatigue to wear out or exhaust. *The difficult race fatigued the runners.*

tire to wear out or exhaust. *Staying up late to baby-sit tires her.*

antonyms: refresh, revive, invigorate

extraordinary *adj.* highly exceptional; remarkable. *The resemblance between the cousins was extraordinary; they looked like twins.* See **legendary**.

amazing causing wonder. *The magician created one amazing illusion after another.*

astounding surprising. *They couldn't pass up buying the new car because of the astonishing price.*

exceptional uncommon or extraordinary. *All the teenagers in the musical competition had exceptional talent.*

rare happening infrequently; uncommon. *A visit from Aunt Harriet is a rare treat.*

remarkable deserving notice. *Our teacher was pleased that Jill had read such a remarkable number of books over the summer.*

uncommon not common; seldom occurring. *It is uncommon to see wild animals in the city.*

unusual not usual or common. *Warm weather is unusual for this time of year.*

antonyms: ordinary, common, usual, humdrum



fascinate *v.* to hold an intense interest or attraction for. *The changing images in the kaleidoscope fascinated the child.*

attract to evoke interest. *The Reptile House at the zoo attracts some people and repels others.*

captivate to fascinate by special charm or beauty. *The spectacular performance of the ice dancers captivated the audience.*

charm to attract greatly; fascinate. *The beautiful and complicated music boxes charmed me.*

enchant to delight completely; charm. *The scenery enchanted everyone in the theater.*

interest to arouse or hold the attention of. *The history of the American West interested Kareem.*

faux pas *n.* a social blunder. *Failing to respond to the invitation was a serious faux pas.*

blunder a grave error made through carelessness. *Did you hear about the President's blunder during the press conference?*

error an incorrect action. *She felt it was an error to eat until everyone else had been served.*

gaffe a clumsy social error. *His most embarrassing gaffe was spilling his food on his companion's fancy clothes.*

mistake an error or fault. *Joe made the mistake of waxing his car in the sun.*

feign *v.* to give a false appearance of; sham. *He feigned an injury so they would leave him alone.*
2. to represent falsely; pretend to.

fake to falsify and present as genuine. *The quarterback faked a pass to fool the defense.*

pretend to feign. *He pretended to be confident to cover his nervousness.*

sham to pretend or give a false appearance of. *After the accident, she often shammed studying because her mind was on her injured mother.*

fiasco *n.* a complete failure. *The fund-raising attempt was a fiasco.*

debacle a sudden collapse; ruin. *The movement to pass a new housing law quickly became a debacle when the leaders decided to quit.*

dud a person or a thing that is disappointingly ineffective or unsuccessful. *The plan was a dud and was finally abandoned.*

flop a complete failure. *The latest film released by that studio was a total flop.*

antonym: success

forbid *v.* to command someone not to do something. *The king decided to forbid his subjects to criticize him.*

ban to prohibit. *Dogs are banned from the playground areas of the city parks.*

disallow to refuse to allow. *Pets are disallowed at my home because of my allergies.*

prevent to keep something from happening. *The rules prevented her from talking to her coach during the competition.*

prohibit to forbid with authority. *The law prohibits parking in front of the school.*

antonyms: allow, permit, let

fragile *adj.* 1. easily broken or damaged; brittle. *The antique vase was fragile.* 2. physically weak or delicate; frail.

breakable able to be broken. *The movers carefully pack all of the breakable items in many layers of paper.*

brittle likely to break. *As we age our bones get more brittle.*

delicate easily broken or damaged. *Please don't handle the delicate figurines.*

frail delicate or weak. *A character in The Secret Garden is a frail boy who spends most of his time in bed.*

puny weak. *The puny puppy struggled to open its eyes.*

weak without physical strength. *He felt weak for several days after having the flu.*

antonyms: strong, sturdy, hardy, resilient, flexible

franchise *n.* 1. a privilege or right officially granted a person or a group by a government.
2. authorization granted by a manufacturer to a distributor or dealer to sell its products. *My aunt and uncle have a franchise for a new fast-food restaurant.*

charter an authorization from a central organization to operate a local branch or chapter. *A charter has been granted for the establishment of a branch bank at the corner of Second and Franklin Streets.*

suffrage the privilege or right to vote; franchise. *The goal of their organization is universal suffrage.*

vote the right to vote; suffrage. *In 1920 women were given the vote throughout the United States.*

full-length *adj.* of a normal or standard length. *The current best-seller is a full-length novel.*

complete whole. *How long does it take to go through the complete program at the health spa?*

unabridged having the original length. *You will certainly find that word in an unabridged dictionary.*

antonyms: condensed, abridged, shortened, partial



galvanize *v.* to arouse to awareness or action; spur. *Their desire for change was galvanized by the rousing speeches.*



activate to set in motion; stimulate. *The coach hoped his pep talk would activate the team's resolve for victory.*

arouse to stir up or stimulate. *The conditions they saw in the poor neighborhood aroused their anger.*

awaken to rouse or stir up. *Our campaign awakened the voters to the need to pass the school levy.*

excite to stir into action. *A series of television programs excited many people about the need for environmental action.*

incite to provoke or stir up. *He hoped his appeal to civic duty incited the people to vote in the election.*

spur to incite; stimulate. *The approaching deadline spurred us to finish the project.*

stimulate to incite; activate. *Jealousy may stimulate inappropriate behavior.*

genuine *adj.* not false; real; true. *He took the ring to a jeweler to see if the diamond was genuine.*

authentic having an undisputed origin; genuine. *His collection contained only one authentic ancient coin, but he did have many good replicas.*

real authentic; genuine. *Most people prefer real to artificial flavoring in their food.*

true not false; consistent with fact and reality. *He made a true and voluntary statement about what he had witnessed.*

antonyms: false, fake, phony, untrue, inauthentic, falsified, artificial

grieve *v.* 1. to cause to be sorrowful; distress.

2. to experience grief; mourn. *The cat grieved over the disappearance of its playmate.*

bereave to leave desolate, especially by death. *The death of their pet bereaved the children.*

distress to cause suffering. *The negative reviews distressed the cast of the play.*

lament to express grief. *She lamented the bankruptcy of her business.*

languish to continue in a state of suffering. *Although he recovered from the accident physically, the psychological trauma caused him to languish for months.*

mourn to show or feel grief. *He mourned the loss of his best friend.*

suffer to feel pain or distress. *Vicki suffered from the loss of her eyesight.*

antonyms: be pleased, enjoy

harangue *n.* a speech or piece of writing characterized by strong feeling or expression; tirade. *The man's harangue about staying off his lawn frightened the neighborhood children.*

diatribe a bitter and abusive criticism. *The coach seldom lectured the team, but when he did it was a real diatribe.*

lecture a sober scolding; sermon. *The lecture to the children was about the danger of playing with matches.*

sermon a long and tedious reproof or scolding. *The committee members tired of the chairperson's daily sermons about efficiency.*

tirade a long, violent speech, especially one that denounces. *The workers could no longer endure the boss's regular tirades.*

antonyms: praise, comfort

heir *n.* a person who inherits or is entitled by law to inherit the property, rank, title, or office of another. *Prince Charles is heir to the throne.*

beneficiary one who receives funds, property, or the like from an insurance policy, will, or other settlement. *His spouse is the beneficiary on his life insurance policy.*

inheritor one who inherits; heir. *The will names three inheritors of the estate.*

successor one who follows in an office or role. *Who was his successor when he completed his term in Congress?*

honorable *adj.* 1. deserving or winning honor and respect. 2. possessing and characterized by honor. *The soldier was an honorable man.*

ethical in accord with accepted standards of right and wrong. *The deal was legal but not ethical.*

moral being or acting in accord with accepted standards of right and wrong. *The judge was known to be a deeply moral man.*

noble lofty in character. *Helping those less fortunate is considered a noble act.*

virtuous righteous; good. *The organization praised and publicly acknowledged virtuous acts by its members.*

antonyms: dishonorable, unethical, immoral, shameful

hospitable *adj.* cordial and generous to guests. *Our hosts provided a hospitable welcome for us.* See **benign**.

accommodating doing a favor or service for. *The woman was very accommodating when we asked to use her telephone.*

gracious characterized by kindness and courtesy. *One of the duties of the First Lady is to be a gracious hostess.*

magnanimous generous in forgiving; gracious; unselfish. *Opening their home to people stranded in a blizzard was a magnanimous thing to do.*

neighborly behaving in the manner of a friendly neighbor. *Helping the stranger change the flat tire was very neighborly.*

obliging doing a favor or service for. *When he explained that he was allergic to seafood, the hostess was very obliging and brought him chicken.*

welcoming receiving with pleasure and hospitality. *He greeted us with a welcoming smile.*

antonyms: inhospitable, unfriendly, rude, unaccommodating, stingy, cold



imminent *adj.* about to occur; impending. *Residents scrambled to prepare for the imminent hurricane.*

approaching coming nearer in time or space. *The approaching holiday generated an air of excitement.*

forthcoming about to appear. *The candidates bought as much tv time as they could in preparation for the forthcoming election.*

impending likely to happen soon; imminent. *The attorney was making last-minute preparations for the impending trial.*

antonyms: eventual, retreating, distant

impose *v.* to bring about by exercising authority. *The mayor imposed a curfew during the unrest.*

demand to ask for urgently, leaving no chance for refusal. *The police officer demanded to see a driver's license.*

levy to impose or collect (taxes, for example). *The president promised to levy no new taxes.*

require to demand. *The new rule required students to carry identification cards.*

inferior *adj.* low or lower in quality, value, or estimation. *The lower-priced coat is only slightly inferior in quality.*

bad poor; not good. *Those apples are so bad that we should get rid of them.*

lower beneath or inferior. *Your test scores are lower than they were last semester.*

mediocre ordinary; commonplace. *You can do better work; this project is mediocre.*

poor lacking in quality. *The chess team made a poor showing in the tournament.*

second-rate not of first quality. *Let's not go there; I hear the food there is second-rate.*

antonyms: good, first-rate, higher, high-quality, fine, excellent. See **superior**.

inscribe *v.* to write, print, carve, or engrave words or letters on or in a surface. *Someone had inscribed a personal note inside the front cover of the book.*

carve to form by cutting. *Finally, the sculptor carved his initials in the base of his new work.*

engrave to carve words, letters, or designs in a surface. *The old trophy was engraved "District Champions—1936."*

etch to make a pattern on metal or glass with acid. *The name of the dairy was etched in the old milk bottle.*

imprint to mark with words, letters, or designs. *The contractor's name was imprinted in the concrete of the sidewalk.*

print to write. *The child carefully printed her name in every book she owned.*

write to form letters or words on a surface. *Write your name on your paper.*

inspector *n.* 1. a person, especially an official, who inspects. *The health inspectors periodically check every restaurant in the city.* 2. a police officer of the rank just below superintendent.

detective a person (often a police officer) who investigates crimes or obtains evidence. *Several detectives were assigned to investigate a series of robberies.*

examiner one who inspects in detail. *She worked as tax examiner for the Internal Revenue Service.*

investigator one who investigates; a detective. *The attorney hired an investigator to find out if there had been any witnesses to the accident.*

sleuth a detective. *As a long-time and avid reader of mysteries, she thought of herself as an accomplished sleuth.*

intelligent *adj.* having a high degree of intelligence; mentally acute. *This game requires intelligent players.* See **brilliant**.

astute keen in judgment. *The chess player made an astute move.*

bright smart or intelligent. *The bright child knew the alphabet at an early age.*

clever mentally quick. *The clever animal learned the trick the first time its trainer showed how it was done.*

discerning astute. *The discerning journalist got straight to the heart of the matter.*

quick learning, understanding, or thinking with speed. *She has a very quick mind.*

sharp shrewd or astute. *The sharp businessman knew just when to raise or to lower prices.*

shrewd having keen insight. *A shrewd investor can make a lot of money.*

smart characterized as having sharp, quick thought. *Smart buyers shop around before making a major purchase.*

antonyms: unintelligent, dull, stupid, dumb, slow

introductory *adj.* serving to introduce. *At the seminar a woman made introductory remarks outlining the objectives for the day.*

beginning coming first. *The beginning activity each day at camp was raising the flag.*

opening at the beginning; introductory. *The traditional opening music of an opera is an overture.*

preliminary introductory; beginning. *Collecting background information was always the preliminary step.*

preparatory serving to make ready. *He attended a preparatory school in New England.*

antonyms: ending, final, closing, follow-up, concluding

itemize *v.* to set down item by item; list.

They itemized their expenses for tax purposes.

inventory to make a detailed list of items.

The workers periodically inventoried the items on the store shelves.

list to make an itemized record or reminder.

He listed all the things he needed to do before school started.



jealousy *n.* a jealous attitude or disposition. *Because only one of the friends could be chosen to go on the special trip, the others were filled with jealousy.*

covetousness the desire to have something belonging to another. *The ideal of "keeping up with the Joneses" is a kind of covetousness.*

envy discontent at the good fortune of another. *Envy was in the face of every child at the party when the boy got a puppy as a birthday gift.*



knowledgeable *adj.* possessing or showing knowledge; well-informed. *He is quite knowledgeable about fly-fishing.*

See **well-informed**, **academic**.

educated having knowledge. *The lecturer attracted a highly educated audience.*

erudite deeply learned; scholarly. *The program featured an erudite discussion of myths and cultures.*

wise having great learning. *The wise professor impressed all the new students.*

antonyms: uninformed, uneducated, ignorant



laconic *adj.* using or marked by the use of few words; terse; concise. *Many men in westerns are portrayed as laconic.* See **succinct**.

lecture *n.* 1. an exposition of a given subject delivered before an audience or class, especially for the purpose of instruction. *Mrs. Garcia's use of visual aids enlivened the lecture on world geography.* 2. a sober admonition or reproof; reprimand. See **harangue**.

address a formal communication. *The president made an address before congress.*

lesson an explanation; lecture. *The teacher planned a lesson around the coming election.*

speech a talk or an address. *All of the speeches dealt with some aspect of the economy.*

talk an informal speech. *He gave a talk about endangered species.*

legendary *adj.* of, constituting, based on, or of the nature of a legend. *Paul Bunyan is a legendary character.*

heroic courageous; grand. *The movie compared the heroic deeds of the samurai with those of heroes from the American West.*

mythic having the nature of a myth. *There are so many stories about Babe Ruth that, although he was a real baseball player, he has taken on a mythic quality.*

antonyms: ordinary, realistic, humdrum

liability *n.* 1. something for which one is liable; an obligation or debt. 2. legal responsibility to fulfill some contract or obligation. *Liability for the accident was established by the court.* 3. the financial obligations entered in the balance sheet of a business enterprise. 4. something that holds one back; handicap.

accountability being answerable. *Each team member accepted personal accountability for following the training diet.*

debt something owed; liability or obligation. *When the company's major debts were taken care of, the owners were able to consider new ventures.*

disadvantage unfavorable condition. *My inability to speak Spanish was a serious disadvantage on the trip to Mexico.*

hindrance an impediment. *A broken bone can be a hindrance to many kinds of physical activity.*

obligation a duty; promise; contract. *He accepted the care of the stray dog as his obligation.*

responsibility obligation; duty. *The teacher gave each student the responsibility for selecting supplementary readings.*

antonyms: asset, advantage

locality *n.* a particular neighborhood, place, or district. *Housing costs are lower in this locality.*

area a distinct part or section. *The section north of the river has been set aside as a wildlife area.*

district an area created arbitrarily for administrative purposes. *In this district a parent or guardian must visit the school at least four times a year.*

locale a locality in reference to some event. *Artesian Park was chosen as the locale for the family reunion and picnic.*

site the place where something is, was, or is about to be located. *The northeast corner of Second and Jefferson Streets will be the site of the new stadium.*

spot a position or location. *You are standing on a spot where history was made.*

locomotion *n.* the act of moving or the ability to move from place to place; travel. *A new suspension system improved the car's locomotion at high speeds.*

ambulation the act of walking from place to place. *The blister on her foot affected her ambulation.*

mobility the ability to move from place to place. *Lack of wheelchair access in public buildings hampers the mobility of the disabled.*

movement the act of moving. *The choreographer designed every movement on the stage for the final scene.*

travel movement from one place to another. *How much travel does a glider have under these conditions?*

antonyms: motionlessness, stillness, immobility



malady *n.* a disease, disorder, or ailment. *He blamed his malady on the change in the weather.*

affliction a condition of pain, suffering, or distress. *Because of her affliction, she had to miss classes for a semester.*

ailment a physical or mental disorder, especially a minor one. *The common cold is usually a minor ailment.*

disease a condition in which health is impaired. *Many diseases that were once a threat are no longer in existence.*

illness sickness; disease. *Josh's illness lingered through the winter.*

sickness the condition of being sick; illness. *Flu was the most common sickness at school in January.*

antonyms: health, well-being

malice *n.* a desire to harm others or to see others suffer. *Although disputed by many, some people believe that wolves attack other animals in malice.*

resentment anger or ill will felt as a result of a real or imagined offense. *Resentment at his classmate's success prompted him to start a harmful rumor.*

spite ill will creating an urge to hurt or humiliate someone. *The child broke his playmate's toy out of spite.*

viciousness maliciousness. *The viciousness of her attacks against her opponent cost her many votes.*

antonyms: forgiveness, charity, goodness, benevolence

malign *v.* to speak evil of. *He felt that the newspaper had maligned him.*

defame to attack the good name of. *The gossip defamed all the members of the club.*

libel to make or publish defamatory remarks about. *The sports figure sued the newspaper because he felt that he had been libeled.*

slander to utter malicious reports about. *The candidate felt that his opponent had slandered him.*

antonyms: praise, glorify

maverick *n.* an independent-minded person who refuses to abide by the dictates of or resists adherence to a group; dissenter. *He remained a maverick throughout his career as a lawyer.*

dissenter one who disagrees. *During the speech, a dissenter formulated questions that might embarrass the speaker.*

dissident one who disagrees. *The dissidents gathered outside City Hall to protest the new ordinance.*

nonconformist one who refuses to abide by the accepted rules and beliefs of a group. *The poet was a nonconformist in all his opinions.*

rebel one who disagrees with or opposes established authority. *Rebels deserted from the army and attempted a coup.*

renegade one who denies one religion, cause, allegiance, or group for another. *When he left his unit, they called him a renegade.*

antonyms: conformist, sycophant

melodic *adj.* of, pertaining to, or containing melody. *The music in most Italian operas is quite melodic.*

melodious musical. *Juan worked with a vocal coach to make his voice more melodious.*

musical resembling music; melodious. *The musical song of the birds cheered her up in the morning.*

tuneful melodic, musical. *They left the show humming the most tuneful songs.*

antonyms: unmusical, dissonant, unmelodious, noisy, jarring

memorandum *n.* a short note written as a reminder. *The principal's office sent out a memorandum about cleaning out lockers.*

message a communication. *Reggie wrote himself a message regarding when his library books were due.*

note a short written message to aid memory. *Mom left a note on the refrigerator about when she would be home.*

reminder something to jog the memory. *The boss sent a reminder to all employees about the company meeting next week.*

merchandise *n.* commodities or goods that may be bought or sold. *They restocked the store with merchandise regularly.*

commodities articles of commerce, especially those that can be transported, such as mining or agricultural products. *Commodities like wheat are traded in a special kind of financial market.*

goods merchandise or wares. *In earlier times, a store that sold all kinds of goods was called a general store.*

products manufactured items that are for sale. *They created a special display of all their new products for the promotion.*

stock the total supply of merchandise of a store or business. *The clerk reported that the item was not in stock.*

wares articles of commerce; goods. *The peddler carried all of his wares with him.*

metropolitan *adj.* of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a metropolis. *Bustling crowds are part of the metropolitan atmosphere. See urban.*

monarch *n.* 1. a sole and absolute ruler of a state. 2. a sovereign, such as a king or emperor. *In the United States there is no monarch.*

dictator a ruler having absolute authority and supreme jurisdiction over the government of a state. *Joseph Stalin was a dictator in the Soviet Union during the first half of the twentieth century.*

potentate one who has the power and position to rule others. *The potentate of the tiny island nation rules like a kind parent.*

queen monarch or sovereign. *Victoria was queen of the United Kingdom.*

moral *adj.* of or concerned with the judgment or principles of right and wrong in relation to human action and character. *The judge was believed to be of high moral character.*

ethical in accord with accepted standards of right and wrong. *Strictly ethical behavior is required for people in this position.*

good moral. *Consideration of others is expected from a truly good person.*

honorable deserving of respect. *Her behavior was consistently honorable.*

principled motivated by morals or ethics. *The principled woman always tried to think of the best way to behave.*

respectable of or appropriate to good and correct behavior. *During the crisis, the family members tried to look respectable.*

scrupulous principled; moral. *The story told of a scrupulous king with an unscrupulous enemy.*

upright morally correct; respectable. *Each political party was searching for an upright person to run for office.*

virtuous moral. *The group rewards the virtuous behavior of its members.*

antonyms: immoral, bad, evil, dishonorable, unethical, corruptible, unprincipled, unscrupulous

mythical *adj.* 1. having the nature of a myth. 2. of or existing in myth. *She enjoyed hearing stories about the mythical unicorn.* 3. imaginary; fictitious. See **legendary**.

fabulous in the nature of a fable or myth. *The storyteller told of fabulous beasts that talked and acted like human beings.*

fictitious imaginary; unreal. *Although the characters in this book seem real, they are completely fictitious.*

imaginary existing in the imagination only; unreal. *Pegasus is an imaginary creature from Greek mythology.*

antonyms: real, actual, existing.



necessity *n.* something needed for the existence, success, or functioning of something; requirement. *Oxygen is a necessity of life.*

need something required. *Our school library has a need for more books.*

requirement that which is required; a necessity. *Good swimming ability is a requirement for lifesaving.*

requisite a necessity; requirement. *Understanding plane geometry is a requisite for learning solid geometry.*

antonyms: frivolity, luxury

negotiate *v.* 1. to arrange or settle by conferring or discussing. *They hoped to negotiate a union contract in a few days.* 2. to succeed in going over, accomplishing, or coping with. *The experienced driver negotiated the sharp curve with ease.*

deal to transact business. *The used car salesperson said he was ready to deal.*

navigate to direct oneself toward a destination. *The skier carefully navigated the trail back to the comfort of the lodge.*

settle to decide by mutual agreement. *After days of discussion, the union dispute was finally settled.*

transact to do business with; negotiate. *The business deal was transacted without fuss.*

numerous *adj.* consisting of many persons or items. *When I got to my doctor's office, there were already numerous patients waiting to see her.* See **abundant**.

countless too many to be counted. *Countless people were left homeless by the earthquake.*

infinite immeasurably large. *An infinite expanse of desert stretched before us.*

innumerable too many to be counted. *Innumerable stars filled the sky.*

many consisting of a large, indefinite number. *There were so many people at the game that we couldn't find a place to sit.*

myriad amounting to a very large, indefinite number. *Myriad letters of application were received for the one job opening.*

numberless many; countless. *There were numberless wildflowers in the meadow.*

thick close-packed; having a great number of. *The tent was thick with mosquitoes.*

antonyms: few, scarce.



objective *n.* something worked toward or striven for; goal. *My objective was to read five books each month for a year.*

aim intention. *Joel's aim was to get his homework done before his favorite tv program began.*

goal purpose toward which one works. *Getting across the mountains before the first snowfall was their goal.*

purpose object toward which one strives. *The number one purpose of the trip was relaxation.*

observe *v.* 1. to perceive; notice. 2. to make a systematic or scientific observation of. *His job is to observe the moon's orbit.* 3. to say casually; remark. 4. to keep or celebrate (a holiday, for example). *The couple observed their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.*

celebrate to observe. *They celebrated*

Thanksgiving with the traditional turkey dinner.

comment to remark. *The reporter asked the lawyer whether he would comment on the case.*

mention to refer to casually. *He mentioned that he and his mother were going out of town over the weekend.*

regard to observe closely. *The children regarded the model of a hydroelectric dam with interest.*

say to speak. *After ringing up the sale, Ms. Thornton would say, "Have a nice day."*

see to perceive visually. *Did you see the accident?*

study to examine carefully. *That scientist set out to study the habits of eagles.*

watch to observe. *The people eating in the sidewalk cafe watched the passersby.*

obstacle *n.* something that opposes, stands in the way of, or holds up progress. *Construction work on the highway was a serious obstacle to our prompt arrival.*

barrier anything that obstructs or prevents passage. *A barrier was erected around the newly seeded lawn to keep people from walking on it.*

hindrance something that hinders; an obstacle. *Shyness can be a significant hindrance in making friends.*

obstruction something that obstructs; an obstacle. *The Heimlich maneuver is an effective way to remove an obstruction to breathing.*

antonyms: aid, freedom. See **assistance**.

occupation *n.* an activity that serves as one's regular source of livelihood; vocation. *His occupation was nursing.* See **vocation**.

offend *v.* 1. to create or excite anger, resentment, or annoyance in. 2. to be displeasing or disagreeable to. *On some days the level of noise in the cafeteria really offends me.*

anger to enrage or provoke. *Rude treatment always angers us.*

annoy to bother or irritate. *The bees' buzzing around annoyed Mr. Ito.*

insult to offend with a remark or action. *Ramon insulted me by hanging up in the middle of our telephone conversation.*

irritate to exasperate; vex. *The prolonged delay of the flight home irritated her.*

outrage to produce resentment or anger in. *Cruel treatment of animals outrages her.*

provoke to incite anger or resentment. *The sign said, "Do not provoke the animals."*

vex to annoy or irritate. *It vexed her when the clerk ignored her and waited on someone else.*

antonyms: please, soothe, flatter, delight

old-fashioned *adj.* of a style or method formerly in vogue; outdated. *Because it was the warmest one he had, he wore the old-fashioned coat.* See **out-of-date**.

out-of-date *adj.* outmoded; old-fashioned. *Those reference books are so out-of-date that they shouldn't be used for serious research.*

dated old-fashioned; out of style. *He purposely wore dated clothing to attract attention.*

obsolete outmoded; no longer in use. *That software is obsolete; it won't work with newer computers.*

outmoded out of fashion; obsolete. *His outmoded methods of car repair were inappropriate on new cars.*

passé no longer in fashion. *Certain extreme styles of clothing become passé more quickly than others.*

antonyms: See **up-to-the-minute**.

P

panic *n.* a sudden, overpowering terror, often affecting many people at once. *Panic is often the first reaction in a crisis.*

alarm a sudden fear caused by perceived danger. *The thunderstorm filled the child with alarm.*

dread to fear greatly. *Dread of the upcoming tests kept Sam studying for hours.*

fear a feeling of disquiet or alarm caused by the expectation of danger, pain, or the like. *Fear of flying is very strong in some people.*

antonyms: calmness, tranquility, peacefulness

peaceable *adj.* 1. inclined or disposed to peace; promoting calm. 2. peaceful; undisturbed. *The quiet meadow was a peaceable place.* See **docile**.
calming soothing. *The calming effect of the sound of gently lapping water helped them relax.*

tranquil free from disturbance. *The tranquil rural setting was a good place to spend a relaxing weekend.*

untroubled at peace. *They envied the child's untroubled sleep.*

antonyms: upsetting, disturbing, troubled, agitating

penalize v. to subject to a penalty, especially for infringement of a law or official regulation. *In the last quarter of the game the referee penalized our team twice.*

castigate to punish or chastise. *The parents castigated the teens for breaking curfew.*

chastise to punish. *The teachers chastised the children for fighting on the playground.*

fine to impose a sum of money as punishment. *He fined the motorist twenty-five dollars for the parking violation.*

impose to force upon. *The court imposed a fine and one hundred hours of community service for the offense.*

punish to penalize for wrongdoing. *How will they punish the thieves?*

sentence to impose a court judgment. *The judge sentenced the man to five years in prison.*

antonyms: reward, honor, praise

perpetual *adj.* 1. lasting for an indefinitely long duration. 2. ceaselessly repeated or continuing without interruption. *The perpetual singing of the crickets filled the summer night.*

continual continuous; without interruption or end. *The big production number in the show featured continual tap dancing.*

endless without end. *Our wait in line to buy tickets for the movie seemed endless.*

eternal without interruption or end. *The memorial featured an eternal flame.*

everlasting lasting forever. *The project seemed to require an everlasting commitment.*

permanent fixed and changeless. *Civil War relics were on permanent display at the library.*

unceasing never stopping. *The unceasing noise from the construction site interfered with studying.*

antonyms: temporary, ending, fleeting, short-lived, stopping, passing, momentary

perplex v. to confuse or puzzle; bewilder. *The complicated code perplexed the treasure hunters.*

befuddle to confuse or perplex. *Poorly written directions will befuddle even a skilled person trying to assemble something.*

bewilder to befuddle or confuse. *The list of contradictory rules bewildered me.*

confuse to perplex or bewilder. *He confused me by beginning a new idea mid-sentence.*

mystify to perplex or bewilder. *Many phenomena in nature will mystify you.*

puzzle to cause uncertainty and indecision. *The maze of hallways puzzles most newcomers to the building.*

persevere v. to persist in or remain constant to a purpose, idea, or task in the face of obstacles or discouragement. *She will persevere until the difficult task is satisfactorily completed.*

continue to go on with; persist. *The child continued to ask questions even though her father wasn't listening.*

endure to carry on in spite of hardships. *The construction workers will have to endure the winter weather and finish the project on time.*

persist to continue tenaciously. *In spite of a serious headache, Jose persisted at his work until it was completed.*

antonyms: quit, give up, lapse, discontinue

personality *n.* the totality of qualities and traits, as of character or behavior, that are peculiar to an individual person. *This job calls for someone with an easygoing personality.*

character the combination of qualities that distinguishes one person, thing, or group from another. *How would you describe the character of the club?*

makeup the qualities that constitute a personality. *It's a natural part of his makeup to be aggressive.*

nature the innate qualities and characteristics of a person or thing. *Being dishonest is not part of her nature.*

phenomenon *n.* 1. an occurrence or fact that is directly perceptible by the senses. 2. an unusual, significant, or unaccountable fact or occurrence; marvel. *She was in awe at the sight of a natural phenomenon such as the northern lights.*

event an occurrence. *The next event on her calendar is visiting the art museum.*

happening an event. *People were so excited about the way things were changing that they kept a close watch for the next happening.*

incident a distinct occurrence. *Anyone who witnessed the incident at Fourth and Clark Streets involving a bicycle is asked to call the police.*

marvel something that evokes admiration, surprise, or wonder. *The ice skater's performance was a marvel.*

miracle something that excites awe or wonder. *The town's quick return to normal functioning after the flood was a miracle.*

occurrence something that takes place. *The next occurrence of a lunar eclipse is several years away.*

wonder something that arouses awe, surprise, or admiration. *Old Faithful is a natural wonder that should not be missed.*

portrait *n.* a painting, photograph, or other likeness of a person, especially one showing the face. *A portrait of the company president hangs in the reception area of the office.*

image a likeness. *The images of four U.S. Presidents appear on Mount Rushmore.*

likeness an image. *George Washington's likeness appears on a one-dollar bill.*

painting a picture or design in paint. *The artist's most recent painting was a humorous self-portrait.*

photograph an image made with a camera and reproduced on a photosensitive surface. *The star sent glossy photographs of himself to his fans.*

picture a visual image painted, drawn, photographed, or otherwise created on a flat surface. *Mrs. Lee has a picture of each of her children on her desk at the office.*

postpone *v.* to delay until a future time; put off. *The baseball game was postponed because of rain.* See **adjourn**.

posture *n.* 1. a position or attitude of the body or of bodily parts. *Good posture is an important element of appearance.* 2. a characteristic way of bearing one's body; carriage.

attitude a position of the body or way of carrying oneself. *She assumed an attitude of casual confidence.*

bearing the way of carrying or conducting one-self. *The monarch's bearing on state occasions was regal.*

carriage the way of holding one's head and body; posture. *Dance lessons can improve one's poise and carriage.*

demeanor the way a person behaves. *The clown pretended a dignified demeanor.*

stance the attitude or position of one's body. *The batter worked on improving his stance.*

prediction *n.* something foretold or predicted; prophecy. *We all made predictions about who would win the Academy Awards.*

forecast a prediction. *The nightly news program on television includes a weather forecast.*

prognosis a prediction about the outcome of an illness. *Dina's prognosis was for a full recovery.*

prophecy a prediction. *In Greek tragedies, characters visited oracles to receive prophecies.*

preliminary *adj.* leading to or preparing for the main event, action, or business. *We held a brief preliminary meeting to discuss strategy before the meet began.* See **introductory**.

preserve *v.* 1. to keep safe from injury, peril, or other adversity; protect. 2. to keep in perfect or unaltered condition; maintain unchanged. *They preserved the old courthouse as a historic landmark.*

conserve to protect from depletion or loss. *A marathon runner must conserve energy in order to finish the grueling race.*

guard to protect from harm. *If you camp, take certain simple precautions to guard against setting forest fires.*

keep to preserve and protect. *Keep this bracelet to remember me by.*

maintain to preserve or keep up. *The Lindstroms maintain many of the customs their ancestors followed in Sweden.*

protect to keep from harm, injury, or attack. *The Bill of Rights protects our basic freedoms.*

save to keep safe. *The company saved detailed sales records to compare one year's business to the next.*

antonyms: destroy, waste, squander, ruin, damage

primary *adj.* being first or best in degree, quality, or importance. *Milk is a primary source of calcium.*

basic underlying; fundamental. *The basic reason for the strike was low wages.*

elementary fundamental. *Ice skating is an elementary skill for a hockey player.*

fundamental elemental; basic. *The captain's fundamental concern was for the safety of those on board.*

antonym: secondary

proceed *v.* 1. to go forward or onward, especially after an interruption; continue. *After the telephone call, he proceeded with his work.* 2. to move in an orderly manner.

advance to move forward. *After a brief pause at the reviewing stand, each band will advance down the street.*

continue to go on with. *After lunch, we will continue the discussion.*

progress to advance or proceed. *We will read a chapter each week until we have progressed through the entire text.*

antonyms: stop, discontinue, retreat

punctual *adj.* acting or arriving exactly at the appointed time; prompt. *Most companies require that employees be punctual.*

on time ready at the appointed time; not late. *It is important to be on time for the concert; no one will be seated after the program begins.*

prompt on time; punctual. *Because they were often late, their prompt arrival at the airport was a relief.*

antonyms: tardy, late

Q

questionnaire *n.* a printed form containing a set of questions, especially one addressed to a statistically significant number of subjects by way of gathering information, as for a survey.

The senator sent a questionnaire to his constituents to assess their views on issues.

form a document for collecting information. *He had to fill out a form in order to get a new library card.*

report a statement of facts. *The officer had to complete an accident report.*

survey a list of questions meant to gather useful information. *Complete and return this marketing survey, and we will send you a free gift.*

R

regal *adj.* 1. of or pertaining to royalty. 2. belonging to or befitting royalty. *The gold-embroidered robes were standard regal attire.*

majestic having stateliness or dignity; regal. *The coronation music was majestic.*

royal of or pertaining to a monarch. *The royal wedding was televised.*

stately dignified; formal; majestic. *The stately woman moved with grace and dignity.*

antonyms: common, undignified

regime *n.* a government that is in power; administration. *Everyone rejoiced when the dictator's regime ended.*

administration a government that is in power. *The Lincoln administration had to deal with one of the most difficult times in the history of the United States.*

government a governing body. *The new government promised to tackle the problem of balancing the budget.*

reign the exercise of sovereign power. *The queen's reign was marked by peace and prosperity.*

regret *v.* to feel sorry, disappointed, or distressed about. *He regretted having forgotten to send a birthday card.* See **grieve**.

deplore to feel or express deep sorrow over. *She deplored the loss of her cat in the fire.*

lament to regret deeply. *He lamented the loss of his job.*

repent to feel regret or remorse for some action or inaction. *Wanda repented of her ineffective study habits before the test.*

rue to regret or feel sorry for. *She rued the opportunity lost when she was late for the audition.*

reject *v.* 1. to refuse to accept, recognize, or make use of. *The union rejected management's offer of a six percent pay increase.* 2. to discard as defective or useless; throw away.

deny to refuse to recognize or acknowledge. *The man denied having witnessed the accident.*

disavow to deny knowledge of. *The mayor disavowed any knowledge of the incident reported in the newspaper.*

discard to throw away. *He ate the banana and discarded the peel in a litter basket.*

disdain to reject with scorn. *The lion disdained the offer of food from the zookeeper.*

junk to throw away as useless. *The car was in such bad condition that the mechanic encouraged them to junk it.*

refuse to decline to accept. *The waiter refused the generous tip offered by the obnoxious diners.*

renounce to reject or disown. *The candidate renounced his press secretary after the scandal broke.*

scorn to reject with disdain. *Sam scorned her friendly overtures.*

spurn to reject scornfully. *She spurned the low-paying job.*

antonyms: accept, affirm, keep, treasure.
See **preserve**.

relevant *adj.* related to the matter at hand; pertinent. *The judge ruled that the evidence was relevant to the case.*

germane having an important bearing on the matter at hand. *Limit the discussion to points germane to your thesis.*

material substantial; notable, especially of importance to an argument. *When the speaker strayed from his topic, his remarks were no longer material.*

pertinent related to the matter at hand. *Each panelist added information pertinent to the discussion.*

antonyms: irrelevant, unrelated, unimportant, immaterial

reorganize *v.* to undergo or effect changes in organization. *He reorganized his closet to make finding things easier.* See **adjust**.

rearrange to change the arrangement of. *He rearranged his schedule so that he could go to the play.*

recast to present (ideas, for example) in a new arrangement. *She recast the report by placing the events in chronological order.*

refashion to reconstruct or reorganize. *The committee refashioned the bylaws to meet the new needs of the club.*

remodel to reconstruct or reorganize. *The auditorium is being remodeled to create more seating.*

reserve *v.* 1. to keep back or save for future use or a special purpose. 2. to keep secure for oneself; retain. *You should reserve a seat early if you plan to travel over the holiday.* See **preserve**.

hoard to accumulate by saving or hiding. *When people know that something will be in short supply, they have a tendency to hoard it and thus make the problem worse.*

hold to retain. *They will hold tickets at the box office until an hour before a performance.*

keep to retain; hold. *They asked the restaurant to keep a table for us.*

retain to keep or hold. *If you retain your sales slip, you can return the merchandise if necessary.*

save to hold or hold back. *Save a seat for me at the game; I'll be a little late.*

antonyms: waste, squander, release

revive *v.* 1. to bring back to life or consciousness. *At the scene of the accident the paramedics tried to revive the unconscious woman.* 2. to restore to use, currency, activity, or notice. 3. to present (as an old play, for example) again.

reawaken to awaken again; renew. *Seeing the tennis championships on television reawakened her desire to compete.*

refresh to become fresh again; revive. *He found that a quick shower always refreshed him when he was tired.*

reinvigorate to invigorate again; revive. *A cool drink of water and a moment of rest reinvigorated the hikers.*

rejuvenate to reinvigorate. *A good night's sleep was all that was necessary to rejuvenate her.*

renew to rebuild or revive. *The television special renewed our interest in the American West.*

resuscitate to restore consciousness or life to. *In lifesaving class we learned how to resuscitate drowning victims.*

revivify to cause to revive; to revive. *Even though the child was in a coma, they felt they could revivify him.*

antonyms: See **exhaust**.

S

sociable *adj.* pleasant, friendly, or affable. *When feeling sociable, she'd invite several friends to her home.* See **hospitable**.

affable easy to speak to; friendly. *He was an affable man whom everyone liked.*

amiable friendly; sociable. *The club members formed an amiable group.*

convivial sociable. *The restaurant's convivial atmosphere attracted large crowds of diners.*

festive happy and friendly. *The holidays bring many festive gatherings.*

friendly in the manner of a friend. *It was a friendly conversation.*

genial having a friendly or pleasant manner. *The genial group in the theater lobby welcomed a stranger into their conversation.*

gregarious sociable. *The gregarious group in the middle of the room kept growing as newcomers were admitted to the circle.*

jovial characterized by friendliness and sociability. *The jovial couple were popular hosts.*

antonyms: unsociable, antisocial, unfriendly, hostile

startle *v.* 1. to cause to make a quick involuntary movement or start. 2. to alarm, frighten, or surprise. *The sound of a dropped book will startle everyone in the library.* See **astonish**.

alarm to cause sudden fear. *The unexpected sound of sirens will alarm many people.*

frighten to make afraid. *Bats frighten many people.*

shock to strike with surprise and agitation. *Break the news gently; it will shock everyone concerned.*

surprise to catch unawares. *They will surprise her with a party this year.*

antonyms: soothe, comfort

stimulus *n.* something causing or regarded as causing a response. *Good questions can be a stimulus for learning.*

cause reason for an effect or action. *The cause of the accident was driving too fast on slick pavement.*

impetus something that incites. *The cheering of the throng of fans was all the impetus the team required for the win.*

motive an emotion, desire, or psychological need as an incitement to action. *The police felt that the motive for the crime was revenge.*

submit *v.* 1. to yield or surrender (oneself) to the will or authority of another. *They cheerfully submitted to the silliness of the initiation to join the club.* 2. to subject to a condition or process. 3. to commit (something) to the consideration or judgment of another.

offer to present for acceptance or rejection. *The screenwriter offered her script to a producer for consideration.*

subject to submit for consideration. *The new medical treatment was subjected to rigorous tests before being approved.*

surrender to give (oneself) over to something. *Although shy at first, Les eventually surrendered to the boisterous fun of the party.*

subtle *adj.* 1. so slight as to be difficult to detect or analyze; elusive. *Her friends noticed a subtle change in the way she behaved toward them.* 2. not immediately obvious.

elusive eluding the grasp or perception. *The difference in meaning between some words is sometimes elusive.*

hinted suggestive; indirect. *A hinted criticism was all it took to get Hilda to do the assignment over.*

indirect not direct; roundabout. *He made an indirect request to go with us.*

slight minor; hard to perceive. *The new rules involved some slight changes that we had trouble grasping.*

suggestive giving a hint or suggestion; indicative. *Mom's suggestive remark about cleaning my room was not exactly an order.*

antonyms: direct, obvious, open, bold, dramatic. See **evident**.

succeed *v.* to accomplish something desired or intended. *We are working hard to succeed in the state music competition.*

prosper to thrive; succeed. *The business prospered in the new mall.*

thrive to improve steadily; prosper. *With enough enthusiastic members, the new club will thrive.*

antonyms: fail, flop

successor *n.* one that succeeds another. *He hopes to be the team captain's successor.* See **heir**.

follower one that follows or takes the place of. *Her follower will have a tough standard to live up to.*

replacement one who takes the place of another. *His replacement in the band will be a drummer from Kansas City.*

supplanter one who takes the place of another. *They worried about who the supplanter of their well-liked principal would be.*

antonym: predecessor

succinct *adj.* 1. clearly expressed in few words; concise; terse. 2. characterized by brevity and clarity in speech. *The principal's message about the crisis was succinct.* See **laconic**.

brief short. *The judge made a brief, clarifying statement at the beginning of the trial.*

compact expressed briefly; concise. *She wrote a compact press release about the mayor's condition.*

concise expressing a great deal in a few words.

A concise statement of the facts will be appreciated by the investigator.

condensed of reduced volume. *The condensed lecture contained all the important facts, omitting some of the less important but colorful details.*

curt rudely brief; concise. *Such a curt reply caused hurt feelings.*

pithy precisely meaningful; terse. *The professor took pride in his pithy remarks.*

terse concise; succinct. *The terse report contained all of the relevant facts.*

antonyms: wordy, rambling, long, lengthy, tedious, cumbersome

superior *adj.* 1. higher in rank, station, or authority. *She worked hard throughout her training to become like her superior officers.* 2. of a higher nature or kind. 3. of great value or excellence; extraordinary.

excellent exceptionally good. *She prided herself on being an excellent bowler.*

greater superior in character or quality. *Many of the greater works of the artist are on display at the gallery.*

supervisory greater in responsibility or authority. *The supervisory personnel worked to solve the problem of staff morale.*

antonyms: inferior, poor, ordinary

surplus *adj.* being more than or in excess of what is needed or required. *The surplus grain was stored in silos.*

additional extra; supplementary. *When each student has a text, leave all the additional books on the shelf.*

excess an amount beyond what is needed. *The recipe said to pour off the excess liquid before serving.*

extra more than usual, normal, or expected. *Keep your extra pencils in your desks.*

leftover an unused remainder. *The leftover balloons were stored for use next year.*

remaining what is left; the rest. *After dinner, put the remaining food in the refrigerator.*

residual a quantity left over at the end of a process; remainder. *After she finished knitting a sweater, she put the residual yarn into a bag of scraps she used for crafts projects.*

T

transfer *v.* 1. to convey or shift from one person or place to another. *He transferred the call to his boss because he couldn't answer the question.*

2. to move oneself from one location, job, or school, to another.

exchange to trade or transfer. *Every year she exchanged gifts with her pen pal.*

interchange to switch two things. *At halftime the teams interchange goals.*

move to change position. *They asked her to move to a new location.*

relocate to establish in a new place. *Because of the father's career, the family was forced to relocate many times.*

shift to move from one place to another. *Shift that vase to the left to give a more balanced look to the display.*

switch to transfer, shift, or change. *At the end of the term, she switched to a new school.*

antonym: remain

transform *v.* 1. to change markedly the form or appearance of. 2. to change the nature, function, or condition of; convert. *With a lot of work, the cluttered, dirty basement was transformed into a family room.*

alter to change or make different. *They had to alter the seating plan when five people who had not been expected showed up.*

change to cause to be different. *Her new hairstyle really changed her appearance!*

convert to change into another form, substance, or state. *Heating water will convert it to steam.*

U

uncontrollable *adj.* not able to be controlled or governed. *She had an uncontrollable urge to run all the way home from school.*

headstrong insisting on having one's own way. *The headstrong child gave the baby-sitter a difficult time.*

ungovernable not able to be governed. *After the coup, the country proved to be ungovernable.*

unmanageable not able to be managed. *Getting four cats ready for a visit to the veterinarian was a nearly unmanageable task.*

unruly difficult to govern or control. *He never gave up trying to arrange his unruly hair.*

wild lacking control or discipline. *The wild fans tore down the goalposts after their team's victory.*

willful inclined to demand one's own will. *The rider could not control the willful young horse.*

antonyms: controllable, governable, willing, manageable, tame. See **docile**.

unpredictable *adj.* not predictable; not able to be foretold. *Until it is trained, the animal's behavior will be somewhat unpredictable.*

capricious unpredictable; playful. *Hold onto your hat or a capricious gust of wind will carry it away.*

haphazard dependent merely upon chance. *We couldn't find the book we wanted because of the haphazard arrangement of the shelves.*

random having no specific objective or pattern. *The packages were distributed in a random order.*

whimsical capricious or arbitrary. *The whimsical arrangement of items in the store made it hard to find specific things.*

antonyms: predictable, planned, organized, orderly

unwieldy *adj.* 1. difficult to carry or manage because of bulk or shape. 2. clumsy; ungainly. *A tricycle is an unwieldy thing to carry.*

awkward hard to handle. *Two shopping bags make an awkward load when you are going through a turnstile.*

bulky extremely large; unwieldy. *Although not heavy, the down coat made a bulky package.*

clumsy lacking skill or grace; awkward. *The huge clown shoes caused the child to make a clumsy entrance onto the stage.*

ungainly difficult to move or use; clumsy. *For a beginner, the sousaphone is an ungainly instrument.*

antonyms: easy, convenient, graceful

upheaval *n.* a sudden and violent disruption or upset. *The sudden drop in stock prices caused an upheaval in the financial world.* See **chaos**.

commotion a violent or turbulent motion. *One doesn't expect a commotion in a library.*

disruption interruption; confusion; disorder. *When choosing a setting for giving standardized tests, the administrator must find a place that will be free of disruption.*

disturbance an interruption, commotion, or upset. *The rowdy demonstrators created a disturbance at the statehouse.*

riot a wild or turbulent disturbance caused by a large number of people. *Because of overcrowding, the warden feared a riot.*

turbulence a violent disturbance. *The pilot warned of pockets of air turbulence and told us to remain seated with our seat belts fastened.*

turmoil complete confusion; agitation; commotion. *The fox caused turmoil in the chicken house.*

antonyms: peace, calmness

up-to-the-minute *adj.* marked by or including the most up-to-date information; current. *Have you heard an up-to-the-minute newsbreak about the space probe?*

current belonging to the present. *He disliked the current fashion of wearing very short hair.*

fashionable conforming to the current style. *It is fashionable in some circles to be late to social events.*

modern of or pertaining to the present or recent times. *Some modern automobiles have sophisticated computer systems.*

new of recent origin or lately made. *Each month he waited eagerly for the new issue of his treasure hunters' magazine.*

up-to-date reflecting the latest developments. *He turned on the radio to find up-to-date election results.*

antonyms: See **out-of-date**, **antique**.

urban *adj.* 1. of or located in a city. *Urban areas are often centers of cultural activities.* 2. characteristic of the city or city life.

citified having characteristics of city life. *Some residents complained that the noise and traffic of the new highway gave their town a citified feeling.*

metropolitan of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a metropolis. *Bustling crowds are part of the metropolitan atmosphere.*

utilize *v.* to put to use for a certain purpose. *The city will utilize fifty police officers for crowd control at the rally.*

devote to give entirely to a particular activity or purpose. *The newspaper will devote the front page to election results.*

employ to put to service. *To complete this assignment, you must employ at least three reference sources.*

V

veil *v.* to cover, conceal, mask, or disguise with or as if with a veil. *Fog veiled the valley.*

cloak to cover up; hide; conceal. *The arrangements for the meeting were cloaked in mystery.*

conceal to hide or keep from discovery. *The spy concealed the documents in the lining of his overcoat.*

cover to hide something by placing something over or in front of it. *I covered my face with my hand.*

disguise to conceal by false show; misrepresent. *She put a handkerchief over the mouthpiece of the telephone to disguise her voice.*

hide to keep or put out of sight. *Hide the gift behind the draperies.*

mask to cover for concealment or protection. *He masked his depression with a broad but insincere smile.*

obscure to conceal from view. *They were disappointed when clouds obscured the eclipse of the moon.*

antonyms: uncover, expose, reveal, unmask, exhibit, show

violent *adj.* 1. marked by or resulting from great physical force or rough action. 2. severe, intense. *The ships were tossed about by the violent storm.*

ferocious savage; violent. *The tale told of a ferocious beast that roamed the woods.*

fierce having a violent nature; ferocious. *Fierce sandstorms swept across the desert, preventing all outdoor activity.*

powerful strong. *Don't swim along this beach; there is a powerful undertow.*

savage fierce or ferocious. *The bear cub suffered a savage attack by a mountain lion.*

antonyms: gentle, calm, weak. See **peaceable**.

vista *n.* a distant view seen through an opening; prospect. *The vista from the chalet window was breathtaking.*

outlook the view seen by looking out; prospect. *The brochure for the resort claimed a spectacular mountain outlook.*

prospect the direction in which something, such as a building, faces; an outlook. *The building's prospect provided an ocean view.*

scene a place as seen by a viewer; view. *The scene from the top floor of the skyscraper made him dizzy.*

view a prospect or vista. *They asked the desk clerk for a room with a view.*

vital *adj.* 1. of or characteristic of life. *The nurse checked the patient's vital signs.* 2. full of life; animated. 3. having immediate importance; essential. See **essential**.

critical essential; necessary. *Time is the most critical factor in completing this project successfully.*

energetic full of energy; vigorous. *The football team is looking for an energetic person for the job of equipment manager.*

indispensable required. *In the rainy season an umbrella is an indispensable accessory.*

necessary vital; essential. *The mountain climbers brought only the most necessary equipment.*

antonyms: lifeless, sluggish, inessential, dispensable, unnecessary

vivid *adj.* 1. perceived as bright and distinct; brilliant. 2. having intensely bright colors. *They stood admiring the vivid sunset until night fell.*

See **brilliant**, **distinct**.

colorful rich in variety; vivid. *We admired the author's colorful word choices.*

garish flawed by intense color or excessive decoration. *The garish hat was orange, purple, and green with bangles and feathers.*

intense having great concentration, power, or force. *It had been a very intense dream that stayed with her for days.*

antonyms: dull, plain, indistinct, pale

vocal *adj.* 1. of or pertaining to the voice. *The singer began taking lessons with a vocal coach.* 2. quick to speak or criticize; outspoken.

frank outspoken; candid. *Frank discussion of personal finances can be embarrassing.*

pronounced spoken. *Clearly pronounced words are more easily understood.*

spoken uttered. *How does spoken grammar differ from written grammar?*

straightforward outspoken; honest. *The candidate captured the people's attention with her straightforward approach.*

unreserved outspoken; frank. *The teacher's unreserved praise boosted his morale.*

antonyms: reticent, reserved

vocation *n.* a regular occupation or profession, especially one for which a person is specially suited or qualified. *All through her childhood she planned a vocation as a physician.*

calling vocation or career. *Elizabeth Blackwell's calling was medicine.*

career a life work; vocation. *She chose a military career because the discipline appealed to her.*

occupation an activity that serves as one's regular source of livelihood; vocation. *Most people change occupations at least once during their working lives.*

profession an occupation requiring advanced specialized training. *Everyone in the family was a member of the legal profession.*

W

weird *adj.* 1. unearthly; eerie. 2. of an odd and inexplicable character; strange; fantastic. *The weird program featured talking insects.*
See **bizarre**.

well-informed, *adj.* having a good background of knowledge, especially up-to-date information. *A journalist must be well-informed to do his or her job.* See **knowledgeable**.

au courant having up-to-date information. *A political candidate must be au courant on all topics of public interest to answer the many questions he or she will be asked.*

well-read widely read. *Tyler's goal was to be a well-read person.*

well-rounded having knowledge of a wide variety of topics. *The talk show host prided himself on being well-rounded and able to discuss anything with anyone.*

antonyms: out-of-date, uninformed, ignorant

world-famous *adj.* acclaimed around the world; outstanding. *Dame Nellie Melba was a world-famous opera singer.*

outstanding superior to others of its kind. *He claimed that his car delivered outstanding performance.*

preeminent noted above all others; outstanding. *Shakespeare is the preeminent playwright in the English language.*

redoubtable worthy of respect; awesome. *No one wanted to challenge the redoubtable world champion.*

renowned widely acclaimed; famous. *The renowned British actor Sir Laurence Olivier died in 1989.*

antonyms: unknown, obscure, little-known, unworthy

Y

yacht *n.* any of various sailing or mechanically propelled vessels, generally with smart, graceful lines, used for pleasure cruises or racing. *The yacht cut through the turquoise water toward the island.*

cruiser a large, mechanically powered boat with living quarters. *The executive liked to have business meetings aboard his cruiser whenever possible.*

sailboat a boat propelled primarily by sail. *On most summer days Lake Michigan provides an enjoyable parade of sailboats to watch.*

ship any large vessel able to navigate deep water. *The harbor was crowded with ships of all sorts.*

Z

zeppelin *n.* a rigid airship having a long, cylindrical body supported by internal gas cells. *The zeppelin, a flying machine, was invented by Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin.*

airship a vehicle invented to transport things through the air. *Many kinds of airships have been developed since the beginning of the twentieth century.*

blimp a buoyant aircraft. *A blimp is often used to shoot aerial views of televised events such as the World Series.*

dirigible an early cylindrical lighter-than-air craft. *There were pictures of dirigibles as well as zeppelins and blimps in the article about buoyant aircraft.*