

| paucity      | Common<br>Words I | noun: a lack of something  | There is a paucity of jobs hiring today that require menial skills, since most jobs have either been automated or outsourced.  |
|--------------|-------------------|--|--|
| stem         | Common<br>Words I | verb: to hold back or limit the flow or growth of something  | To stem the tide of applications, the prestigious Ivy requires that each applicant score at least 2100 on the SAT.   |
| indigenous   | Common<br>Words I | adjective: originating in a certain area   | The plants and animals indigenous to Australia are notably different from those indigenous to the U.Sone look at a duckbill platypus and you know youre not dealing with an opossum. |
| insolvent    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: unable to pay one's bills; bankrupt   | With credit card bills skyrocketing, a shockingly large number of Americans are truly insolvent.   |
| affluent     | Common<br>Words I | adjective: wealthy   | The center of the city had sadly become a pit of penury, while, only five miles away, multi-million dollar homes spoke of affluence.   |
| vicarious    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: felt or<br>undergone as if one<br>were taking part in the<br>experience or feelings<br>of another | The advent of twitter is a celebrity stalker's dream, as he or she canthrough hundreds of intimate "tweets" vicariously live the life of a famous person.                            |
| animosity    | Common<br>Words I | noun: intense hostility  | The governors animosity toward his rival was only inflamed when the latter spread false lies regarding the governors first term.   |
| hodgepodge   | Common<br>Words I | noun: a confusing mixture or jumble  | Those in attendance represented a hodgepodge of the city's denizens: chimney sweepers could be seen sitting elbow to elbow with stockbrokers.  |
| demean       | Common<br>Words I | verb: to insult; to cause someone to lose dignity or respect   | At first the soccer players bantered back and forth, but as soon as one of the players became demeaning, calling the other's mother a water buffalo, the ref whipped out a red card. |
| antiquated   | Common<br>Words I | adjective: old-fashioned; belonging to an earlier period in time   | Aunt Betty had antiquated notions about marriage, believing that a man should court a woman for at least a year before receiving a kiss.   |
| apprehension | Common<br>Words I | noun: fearful expectation  | Test day can be one of pure apprehension, as many students worry about their test scores.  |
| belittle     | Common<br>Words I | verb: lessen the importance, dignity, or reputation of   | A good teacher will never belittle his students, but will instead empower them.  |



| honian        | Common<br>Words I | adjective: kind  | I remember my grandfather's face was wrinkled, benign, and calm.  |
|---------------|-------------------|--|---|
| benign        | VVOIUS I          | adjective: kind adjective: (medicine) not dangerous to   | benign, and cann.   |
| benign        | Common<br>Words I | health; not recurrent or progressive   | The tumor located in your ear lobe seems to be benign and should not cause you any trouble.   |
| candidness    | Common<br>Words I | noun: the quality of<br>being honest and<br>straightforward in<br>attitude and speech                      | Although I was unhappy that the relationship ended, I appreciated her candidness about why she was ready to move on from the relationship.          |
| commendable   | Common<br>Words I | adjective: worthy of high praise   | The efforts of the firefighters running into the burning building were commendable.   |
| complacent    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: contented to a fault with oneself or one's actions  | After the water polo team won their sixth championship, they became complacent and didn't even make it to the playoffs the next year.               |
| creditable    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: deserving of praise but not that amazing  | Critics agreed the movie was creditable, but few gave it more than three out of five stars.   |
| cumbersome    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: difficult to handle or use especially because of size or weight                                 | Only ten years ago, being an avid reader and a traveler meant carrying a cumbersome backpack stuffed with booksthese days we need only an e-reader. |
| dearth        | Common<br>Words I | noun: a lack or shortage   | I am surprised by the dearth of fast food chains; this is<br>America and I assumed they were on every street.                                       |
| derisive      | Common<br>Words I | adjective: abusing vocally; expressing contempt or ridicule  | I was surprised by her derisive tone; usually, she is sweet, soft spoken, and congenial.  |
| deter         | Common<br>Words I | verb: turn away from by persuasion   | His mother tried to deter him from joining the army, but he was too intoxicated with the idea of war to listen.                                     |
| deter         | Common<br>Words I | verb: try to prevent; show opposition to   | The government's primary job should involve deterring paths to war, not finding ways to start them.   |
| differentiate | Common<br>Words I | verb: be a distinctive<br>feature, attribute, or<br>trait (sometimes in<br>positive sense)                 | Mozart's long melodic lines differentiate his compositions from other works of late 18th century music.   |
| differentiate | Common<br>Words I | verb: evolve so as to<br>lead to a new species<br>or develop in a way<br>most suited to the<br>environment | Animals on Madagascar differentiated from other similar animal species due to many years of isolation on the island.                                |



|              |                   | noun: look of   | Donnito all their telepted players, the terre was filled   |
|--------------|-------------------|---|--|
| discord      | Common<br>Words I | noun: lack of agreement or harmony  | Despite all their talented players, the team was filled with discordsome players refused to talk to othersand lost most of their games.  |
| discreet     | Common<br>Words I | adjective: careful to protect one's speech or actions in order to avoid offense or draw attention | The professor thought that he was discreet, subtly wiping the stain off of his shirt, but as soon as he stepped off the podium a heckler in the audience burst out, "You missed a spot". |
| disheartened | Common<br>Words I | adjective: made less<br>hopeful or enthusiastic   | After the visiting team scored nine times, the home team's fans were disheartened, some leaving the game early.  |
| eccentric    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: highly unconventional or unusual (usually describes a person)                          | Mozart was well-known for his eccentricities, often speaking words backward to confuse those around him.   |
| elaborate    | Common<br>Words I | adjective: marked by complexity and richness of detail  | Thomas, on returning from Morocco, replaced his dirty gray carpet with an elaborate one he'd brought back with him.  |
| elaborate    | Common<br>Words I | verb: explain in more detail  | Most high school physics teachers find themselves elaborating the same point over and over again, since many concepts confuse students.  |
| embellish    | Common<br>Words I | verb: make more<br>attractive by adding<br>ornament, colour, etc.;<br>make more beautiful         | McCartney would write relatively straightforward lyrics, and Lennon would embellish them with puns and poetic images.  |
| emulate      | Common<br>Words I | verb: strive to equal or<br>match, especially by<br>imitating; compete<br>with successfully       | To really become fluent in a new language, emulate the speech patterns of people who speak the language.   |
| evasive      | Common<br>Words I | adjective: avoiding or escaping from difficulty or danger or commitment                           | His responses were clearly evasive; he obviously did not want to take on any responsibility or any new work.   |
| evasive      | Common<br>Words I | adjective: deliberately vague or ambiguous  | Every time I call the bank, I receive the same evasive answers about our mortgage and never get a clear response.  |
| exasperate   | Common<br>Words I | verb: to irritate intensely   | As a child, I exasperated my mother with strings of never-ending questions.  |
| forthright   | Common<br>Words I | adjective:<br>characterized by<br>directness in manner  | I did not expect the insurance agent to give us any straight answers, but I was pleasantly surprised by how forthright he was.   |



|              |                   | or speech; without subtlety or evasion                                     |   |
|--------------|-------------------|--|---|
| guffaw       | Common<br>Words I | verb: laugh boisterously   | Whenever the jester fell to the ground in mock pain, the king guffawed, exposing his yellow, fang-like teeth.   |
| hamper       | Common<br>Words I | verb: prevent the progress or free movement of                             | As the rain water began to collect in pools on the highway, it began to hamper the flow of traffic.   |
| inadvertent  | Common<br>Words I | adjective: happening<br>by chance or<br>unexpectedly or<br>unintentionally | Although Prohibition was rooted in noble ideals, the inadvertent and costly consequences of making alcohol illegal in the U.S. led to its repeal.                     |
| inarticulate | Common<br>Words I | adjective: without or deprived of the use of speech or words               | Although a brilliant economist, Professor Black was completely inarticulate, a terrible lecturer.   |
| malady       | Common<br>Words I | noun: a disease or sickness  | The town was struck by a malady throughout the winter that left most people sick in bed for two weeks.  |
| malodorous   | Common<br>Words I | adjective: having an unpleasant smell                                      | Some thermally active fountains spew sulfur fumesthe air around them is sometimes so malodorous that many have to plug their noses.                                   |
| melancholy   | Common<br>Words I | noun: a deep,<br>long-lasting sadness                                      | Hamlet is a figure of tremendous melancholy: he doesn't have a truly cheerful scene throughout the entire play.   |
| obliging     | Common<br>Words I | adjective: showing a cheerful willingness to do favors for others          | Even after all his success, I found him to be accommodating and obliging, sharing with me his "secret tips" on how to gain wealth and make friends.                   |
| patronize    | Common<br>Words I | verb: treat condescendingly  | She says she genuinely wanted to help me, but instead she patronized me, constantly pointing out how I was inferior to her.   |
| qualm        | Common<br>Words I | noun: uneasiness about the fitness of an action                            | While he could articulate no clear reason why Harkner's plan would fail, he nevertheless felt qualms about committing any resources to it.                            |
| quip         | Common<br>Words I | noun: a witty saying or remark   | In one of the most famous quips about classical music, Mark Twain said: "Wagner's music is better than it sounds."  |
| quip         | Common<br>Words I | verb: to make a witty remark, to say in jest                               | When an old English teacher criticized Churchill for ending a sentence with a preposition, he quipped, "This is the kind of criticism up with which we will not put!" |
| resignation  | Common<br>Words I | noun: the acceptance of something unpleasant that can't be avoided         | Since Jack could not think of a convincing reason why he had to miss the seminar, he attended it with a sense of resignation.   |



| resolve    | Common<br>Words I  | verb: reach a conclusion after a discussion or deliberation   | After much thought, Ted resolved not to travel abroad this summer because he didn't have much money in his bank account.   |
|------------|--------------------|---|--|
| retract    | Common<br>Words I  | verb: pull inward or<br>towards a center;<br>formally reject or<br>disavow a formerly<br>held belief, usually<br>under pressure | Email is wonderfully efficient, but once something awkward or damaging has been sent, there is no way to retract it.   |
| smug       | Common<br>Words I  | adjective: marked by excessive complacency or self-satisfaction   | When Phil was dating the model, he had a smug attitude that annoyed his buddies.   |
| sordid     | Common<br>Words I  | adjective: involving ignoble actions and motives; arousing moral distaste and contempt; foul and run-down and repulsive         | The nightly news simply announced that the senator had had an affair, but the tabloid published all the sordid details of the interaction.   |
| surly      | Common<br>Words I  | adjective: inclined to<br>anger or bad feelings<br>with overtones of<br>menace  | Every morning, Bhavin was a surly, unhappy person, but once he ate breakfast, he became loving, laughing, and a joy to be around.  |
| tumult     | Common<br>Words I  | noun: a state of chaos, noise and confusion   | Riots broke out just in front of our apartment building, and the tumult continued late into the night.   |
| erratic    | Common<br>Words II | adjective: unpredictable; strange and unconventional  | It came as no surprise to pundits that the Presidents attempt at re-election floundered; even during his term, support for his policies was erratic, with an approval rating jumping anywhere from 30 to 60 percent. |
| pugnacious | Common<br>Words II | adjective: eager to fight or argue; verbally combative  | The comedian told one flat joke after another, and when the audience started booing, he pugnaciously spat back at them, Hey, you think this is easy why dont you buffoons give it a shot?                            |
| profuse    | Common<br>Words II | adjective: plentiful;<br>pouring out in<br>abundance  | During mile 20 of the Hawaii Marathon, Dwayne was sweating so profusely that he stopped to take off his shirt, and ran the remaining six miles wearing nothing more than skimpy shorts.                              |



| sanguine    | Common<br>Words II | adjective: cheerful; optimistic   | With the prospect of having to learn 3,000 words during the course of the summer, Paul was anything but sanguine.  |
|-------------|--------------------|---|--|
| desecrate   | Common<br>Words II | verb: to willfully violate or destroy a sacred place                                      | After desecrating the pharaoh's tomb, the archaeologist soon fell victim to a horrible illness.  |
| spendthrift | Common<br>Words II | noun: one who spends money extravagantly  | Taking weekly trips to Vegas, Megan was a spendthrift whose excesses eventually caught up to her.  |
| avarice     | Common<br>Words II | noun: greed (one of the seven deadly sins)  | The Spanish conquistadors were known for their avarice, plundering Incan land and stealing Incan gold.   |
| voracious   | Common<br>Words II | adjective: very hungry; approaching an activity with gusto                                | Steven was a voracious reader, sometimes finishing two novels in the same day.   |
| vindictive  | Common<br>Words II | adjective: to have a very strong desire for revenge                                       | Though the other girl had only lightly poked fun of Vanessa's choice in attire, Vanessa was so vindictive that she waited for an entire semester to get the perfect revenge. |
| cogent      | Common<br>Words II | adjective: clear and persuasive   | A cogent argument will change the minds of even the most skeptical audience.   |
| tirade      | Common<br>Words II | noun: an angry  | In terms of political change, a tirade oftentimes does little more than make the person speaking red in the face.  |
| archaic     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: so old as to appear to belong to a different period                            | Hoping to sound intelligent, Mary spoke in archaic English that was right out of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudiceneedless to say, she didn't have many friends.             |
| assuage     | Common<br>Words II | verb: make something intense less severe  | Her fear that the new college would be filled with unknown faces was assuaged when she recognized her childhood friend standing in line.                                     |
| besiege     | Common<br>Words II | verb: harass, as with<br>questions or requests;<br>cause to feel<br>distressed or worried | After discovering a priceless artifact in her backyard, Jane was besieged by phone calls, emails, and reporters all trying to buy, hold or see the rare piece of history.    |
| besmirch    | Common<br>Words II | verb: damage the good name and reputation of someone                                      | The prince's distasteful choice of words besmirched not only his own name, but the reputation of the entire royal family.  |
| champion    | Common<br>Words II | verb: to fight for a cause  | Martin Luther King Jr. championed civil rights fiercely throughout his short life.   |



| convivial   | Common<br>Words II | adjective: describing a lively atmosphere   | The wedding reception was convivial; friends who hadn't seen each other for ages drank and ate together before heading to the dance floor.          |
|-------------|--------------------|---|---|
| debase      | Common<br>Words II | verb: reduce the quality or value of something  | The third-rate script so debased the film that not even the flawless acting could save it from being a flop.  |
| degrade     | Common<br>Words II | verb: reduce in worth or character, usually verbally  | Jesse had mockingly pointed out all of Nancy's faults in front of their friends, publicly degrading the poor girl.                                  |
| devolve     | Common<br>Words II | verb: pass on or delegate to another  | The company was full of managers known for devolving tasks to lower management, but never doing much work themselves.                               |
| devolve     | Common<br>Words II | verb: grow worse<br>(usually "devolve<br>into")   | The dialogue between the two academics devolved into a downright bitter argument.   |
| dilapidated | Common<br>Words II | adjective: in terrible condition  | The main house has been restored but the gazebo is still dilapidated and unuseable.   |
| elusive     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: difficult to capture or difficult to remember  | Many first time skydivers say that describing the act of falling from the sky is elusive.   |
| enmity      | Common<br>Words II | noun: a state of deep-seated ill-will   | Charles rude remark toward Sarah yesterday was due to his illness, not due to any real enmity toward Sarah.   |
| enumerate   | Common<br>Words II | verb: determine the number or amount of   | The survey enumerates the number of happy workers and the number of unhappy workers.  |
| enumerate   | Common<br>Words II | verb: specify individually, one by one  | I sat and listened as she enumerated all of the things she did not like about the past three months.  |
| fawn        | Common<br>Words II | verb: try to gain favor by extreme flattery   | The media fawned over the handsome new CEO, praising his impeccable sense of style instead of asking more pointed questions.                        |
| fickle      | Common<br>Words II | adjective: liable to<br>sudden unpredictable<br>change, esp. in<br>affections or<br>attachments | She was so fickle in her politics, it was hard to pinpoint her beliefs; one week she would embrace a side, and the next week she would denounce it. |
| incessant   | Common<br>Words II | adjective: uninterrupted in time and indefinitely long continuing                               | I don't mind small children in brief doses, but I think the incessant exposure that their parents have to them would quickly wear me down.          |



| ingenuity | Common<br>Words II | noun: the power of creative imagination  | Daedalus was famous for his ingenuity; he was able to fashion his son Icarus with a pair of wings, using wax to hold them together.  |
|-----------|--------------------|--|--|
| insipid   | Common<br>Words II | adjective: dull and uninteresting  | The movie director was known for hiring beautiful actors in order to deflect attention away from the insipid scripts he would typically use.   |
| lethargic | Common<br>Words II | adjective: lacking energy  | Nothing can make a person more lethargic than a big turkey dinner.   |
| malleable | Common<br>Words II | adjective: capable of being shaped or bent or drawn out                        | The clay became malleable and easy to work with after a little water was added.  |
| malleable | Common<br>Words II | adjective: easily influenced   | My little brother is so malleable that I can convince him to sneak cookies from the cupboard for me.   |
| meander   | Common<br>Words II | verb: to wander aimlessly  | A casual observer might have thought that Peter was meandering through the city, but that day he was actually seeking out those places where he and his long lost love had once visited. |
| morose    | Common<br>Words II | adjective: ill-tempered and not inclined to talk; gloomy                       | After Stanley found out he was no longer able to go on vacation with his friends, he sat in his room morosely.   |
| obstinate | Common<br>Words II | adjective: resistant to guidance or discipline; stubbornly persistent          | The coach suggested improvements Sarah might make on the balance beam, but she remained obstinate, unwilling to modify any of the habits that made her successful in the past.           |
| ornate    | Common<br>Words II | adjective: marked by elaborate rhetoric and elaborated with decorative details | The ornate Victorian and Edwardian homes spread throughout San Francisco are my favorite part of the city.   |
| perturb   | Common<br>Words II | verb: disturb in mind or cause to be worried or alarmed                        | Now that Henry is recovering from a major illnesses, he no longer lets the little trivialities, such as late mail, perturb him.  |
| placid    | Common<br>Words II | adjective: not easily irritated  | Doug is normally placid, so we were all shocked to see him yelling at the television when the Mets lost the game.  |
| profusion | Common<br>Words II | noun: the property of being extremely abundant                                 | When Maria reported that she had been visited by Jesus Christ and had proof, a profusion of reporters and journalists descended on the town.   |
| proponent | Common<br>Words II | noun: a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea                     | Ironically, the leading proponent of Flat-Earth Theory flies all over the world in an effort to win more adherents.  |



| respite    | Common<br>Words II | noun: a pause from doing something (as work)  | Every afternoon, the small company has a respite in which workers play foosball or board games.  |
|------------|--------------------|---|--|
| robust     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: sturdy and strong in form, constitution, or construction                                     | Chris preferred bland and mild beers, but Bhavin preferred a beer with more robust flavor.   |
| smattering | Common<br>Words II | noun: a slight or<br>superficial<br>understanding of a<br>subject; a small<br>amount of something       | I know only a smattering of German, but Helen is able to read German newspapers and converse with natives.   |
| stolid     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: having or<br>revealing little emotion<br>or sensibility; not<br>easily aroused or<br>excited | Elephants may appear stolid to casual observers, but they actually have passionate emotional lives.  |
| tarnish    | Common<br>Words II | verb: make dirty or<br>spotty, as by exposure<br>to air; also used<br>metaphorically                    | Pete Rose was one of the best baseball players of his generation, but his involvement with gambling on baseball games has tarnished his image in the eyes of many.         |
| tawdry     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: tastelessly<br>showy; cheap and<br>shoddy  | Carol expected to find New York City magical, the way so many movies had portrayed it, but she was surprised how often tawdry displays took the place of genuine elegance. |
| taxing     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: use to the limit; exhaust  | The hike to the summit of Mt. Whitney was so taxing that I could barely speak or stand up.   |
| urbane     | Common<br>Words II | adjective: showing a high degree of refinement and the assurance that comes from wide social experience | Because of his service as an intelligence officer and his refined tastes, W. Somerset Maugham became the inspiration for the urbane and sophisticate spy James Bond.       |
| vanquish   | Common<br>Words II | verb: come out better in a competition, race, or conflict   | For years, Argentina would dominate in World Cup qualifying matches, only to be vanquished by one of the European countries during the late stages of the tournament.      |
| veneer     | Common<br>Words II | noun: covering consisting of a thin superficial layer that hides the underlying substance               | Mark Twain referred to the Victorian Period in America as the "Gilded Age", implying the ample moral corruption that lay beneath a mere veneer of respectability.          |



| whimsical          | Common<br>Words II  | adjective: determined<br>by impulse or whim<br>rather than by<br>necessity or reason | Adults look to kids and envy their whimsical nature at times, wishing that they could act without reason and play without limitation.   |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|---|
| disparate          | Common<br>Words III | adjective: two things are fundamentally different                                    | With the advent of machines capable of looking inside the brain, fields as disparate as religion and biology have been brought together by scientists trying to understand what happens in the brain when people have a religious experience. |
| inundate           | Common<br>Words III | verb: to flood or overwhelm  | The newsroom was inundated with false reports that only made it more difficult for the newscasters to provide an objective account of the bank robbery.   |
| wax                | Common<br>Words III | verb: to gradually increase in size or intensity                                     | Her enthusiasm for the divas new album only waxed with each song; by the end of the album, it was her favorite CD yet.  |
| indignant          | Common<br>Words III | adjective: feeling anger over a perceived injustice                                  | When the cyclist swerved into traffic, it forced the driver to brake and elicited an indignant shout of "Hey, punk, watch where you're going!"  |
| misanthrope        | Common<br>Words III | noun: a hater of mankind   | Kevin is such a misanthrope that he refused to attend<br>the Christmas party, claiming that everyone's<br>happiness was "fake" and "annoying."  |
| sanctimoniou<br>s  | Common<br>Words III | adjective: making a show of being pious; holier-than-thou                            | Even during the quiet sanctity of evening prayer, she held her chin high, a sanctimonious sneer forming on her face as she eyed those who were attending church for the first time.   |
| thrifty            | Common<br>Words III | adjective: spending money wisely   | He was economical, spending his money thriftily and on items considered essential.  |
| unconscionab<br>le | Common<br>Words III | adjective:<br>unreasonable;<br>unscrupulous;<br>excessive                            | The lawyers demands were so unconscionable that rather than pay an exorbitant sum or submit himself to any other inconveniences, the defendant decided to find a new lawyer.  |
| exhort             | Common<br>Words III | verb: to strongly urge on; encourage   | Nelsons parents exhorted him to study medicine, urging him to choose a respectable profession; intransigent, Nelson left home to become a graffiti artist.  |
| extenuating        | Common<br>Words III | adjective: making less<br>guilty or more<br>forgivable                               | The jury was hardly moved by the mans plea that his loneliness was an extenuating factor in his crime of dognapping a prized pooch.   |
| zenith             | Common<br>Words III | noun: the highest point; culmination   | At the zenith of his artistic career, Elvis was outselling any other artist on the charts.  |
| bellicose          | Common<br>Words III | adjective: warlike; inclined to quarrel  | Known for their bellicose ways, the Spartans were once the most feared people from Peloponnesus to Persia.  |



| affable           | Common<br>Words III | adjective: likeable; easy to talk to                                  | For all his surface affability, Marco was remarkably glum when he wasnt around other people.   |
|-------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| amiable           | Common<br>Words III | adjective: friendly   | Amys name was very apt: she was so amiable that she was twice voted class president.   |
| telltale          | Common<br>Words III | adjective: revealing  | The many telltale signs of chronic smoking include yellow teeth, and a persistent, hacking cough.  |
| replete           | Common<br>Words III | adjective: completely stocked or furnished with something             | Only weeks after the hurricane made landfall, the local supermarket shelves were replete with goods, so quick was the disaster relief response.      |
| advocate          | Common<br>Words III | verb: speak, plead, or argue in favor of                              | While the senator privately approved of gay marriage, he was unwilling to advocate for the cause in a public venue.                                  |
| advocate          | Common<br>Words III | noun: a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea            | Martin Luther King Jr. was a tireless advocate for the rights of African-Americans in the United States.   |
| banish            | Common<br>Words III | verb: expel from a community, residence, or location; drive away      | The most difficult part of the fast was banishing thoughts of food.  |
| brusquely         | Common<br>Words III | adverb: in a blunt, direct manner                                     | Not one for social pleasantries, the Chief of Staff would<br>brusquely ask his subordinates anything he wanted,<br>even coffee.                      |
| complementar<br>y | Common<br>Words III | adjective: enhancing each other's qualities (for two things or more). | The head waiter was careful to tell the amateur diners that red wine was complementary with beef, each bringing out subtle taste notes in the other. |
| convoluted        | Common<br>Words III | adjective: highly complex or intricate                                | Instead of solving the math problem in three simple steps, Kumar used a convoluted solution requiring fifteen steps.                                 |
| credence          | Common<br>Words III | noun: belief in something   | He placed no credence in psychics, claiming that they offered no special powers beyond the ability to make people part with their money.             |
| debunk            | Common<br>Words III | verb: expose as false ideas and claims, especially while ridiculing   | Richard Dawkins tries to debunk religious belief, but his ridicule tends to push people away from his points rather than convince them.              |
| deliberate        | Common<br>Words III | verb: think about carefully; weigh the pros and cons of an issue      | Emergency situations such as this call for immediate action and leave no room to deliberate over options.  |
| deride            | Common<br>Words III | verb: treat or speak of with contempt                                 | The nun derided the students for trying to sneak insects and worms into the classroom.   |
|                   |                     |   |  |



| destitute    | Common<br>Words III | adjective: poor enough to need help from others  | Jean Valjean, is at first destitute, but through the grace of a priest, he makes something of his life.   |
|--------------|---------------------|--|---|
| destitute    | Common<br>Words III | adjective: completely wanting or lacking (usually "destitute of")                              | Now that the mine is closed, the town is destitute of any economic activity.  |
| detrimental  | Common<br>Words III | adjective: (sometimes followed by "to") causing harm or injury                                 | Many know that smoking is detrimental to your health, but processed sugar in large quantities is equally bad.   |
| empathetic   | Common<br>Words III | adjective: showing understanding and ready comprehension of other peoples' states and emotions | Most discrimination and hatred is based on a lack of empathetic awareness of people that have the same aspirations and fears.                                   |
| excruciating | Common<br>Words III | adjective: extremely painful   | After the boulder rolled a couple of feet, pinning my friend's arm, he experienced excruciating pain.   |
| glean        | Common<br>Words III | verb: collect information bit by bit   | Herb has given us no formal statement about his background, but from various hints, I have gleaned that he grew up in difficult circumstances.                  |
| humdrum      | Common<br>Words III | adjective: dull and lacking excitement   | Having grown up in a humdrum suburb, Jacob relished life in New York City after moving.   |
| impeccable   | Common<br>Words III | adjective: without fault or error  | He was impeccably dressed in the latest fashion without a single crease or stain.   |
| impede       | Common<br>Words III | verb: be a hindrance or obstacle to  | Since the police sergeant had to train the pair of new hires, progress in his own case was impeded.   |
| leery        | Common<br>Words III | adjective: openly distrustful and unwilling to confide   | Without checking his references and talking to previous employers, I am leery of hiring the candidate.  |
| lucid        | Common<br>Words III | adjective: (of language) transparently clear; easily understandable                            | Though Walters writes about physics and time travel, his writing is always lucid, so readers with little scientific training can understand difficult concepts. |
| paradoxical  | Common<br>Words III | adjective: seemingly contradictory but nonetheless possibly true                               | That light could be both a particle and a wave seems paradoxical, but nonetheless, it is true.  |
| perennial    | Common<br>Words III | adjective: lasting an indefinitely long time; eternal; everlasting                             | Even at the old-timers games, Stan Musial would get the loudest cheer: he was a perennial favorite of the fans there.   |



| pertinent  | Common<br>Words III | adjective: having precise or logical relevance to the matter at hand  | While the salaries of the players might draw attention in the media, such monetary figures are not pertinent to the question of who plays the best on the field.  |
|------------|---------------------|---|---|
| ploy       | Common<br>Words III | noun: a clever plan to turn a situation to one's advantage  | Dennis arranged an elaborate ploy, involving 14 different people lying for him in different situations, so that it could appear that he was meeting Mary completely by chance at the wedding reception.                       |
| precarious | Common<br>Words III | adjective: fraught with danger  | People smoke to relax and forget their cares, but ironically, in terms of health risks, smoking is far more precarious than either mountain-climbing or skydiving.  |
| precedent  | Common<br>Words III | noun: an example that is used to justify similar occurrences at a later time                                  | The principal explained that even though one student had done modelling work outside of school, the outfits that student wore in those photographs in no way established a precedent for what could be worn at school dances. |
| quandary   | Common<br>Words III | noun: state of uncertainty or perplexity especially as requiring a choice between equally unfavorable options | Steve certainly is in a quandary: if he doesn't call Elaine, she will blame him for everything, but if he does call her, the evidence of where he currently is could cost him his job.  |
| rankle     | Common<br>Words III | verb: gnaw into; make resentful or angry  | His constant whistling would rankle her, sometimes causing her to leave in a huff.  |
| relegate   | Common<br>Words III | verb: assign to a lower position  | When Dexter was unable to fulfill his basic duties, instead of firing him, the boss relegated him to kitchen cleanup.   |
| spurn      | Common<br>Words III | verb: reject with contempt  | She spurned all his flattery and proposals, and so he walked off embarrassed and sad.   |
| squander   | Common<br>Words III | verb: spend<br>thoughtlessly; waste<br>time, money, or an<br>opportunity                                      | Fearing his money would be squandered by his family, he gave all of it to charity when he died.   |
| steadfast  | Common<br>Words III | adjective: marked by firm determination or resolution; not shakable   | A good captain needs to be steadfast, continuing to hold the wheel and stay the course even during the most violent storm.  |
| thwart     | Common<br>Words III | verb: hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of   | I wanted to spend a week in New York this autumn, but the high costs of travel and lodging thwarted my plans.   |



| unprecedente<br>d | Common<br>Words III | adjective: having<br>never been done or<br>known before; novel                    | When America first created its national parks, the idea of setting aside the most beautiful land in a country was unprecedented in the history of mankind.                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| vie               | Common<br>Words III | verb: compete for something   | While the other teams in the division actively vie for the championship, this team seems content simply to go through the motions of playing.  |
| candid            | Basic               | adjective:<br>straightforward and<br>honest                                       | Even with a perfect stranger, Charles was always candid and would rarely hold anything back.   |
| bleak             | Basic               | adjective: having a depressing or gloomy outlook                                  | Unremitting overcast skies tend to lead people to create bleak literature and lugubrious music compare Englands band Radiohead to any band from Southern California.                       |
| variance          | Basic               | noun: the quality of being different  | The cynic quipped, There is not much variance in politicians; they all seem to lie.  |
| miser             | Basic               | noun: a person who<br>doesn't like to spend<br>money (because they<br>are greedy) | Monte was no miser, but was simply frugal, wisely spending the little that he earned.  |
| err               | Basic               | verb: to make an error  | He erred in thinking that "indigent" and "indignant" were synonyms.  |
| censor            | Basic               | verb: to examine and remove objectionable material                                | Every fall, high school English teachers are inundated by requests to censor their curriculum by removing The Catcher in the Rye and Scarlet Letter from their reading lists.              |
| censor            | Basic               | noun: an official who censors material  | The censor insisted that every reference to drugs should be removed from the manuscript.   |
| mesmerize         | Basic               | verb: to spellbind or enthrall  | The plot and the characters were so well developed that many viewers were mesmerized, unable to move their eyes from the screen for even a single second.                                  |
| unnerve           | Basic               | verb: to make nervous or upset  | At one time unnerved by math problems, she began avidly Magoosh-ing, and soon became adept at even combinations and permutations questions.  |
| stipend           | Basic               | noun: a regular allowance (of money)  | He was hoping for a monthly allowance loan from the government, but after no such stipend was forthcoming he realized he would have to seek other means of paying for his college tuition. |
| dupe              | Basic               | verb: to trick or swindle   | Once again a get-rich-fast Internet scheme had duped Harold into submitting a \$5,000 check to a sham operation.   |



| dupe     | Basic | noun: a person who is easily tricked or swindled    | The charlatan mistook the crowd for a bunch of dupes, but the crowd was quickly on to him and decried his bald-faced attempt to bilk them.                               |
|----------|-------|---|--|
| summit   | Basic | noun: the peak or highest point                     | After hiking for two days, the climbers finally reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.   |
| summit   | Basic | noun: a meeting of high-level leaders               | Since climate change policy has been mired in congressional fighting, this summit should help set the goals for president's next term.                                   |
| acme     | Basic | noun: the highest point of achievement              | The new Cessna airplanes will be the acme of comfort, offering reclining seats and ample legroom.  |
| pinnacle | Basic | noun: the highest point                             | At its pinnacle, the Roman Empire extended across most of the landmass of Eurasia, a feat not paralleled to the rise of the British Empire in the 18th and 19th century. |
| apex     | Basic | noun: the highest point                             | The Ivy League is considered the apex of the secondary education system.   |
| hound    | Basic | verb: to pursue relentlessly                        | An implacable foe of corruption, Eliot Ness hounded out graft in all formshe even helped nab Al Capone.  |
| catalyst | Basic | noun: something that speeds up an event             | Rosa Parks's refusal to give up her bus seat acted as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement, setting into motion historic changes for African-Americans.              |
| amply    | Basic | adverb: more than is adequate                       | The boat was amply supplied for its year at seano man would go hungry or thirsty.  |
| augment  | Basic | verb: enlarge or increase; improve                  | Ideally, the restaurant's augmented menu will expand its clientele and increase its profits.   |
| avert    | Basic | verb: turn away                                     | Afraid to see the aftermath of the car crash, I averted my eyes as we drove by.  |
| avert    | Basic | verb: ward off or prevent                           | The struggling video game company put all of its finances into one final, desperate project to avert bankruptcy.   |
| avid     | Basic | adjective: marked by active interest and enthusiasm | Martin is an avid birdwatcher, often taking long hikes into remote mountains to see some rare eagle.   |
| buck     | Basic | verb: resist  | The profits at our firm bucked the general downturn that affected the real estate industry.  |
| cohesive | Basic | adjective: well integrated, forming a united whole  | A well-written, cohesive essay will keep on topic at all times, never losing sight of the main argument.   |



| colossal   | Basic | adjective: so great in size or force or extent as to elicit awe   | Few appreciate the colossal scale of the sun: if hollow, it could contain a million Earths.   |
|------------|-------|---|---|
| conducive  | Basic | adjective: making a situation or outcome more likely to happen  | Studying in a quiet room is conducive to learning; studying in a noisy environment makes learning more difficult.   |
| constraint | Basic | noun: something that limits or restricts  | We don't have many resources, so we'll have to work with some very tight constraints.   |
| delegate   | Basic | verb: give an assignment to (a person)  | Since the senior manager had to go on many international business trips, she was forced to delegate many of her responsibilities to two lower-level managers. |
| diligent   | Basic | adjective:<br>characterized by care<br>and perseverance in<br>carrying out tasks                        | Michael was a diligent gardener, never leaving a leaf on the ground and regularly watering each plant.  |
| docile     | Basic | adjective: easily<br>handled or managed;<br>willing to be taught or<br>led or supervised or<br>directed | Barnyard animals are considerably more docile than the wild animals.  |
| egotist    | Basic | noun: a conceited and self-centered person  | An egotist, Natasha had few friends because of her inability to talk about anything except her dream of becoming the next American Idol.                      |
| eke        | Basic | verb: To live off meager resources, to scrape by  | Stranded in a cabin over the winter, Terry was able to eke out an existence on canned food.   |
| elude      | Basic | verb: escape understanding  | Even a basic understanding of physics can elude most high schools students.   |
| entice     | Basic | verb: get someone to<br>do something through<br>(often false or<br>exaggerated)<br>promises             | Harold enticed his wife, Maude, to go on a vacation to Hawaii, with promises of luaus on the beach and all-you-can-eat seafood buffets.                       |
| euphoria   | Basic | noun: a feeling of great (usually exaggerated) elation  | The euphoria of winning her first gold medal in the 100 meter dash overwhelmed Shelly-Ann Fraser and she wept tears of immense joy.                           |
| foolhardy  | Basic | adjective: marked by<br>defiant disregard for<br>danger or<br>consequences                              | The police regularly face dangerous situations, so for a police officer not to wear his bullet-proof vest is foolhardy.                                       |



| futile     | Basic | adjective: producing<br>no result or effect;<br>unproductive of<br>success                                  | I thought I could repair the car myself, but after two days of work with no success, I have to admit that my efforts were futile.   |
|------------|-------|---|---|
| goad       | Basic | verb: urge on with unpleasant comments  | Doug did not want to enter the race, but Jim, through a steady stream of taunts, goaded him into signing up for it.   |
| illicit    | Basic | adjective: contrary to or forbidden by law  | Though Al Capone was engaged in many illicit activities, he was finally arrested for income tax evasion, a relatively minor offense.  |
| impending  | Basic | adjective: close in time; about to occur  | The impending doom of our world has been a discussed and debated for 2000 yearsmaybe even longer.   |
| inkling    | Basic | noun: a slight suggestion or vague understanding  | Lynne speaks four Romance languages, but she doesn't have an inkling about how East Asian languages are structured.   |
| irk        | Basic | verb: irritate or vex   | My little sister has a way of irking and annoying me like no other person.  |
| jargon     | Basic | noun: a characteristic language of a particular group   | To those with little training in medicine, the jargon of doctors can be very difficult to understand.   |
| malevolent | Basic | adjective: wishing or<br>appearing to wish evil<br>to others; arising from<br>intense ill will or<br>hatred | Villains are known for their malevolent nature, oftentimes inflicting cruelty on others just for enjoyment.   |
| muted      | Basic | adjective: softened, subdued  | Helen preferred muted earth colors, such as green and brown, to the bright pinks and red her sister liked.  |
| prevail    | Basic | verb: be widespread in a particular area at a particular time; be current:                                  | During the labor negotiations, an air of hostility prevailed in the office.   |
| prevail    | Basic | verb: prove superior  | Before the cricket match, Australia was heavily favored, but India prevailed.   |
| pristine   | Basic | adjective: Unspoiled,<br>untouched (usu. of<br>nature)  | The glacial lake was pristine and we filled our canteens to drink deeply.   |
| pristine   | Basic | adjective:<br>Immaculately clean<br>and unused  | Drill sergeants are known for demanding pristine cabinets, uniforms, and beds, and often make new recruits clean and clean and clean until they meet the expected high standards. |



| junta       | Advanced I | noun: an aggressive<br>takeover by a group<br>(usually military); the<br>group that executes<br>such a takeover | As dangerous of a threat as North Korea is, some analysts believe that were a junta suddenly to gain power, it could be even more unpredictable and bellicose than the current leadership    |
|-------------|------------|---|--|
| errant      | Advanced I | adjective: to be wandering; not sticking to a circumscribed path  | Unlike his peers, who spent their hours studying in the library, Matthew preferred errant walks through the university campus.   |
| preemptive  | Advanced I | adjective: done before someone else can do it   | Just as Martha was about to take the only cookie left on the table, Noah preemptively swiped it.   |
| check       | Advanced I | noun: the condition of being held back or limited   | When government abuses are not kept in check, that government is likely to become autocratic.  |
| check       | Advanced I | verb: to limit (usually modifying the growth of something)  | Deserted for six months, the property began to look more like a jungle and less like a residenceweeds grew unchecked in the front yard   |
| telling     | Advanced I | adjective: significant and revealing of another factor  | Her unbecoming dress was very telling when it came to her sense of fashion.  |
| tact        | Basic      | noun: consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offense  | In a tremendous display of tact, Shelly was able to maintain a strong friendship with Marcia, even though Marcia's husband, Frank, confessed to finding Shelley more attractive than Marcia. |
| serene      | Basic      | adjective: calm and peaceful  | I'd never seen him so serene; usually, he was a knot of stress and anxiety from hours of trading on the stock exchange.  |
| sentimental | Basic      | adjective: effusively or insincerely emotional, especially in art, music, and literature                        | I don't like romanticism for the same reason I don't like melodramatic acting and soap operasoverly sentimental.   |
| rile        | Basic      | verb: cause<br>annoyance in; disturb,<br>especially by minor<br>irritations                                     | Dan is usually calm and balanced, but it takes only one intense glare from Sabrina to rile him.  |
| rash        | Basic      | adjective: marked by<br>defiant disregard for<br>danger or<br>consequences;<br>imprudently incurring<br>risk    | Although Bruce was able to make the delivery in time with a nighttime motorcycle ride in the rain, Susan criticized his actions as rash.   |



| melee       | Advanced I | noun: a wild,<br>confusing fight or<br>struggle                  | After enduring daily taunts about my name, I became enraged and pummeled the schoolyard bully and his sycophantic friends in a brutal melee.   |
|-------------|------------|--|--|
| embroiled   | Advanced I | adjective: involved in argument or contention                    | These days we are never short of a D.C. politician embroiled in scandala welcome phenomenon for those who, having barely finished feasting on the sordid details of one imbroglio, can sink their teeth into a fresh one.    |
| badger      | Advanced I | verb: to pester  | Badgered by his parents to find a job, the 30-year-old loafer instead joined a gang of itinerant musicians.  |
| screed      | Advanced I | noun: an abusive rant (often tedious)                            | Joey had difficulty hanging out with his former best friend Perry, who, during his entire cup of coffee, enumerated all of the governments deficienciesonly to break ranks and launch into some screed against big business. |
| cadaverous  | Advanced I | adjective: emaciated; gaunt                                      | Some actors take challenging roles in which they have to lose so much weight that they appear cadaverous.  |
| slapdash    | Advanced I | adjective: carelessly and hastily put together                   | The office building had been constructed in a slapdash manner, so it did not surprise officials when, during a small earthquake, a large crack emerged on the façade of the building.  |
| aboveboard  | Advanced I | adjective: open and honest                                       | The mayor, despite his avuncular face plastered about the city, was hardly aboveboard some concluded that it was his ingratiating smile that allowed him to engage in corrupt behavior and get away with it.                 |
| indict      | Advanced I | verb: to formally charge or accuse of wrong-doing                | The bankrobber was indicted on several major charges, including possession of a firearm.   |
| altruism    | Advanced I | noun: the quality of unselfish concern for the welfare of others | Albert Schweitzer spent most of his life doing missionary work as a doctor in Africa, seeking no reward, apparently motivated only by altruism.  |
| appreciable | Advanced I | adjective: large enough to be noticed (usu. refers to an amount) | There is an appreciable difference between those who say they can get the job done and those who actually get the job done.  |
| ascribe     | Advanced I | verb: attribute or credit to                                     | History ascribes The Odyssey and The Iliad to Homer, but scholars now debate whether he was a historical figure or a fictitious name.  |
| behoove     | Advanced I | verb: to be one's duty or obligation                             | The teacher looked down at the student and said, "It would behoove you to be in class on time and complete your homework, so that you don't repeat freshman English for a third straight year."                              |



| genial             | Advanced I | adjective: agreeable, conducive to comfort   | Betty is a genial young woman: everyone she meets is put at ease by her elegance and grace.   |
|--------------------|------------|--|---|
| flounder           | Advanced I | verb: behave<br>awkwardly; have<br>difficulties  | Sylvia has excelled at advanced calculus, but ironically, when she has to deal with taxes, she flounders.                                 |
| finagle            | Advanced I | verb: achieve<br>something by means<br>of trickery or devious<br>methods                 | Steven was able to finagle one of the last seats on the train by convincing the conductor that his torn stub was actually a valid ticket. |
| facetious          | Advanced I | adjective: cleverly amusing in tone  | Facetious behavior will not be tolerated during sex education class; it's time for all of you to treat these matters like mature adults.  |
| evenhanded         | Advanced I | adjective: without partiality  | Teachers often have trouble being evenhanded to all of their varied students.   |
| disenfranchis<br>e | Advanced I | verb: deprive of voting rights   | The U.S. Constitution disenfranchised women until 1920 when they were given the right to vote.  |
| derogative         | Advanced I | adjective: expressed as worthless or in negative terms                                   | Never before have we seen a debate between two political candidates that was so derogative and filthy.                                    |
| decimation         | Advanced I | noun: destroying or killing a large part of the population                               | The decimation after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is incomprehensible.   |
| cornucopia         | Advanced I | noun: an abundant supply of something good   | The International Food Expo was a cornucopia of culinary delights: gourmet foods from every continent were under one roof.                |
| connive            | Advanced I | verb: taking part in immoral and unethical plots   | With the help of the prince, the queen connived to overthrow the king.  |
| chivalrous         | Advanced I | adjective: being attentive to women like an ideal knight                                 | Marco's chivalrous ways, like opening doors and pulling out chairs, was much appreciated by his date.                                     |
| cerebral           | Advanced I | adjective: involving intelligence rather than emotions or instinct                       | A cerebral analysis of most pop music finds it to be simple and childish, but that ignores the point—the music's effect on the listener.  |
| boorish            | Advanced I | adjective: ill-mannered<br>and coarse or<br>contemptible in<br>behavior or<br>appearance | Bukowski was known for being a boorish drunk and alienating close friends and family.   |



| glib         | Advanced I | adjective: (of a person) speaking with ease but without sincerity   | I have found that the more glib the salesman, the worse the product.  |
|--------------|------------|---|---|
| implicate    | Advanced I | verb: convey a meaning; imply   | By saying that some of the guests were uncomfortable, the manager implicated to the hotel staff that it needed to be more diligent.   |
| implicate    | Advanced I | verb: to indicate in wrongdoing, usually a crime  | The crime boss was implicated for a long list of crimes, ranging from murder to disturbing the peace.   |
| impregnable  | Advanced I | adjective: immune to attack; incapable of being tampered with   | As a child, Amy would build pillow castles and pretend they were impregnable fortresses.  |
| intermittent | Advanced I | adjective: stopping and starting at irregular intervals   | The intermittent thunder continued and the night was punctuated by cracks of lightninga surreal sleepless night.  |
| irresolute   | Advanced I | adjective: uncertain how to act or proceed  | He stood irresolute at the split in the trail, not sure which route would lead back to the camp.  |
| martial      | Advanced I | adjective: suggesting war or military life  | Americans tend to remember Abraham Lincoln as kindly and wise, not at all martial, despite the fact that he was involved in the fiercest war America has even fought.               |
| misogynist   | Advanced I | noun: a person who dislikes women in particular   | Many have accused Hemingway of being a quiet misogynist, but recently unearthed letters argue against this belief.  |
| moot         | Advanced I | adjective: open to<br>argument or debate;<br>undecidable in a<br>meaningless or<br>irrelevant way                             | Since the Board just terminated Steve as the CEO, what the finance committe might have thought of his proposed marketing plan for next year is now a moot point.                    |
| pastoral     | Advanced I | adjective: relating to the countryside in a pleasant sense  | Those who imagine America's countryside as a pastoral region are often disappointed to learn that much of rural U.S. is filled with cornfields extending as far as the eye can see. |
| perquisite   | Advanced I | noun: a right reserved<br>exclusively by a<br>particular person or<br>group (especially a<br>hereditary or official<br>right) | Even as the dishwasher at the French restaurant, Josh quickly learned that he had the perquisite of being able to eat terrific food for half the price diners would pay.            |
| pithy        | Advanced I | adjective: concise and full of meaning  | I enjoy reading the Daodejing for its pithy and insightful prose; it always gives me something to think about.  |



| wanton      | Advanced I | adjective: without check or limitation; showing no moral restraints to one's                                  | Due to wanton behavior and crude language, the drunk man was thrown out of the bar and asked to never return.   |
|-------------|------------|---|---|
| unseemly    | Advanced I | society   | He acted in an unseemly manner, insulting the hostess and then speaking ill of her deceased husband.  |
| uncanny     | Advanced I | adjective: suggesting<br>the operation of<br>supernatural<br>influences; surpassing<br>the ordinary or normal | Reggie has an uncanny ability to connect with animals: feral cats will readily approach him, and sometimes even wild birds will land on his finger.         |
| travail     | Advanced I | noun: use of physical<br>or mental energy;<br>hard work; agony or<br>anguish                                  | While they experienced nothing but travails in refinishing the kitchen, they completed the master bedroom in less than a weekend.                           |
| staid       | Advanced I | adjective:<br>characterized by<br>dignity and propriety   | Frank came from a staid environment, so he was shocked that his college roommate sold narcotics.  |
| savvy       | Advanced I | adjective:<br>well-informed or<br>perceptive  | With his savvy business partner, the company was able to turn a profit within a year.   |
| savvy       | Advanced I | verb: get the meaning of something  | The student savvies the meaning of astrophysics with little effort.   |
| savvy       | Advanced I | noun: a perceptive understanding  | Although a great CEO, he did not have the political savvy to win the election.  |
| reservation | Advanced I | noun: an unstated doubt that prevents you from accepting something wholeheartedly                             | I was initially excited by the idea of a trip to Washington, D.C. but now that I have read about the high crime statistics there, I have some reservations. |
| rakish      | Advanced I | adjective: marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness   | As soon as he arrived in the city, the rakish young man bought some drugs and headed straight for the seedy parts of town.                                  |
| provisional | Advanced I | adjective: under terms<br>not final or fully<br>worked out or agreed<br>upon                                  | Until the corporate office hands down a definitive decision on use of the extra offices, we will share their use in a provisional arrangement.              |



|              |             | anger, desire, or appetites  |  |
|--------------|-------------|--|--|
| retiring     | Advanced II | adjective: to be shy, and to be inclined to retract from company       | Nelson was always the first to leave soireesrather than mill about with fashionable folk, he was retiring, and preferred the solitude of his garret.                               |
| flush        | Advanced II | adjective: to be in abundance  | The exam's passage is flush with difficult words, words that you may have learned only yesterday.  |
| demure       | Advanced II | adjective: to be modest and shy  | The portrait of her in a simple white blouse was sweet and demure.   |
| moment       | Advanced II | noun: significant and important value                                  | Despite the initial hullabaloo, the play was of no great<br>moment in Hamptons writing career, and within a few<br>years the public quickly forgot his foray into theater<br>arts. |
| start        | Advanced II | verb: to suddenly<br>move in a particular<br>direction                 | All alone in the mansion, Henrietta started when she heard a sound.  |
| imponderable | Advanced II | adjective: impossible to estimate or figure out                        | According to many lawmakers, the huge variety of factors affecting society make devising an efficient healthcare system an imponderable task.                                      |
| chauvinist   | Advanced II | noun: a person who believes in the superiority of their group          | The chauvinist lives on both sides of the political spectrum, outright shunning anybody whose ideas are not consistent with his own.   |
| virago       | Advanced II | noun: an ill-tempered or violent woman                                 | Poor Billy was the victim of the viragos invectiveshe railed at him for a good 30-minutes about how he is the scum of the earth for speaking loudly on his cellphone in public.    |
| pine         | Advanced II | verb: to yearn for   | Standing forlornly by the window, she pined for her lost love.   |
| pittance     | Advanced II | noun: a small amount (of money)  | Vinnys uncle beamed smugly about how hed offered his nephew fifty dollars for his Harvard tuition; even twice the amount would have been a mere pittance.                          |
| underwrite   | Advanced II | verb: to support financially   | The latest symphony broadcast was made possible with underwriting from the Carnegie Endowment.   |
| serendipity  | Advanced II | noun: the instance in which an accidental, fortunate discovery is made | By pure serendipity, Sarah discovered, at a flea market in Peoria, a matching earring to replace the one that fell down the storm drain back home.                                 |
| peruse       | Advanced II | verb: to read very carefully   | Instead of perusing important documents, people all too often rush to the bottom of the page and plaster their signatures at the bottom.   |



| heyday            | Advanced II | noun: the pinnacle or top of a time period or career  | During the heyday of Prohibition, bootlegging had become such a lucrative business that many who had been opposed to the 18th Amendment began to fear it would be repealed. |
|-------------------|-------------|---|---|
| thoroughgoin<br>g | Advanced II | adjective: very thorough; complete  | As a thoroughgoing bibliophile, one who had turned his house into a veritable library, he shocked his friends when he bought a Kindle.                                      |
| abysmal           | Advanced II | adjective: extremely bad  | Coach Ramsey took his newest player off the field after watching a few painful minutes of her abysmal performance.  |
| antedate          | Advanced II | verb: precede in time   | Harry was so unknowledgable that he was unaware the Egyptian pharaohs antedated the American Revolution.  |
| aphoristic        | Advanced II | adjective: something that is concise and instructive of a general truth or principle                          | Sometimes I can't stand Nathan because he tries to impress everyone by being aphoristic, but he just states the obvious.  |
| ascendancy        | Advanced II | noun: the state that exists when one person or group has power over another                                   | The ascendancy of the Carlsbad water polo team is clearthey have a decade of championships behind them.   |
| assail            | Advanced II | verb: attack in speech or writing   | In the weekly paper, the editor assailed the governor for wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars in public projects that quickly failed.                                  |
| beatification     | Advanced II | noun: the action of<br>rendering supremely<br>blessed and extremely<br>happy; a state of<br>supreme happiness | Often we imagine all monks to wear the beatific smile of<br>the Buddha, but, like any of us, a monk can have a bad<br>day and not look very happy.                          |
| boon              | Advanced II | noun: a desirable state   | Modern technology has been a boon to the travel industry.   |
| boon              | Advanced II | adjective: very close and convivial   | He was a boon companion to many, and will be sadly missed.  |
| cavalier          | Advanced II | adjective: given to haughty disregard of others   | Percy dismissed the issue with a cavalier wave of his hand.   |
| clemency          | Advanced II | noun: leniency and compassion shown toward offenders by a person or agency charged with administering justice | In the final moments of the trial, during his closing speech, Phillips was nearly begging the judge for clemency.   |



| collusion    | Advanced II | noun: agreement on a secret plot  | Many have argued that Lee Harvey Oswald, JFK's assassin, was in collusion with other criminals; others maintain that Oswald was a lone gunman. |
|--------------|-------------|---|--|
| contemptuous | Advanced II | adjective: scornful, looking down at others with a sneering attitude                                  | Always on the forefront of fashion, Vanessa looked contemptuously at anyone wearing dated clothing.  |
| cosmopolitan | Advanced II | adjective: comprising many cultures; global in reach and outlook                                      | There are few cities in the world as diverse and cosmopolitan as New York.   |
| dispatch     | Advanced II | noun: the property of being prompt and efficient  | She finished her thesis with dispatch, amazing her advisors who couldn't believe she had written 60 scholarly pages so quickly.                |
| dispatch     | Advanced II | verb: dispose of rapidly and without delay and efficiently  | As soon as the angry peasants stormed the castle, they caught the king and swiftly dispatched him.   |
| exemplify    | Advanced II | verb: be characteristic of  | Lincoln exemplified the best of not only America, but also the potential greatness that exists within each person.                             |
| exemplify    | Advanced II | verb: clarify by giving an example of   | Please present some case studies that exemplify the results that you claim in your paper.  |
| genteel      | Advanced II | adjective: marked by refinement in taste and manners  | A live string quartet would provide a more genteel air to the wedding than would a folk singer.  |
| inclement    | Advanced II | adjective: (of weather) unpleasant, stormy  | After a week of inclement weather, we finally are able to go outside and enjoy the sun.  |
| inclement    | Advanced II | adjective: used of persons or behavior; showing no mercy  | Marcus Aurelius, though a fair man, was inclement to Christians during his reign, persecuting them violently.                                  |
| industrious  | Advanced II | adjective:<br>characterized by hard<br>work and<br>perseverance                                       | Pete was an industrious student, completing every assignment thoroughly and on time.   |
| jocular      | Advanced II | adjective:<br>characterized by jokes<br>and good humor  | My uncle was always in a jocular mood at family gatherings, messing up people's hair and telling knock-knock jokes to anyone who would listen. |
| laborious    | Advanced II | adjective:<br>characterized by effort<br>to the point of<br>exhaustion; especially<br>physical effort | The most laborious job I've had was working 20 hours a day as a fisherman in King Salmon, Alaska.  |



| maxim        | Advanced II | noun: a short saying expressing a general truth  | Johnson initially suggests that the secret to business can be summarized in a single maxim but then requires a 300-page book to explain exactly what he means.                                |
|--------------|-------------|--|---|
| morph        | Advanced II | verb: To undergo<br>dramatic change in a<br>seamless and barely<br>noticeable fashion. | The earnestness of the daytime talk shows of the 1970's has morphed into something far more sensational and vulgar: today guests actually standup and threaten to take swings at one another. |
| obdurate     | Advanced II | adjective: unable to be persuaded or moved emotionally; stubborn; unyielding.          | No number of pleas and bribes would get him to change his obdurate attitude.  |
| preempt      | Advanced II | verb: take the place of or have precedence over  | A governmental warning about an imminent terrorist attack would preempt ordinary network programming on television.   |
| presumptuous | Advanced II | adjective: excessively forward   | Many felt that Barney was presumptuous in moving into the large office before the management even made any official announcement of his promotion.  |
| raffish      | Advanced II | adjective: marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness                  | The men found him raffish, but the women adored his smart clothes and casual attitude.  |
| redress      | Advanced II | noun: an act of making something right   | Barry's redress for forgetting his wife's birthday two years in a row was surprising her with a trip to Tahiti.   |
| renege       | Advanced II | verb: fail to fulfill a promise or obligation  | We will no longer work with that vendor since it has reneged on nearly every agreement.   |
| seemly       | Advanced II | adjective: according with custom or propriety  | The seemly attitude of Southerners is famous, and so I was surprised to find so many impolite and disgraceful people when I visited last fall.  |
| snide        | Advanced II | adjective: expressive of contempt; derogatory or mocking in an indirect way            | The chairman interpreted Taylor's question about promotions as a snide remark, but in all innocence Taylor was trying to figure out the company's process.                                    |
| stymie       | Advanced II | verb: hinder or prevent the progress or accomplishment of                              | The engineers found their plans stymied at every turn and were ultimately able to make almost no progress on the project.   |
| tout         | Advanced II | verb: advertize in strongly positive terms; show off                                   | At the conference, the CEO touted the extraordinary success of his company's Research & Development division.   |



| tribulation        | Advanced II  | noun: something,<br>especially an event,<br>that causes difficulty<br>and suffering                    | As of 2013, nearly 1.5 million Syrians have fled their country hoping to escape the tribulations of a civil war tearing their country to pieces.   |
|--------------------|--------------|--|--|
| uncompromisi<br>ng | Advanced II  | adjective: not making concessions  | The relationship between Bart and Hilda ultimately failed because they were both so uncompromising, never wanting to change their opinions.  |
| unruly             | Advanced II  | adjective: (of persons) noisy and lacking in restraint or discipline; unwilling to submit to authority | Walk in to any preschool and I am sure that you will find an unruly and chaotic sceneunless it's nap time.   |
| vacuous            | Advanced II  | adjective: devoid of intelligence, matter, or significance   | To the journalist's pointed question, the senator gave a vacuous response, mixing a few of his overall campaign slogans with platitudes and completely avoiding the controversial subject of the question. |
| contrite           | Advanced III | adjective: to be remorseful  | Though he stole his little sisters licorice stick with malevolent glee, Chucky soon became contrite when his sister wouldn't stop crying.  |
| checkered          | Advanced III | adjective: marked by disreputable or unfortunate happenings  | One by one, the presidential candidates dropped out of the race, their respective checkered pasts from embezzlement to infidelitysabotaging their campaigns.   |
| raft               | Advanced III | noun: a large number of something  | Despite a raft of city ordinances passed by an overzealous council, noise pollution continued unabated in the megalopolis.   |
| scintillating      | Advanced III | adjective: describes someone who is brilliant and lively   | Richard Feynman was renowned for his scintillating lecturesthe arcana of quantum physics was made lucid as he wrote animatedly on the chalkboard.  |
| tender             | Advanced III | verb: offer up something formally  | The government was loath to tender more money in the fear that it might set off inflation.   |
| becoming           | Advanced III | adjective: appropriate, and matches nicely   | Her dress was becoming and made her look even more beautiful.  |
| beatific           | Advanced III | adjective: blissfully happy  | Often we imagine all monks to wear the beatific smile of<br>the Buddha, but, like any of us, a monk can have a bad<br>day and not look very happy.   |
| fleece             | Advanced III | verb: to deceive   | Many people have been fleeced by Internet scams and never received their money back.   |
| powwow             | Advanced III | noun: an informal meeting or discussion  | Before the team takes the field, the coach always calls for a powwow so that he can make sure all the players are mentally in the right place.   |



| amok         | Advanced III | adverb: in a frenzied or uncontrolled state                    | Wherever the bowl haircut teen-idol went, his legions of screaming fans ran through the streets amok, hoping for a glance at his boyish face.                                       |
|--------------|--------------|--|---|
| reprobate    | Advanced III | noun: a person without morals who is disapproved of            | Those old reprobates drinking all day down by the riverthey are not going to amount to much.  |
| cardinal     | Advanced III | adjective: of primary importance; fundamental                  | Most cultures consider gambling a cardinal sin and thus have outlawed its practice.   |
| remiss       | Advanced III | adjective: to be negligent in ones duty                        | Remiss in his duty to keep the school functioning efficiently, the principal was relieved of his position after only three months.  |
| inflammatory | Advanced III | adjective: extremely controversial, incendiary                 | It only takes one person to leave an inflammatory comment on an Internet thread for that thread to blow up into pages upon pages of reader indignation.                             |
| immaterial   | Advanced III | adjective: not relevant  | The judge found the defendants comments immaterial to the trial, and summarily dismissed him from the witness stand.  |
| corroborate  | Advanced III | verb: to confirm or lend support to (usually an idea or claim) | Her claim that frog populations were falling precipitously in Central America was corroborated by locals, who reported that many species of frogs had seemingly vanished overnight. |
| dog          | Advanced III | verb: to pursue relentlessly; to hound                         | Throughout his life, he was dogged by insecurities that inhibited personal growth.  |
| ferret       | Advanced III | verb: to search for something persistently                     | Ever the resourceful lexicographer, Fenton was able to ferret out the word origin of highly obscure words.  |
| diabolical   | Advanced III | adjective: to be extremely wicked like the devil               | The conspirators, willing to dispatch anyone who stood in their way, hatched a diabolical plan to take over the city.   |
| macabre      | Advanced III | adjective: suggesting the horror of death and decay; gruesome  | Edgar Allen Poe was considered the master of the macabre; his stories vividly describe the moment leading up to and often those moments after grisly death.                         |
| analogous    | Advanced III | adjective: similar in some respects but otherwise different    | In many ways, the Internet's transformative effect on society has been analogous to that of the printing press.   |
| aphorism     | Advanced III | noun: a short instructive saying about a general truth         | Nietzsche was known for using aphorisms, sometimes encapsulating a complex philosophical thought in a mere sentence.  |
|              |              | <u>'</u>   |   |



| autonomously | Advanced III | adverb: Acting independently; self-governing (of a country)         | Many of the factory workers are worried about being replaced by machines and computers that will work completely autonomously.   |
|--------------|--------------|---|--|
| balk         | Advanced III | verb: refuse to comply  | The students were willing to clean up the broken glass, but when the teacher asked them to mop the entire floor, they balked, citing reasons why they needed to leave. |
| begrudge     | Advanced III | verb: to envy<br>someone for<br>possessing or<br>enjoying something | Sitting all alone in his room, Harvey begrudged the happiness of the other children playing outside his window.  |
| begrudge     | Advanced III | verb: to give reluctantly   | We never begrudge money spent on ourselves.  |
| buttress     | Advanced III | verb: make stronger or defensible                                   | China's economy has been buttressed by a global demand for the electronic parts the country manufactures.  |
| carping      | Advanced III | adjective: persistently petty and unjustified criticism             | What seemed like incessant nagging and carping about my behavior from my mother turned out to be wise and useful advice that has served me well.                       |
| coalesce     | Advanced III | verb: fuse or cause to grow together                                | Over time, the various tribes coalesced into a single common culture with one universal language.  |
| compound     | Advanced III | verb: make more intense, stronger, or more marked                   | Her headache was compounded by the construction crew outside, which had six jackhammers going at the same time.  |
| consecrate   | Advanced III | verb: to make holy or<br>set apart for a high<br>purpose            | At the church of Notre Dame in France, the new High Altar was consecrated in 1182.   |
| consummate   | Advanced III | adjective: having or revealing supreme mastery or skill             | Tyler was the consummate musician: he was able to play the guitar, harmonica, and the drum at the same time.   |
| consummate   | Advanced III | verb: to make perfect<br>and complete in every<br>respect           | The restoration of the ancient church was only consummated after a twenty years of labor.  |
| conundrum    | Advanced III | noun: a difficult problem   | Computers have helped solve some of the mathematical conundrums which have puzzled man for many centuries.   |
| discriminate | Advanced III | verb: recognize or perceive the difference                          | Sarah couldn't discriminate between a good wine and a bad wine, so she avoided wine tastings.  |



| endemic     | Advanced III | adjective: native; originating where it is found                               | Irish cuisine makes great use of potatoes, but ironically, the potato is not endemic to Ireland.  |
|-------------|--------------|--|---|
| fete        | Advanced III | verb: to celebrate a person  | After World War II, war heroes were feted at first but quickly forgotten.   |
| fledgling   | Advanced III | adjective: young and inexperienced noun: any new participant in some activity  | Murray has years of experience in family practice, but he is just a fledgling in surgery.   |
| foible      | Advanced III | noun: a behavioral attribute that is distinctive and peculiar to an individual | When their new roommate sat staring at an oak tree for an hour, Marcia thought it indicated a mental problem, but Jeff assured her it was a harmless foible.    |
| grovel      | Advanced III | verb: show submission or fear  | Every time Susan comes to the office, Frank grovels as if she were about to fire.   |
| hamstrung   | Advanced III | verb: made ineffective or powerless  | The FBI has made so many restrictions on the local police that they are absolutely hamstrung, unable to accomplish anything.                                    |
| impermeable | Advanced III | adjective: does not allow fluids to pass through                               | The sand bags placed on the river formed an impermeable barrier, protecting the town from flooding.   |
| incense     | Advanced III | verb: make furious   | When Herb bought football tickets for a game on the day of their wedding anniversary, Jill was incensed.  |
| incumbent   | Advanced III | adjective: necessary<br>(for someone) as a<br>duty or responsibility           | Middle managers at times make important decisions, but real responsibility for the financial well-being of the corporation is ultimately incumbent on the CEO.  |
| irascible   | Advanced III | adjective: quickly aroused to anger  | If Arthur's dog is not fed adequately, he becomes highly irascible, even growling at his own shadow.  |
| miscreant   | Advanced III | noun: a person who breaks the law  | Come back you miscreant! yelled the woman who just had her purse stolen.  |
| perpetuate  | Advanced III | verb: cause to continue  | If you do not let him do things for himself, you are merely perpetuating bad habits that will be even harder to break in the future.                            |
| piquant     | Advanced III | adjective: having an agreeably pungent taste                                   | The chef, with a mere flick of the salt shaker, turned the bland tomato soup into a piquant meal.   |
| plodding    | Advanced III | adjective: (of movement) slow and laborious                                    | Charlie may seem to run at a plodding pace, but he is an ultramarathoner, meaning he runs distances of up to 100 miles, and can run for ten hours at a stretch. |



| presumption | Advanced III | noun: an assumption that is taken for granted                               | When Mr. Baker found out the family car was gone, he acted under the presumption that his rebellious son had taken the car, calling his son's phone and yelling at him; only later did Mr. Baker realize that Mrs. Baker had simply gone out to get her nails done. |
|-------------|--------------|---|---|
| presumption | Advanced III | noun: audacious<br>(even arrogant)<br>behavior that you<br>have no right to | The new neighbor quickly gained a reputation for her presumption; she had invited herself to several neighbors' homes, often stopping over at inopportune times and asking for a drink.   |
| snub        | Advanced III | verb: refuse to acknowledge; reject outright and bluntly                    | Wheeler was completely qualified for the committee, but the board snubbed him, choosing an obviously lesser qualified candidate instead.  |
| transitory  | Advanced III | adjective: lasting a very short time  | If we lived forever and life was not transitory, do you think we would appreciate life less or more?  |