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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Henri Picciotto: Can you solve the alien pyramid riddle? | TED Talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/henri_picciotto_can_you_solve_the_alien_pyramid_riddle

Advanced Words Only

IMPORTANT

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Session 1: Word List

subterranean

adj. under the ground

synonym: underground, belowground, subsurface

(1) **subterranean** rooms, (2) **subterranean** motives for murder

Such **subterranean** passages span kilometers in London.

Mars

n. a small reddish planet that revolves around the sun at the fourth position and is periodically visible to the naked eye

(1) **Mars** colonization, (2) **Mars** exploration

The ice caps on the poles of **Mars** are permanent.

bury

v. to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb

synonym: entomb, sink, forget

(1) **bury** in the earth, (2) **bury** emotion

There is plenty of space to **bury** everyone.

pictogram

n. a graphic symbol that conveys its meaning through its pictorial resemblance to a physical object

(1) **pictogram** color, (2) a **pictogram** code

That town installed signs digitally displaying **pictograms** to reduce traffic accidents.

fortuitous

adj. not planned; happening by lucky chance

synonym : fortunate, lucky, serendipitous

(1) **fortuitous** encounters, (2) **fortuitous** timing

Profits were enhanced by a **fortuitous** drop in the cost of raw materials.

facade

n. the face or front of a building, especially a large one; superficial or false appearance intended to conceal something unpleasant

synonym : front, camouflage, masquerade

(1) the outside **facade** of a castle, (2) **facade** of wealth

A gentle **facade** concealed his powerfulness.

glean

v. to collect information, knowledge, etc., in small amounts and often with difficulty; to gather, as natural products

synonym : cull, collect, extract

(1) **glean** important information, (2) **glean** the fields

He carefully interviewed the victims and tried to **glean** the details of the culprit.

riddle

n. a type of question that describes something in a difficult and confusing way, and that has a surprising answer, often asked as a game

synonym : mystery, puzzle, enigma

(1) **riddle** me a riddle, (2) solve the **riddle**

The **riddle** remains mysterious to us.

inhospitable

adj. harsh and difficult to stay in or grow; unfriendly and unwelcoming towards people who visit you

synonym : sterile, unfriendly, unwelcoming

(1) **inhospitable** environment, (2) in an **inhospitable** manner

He trekked across some of the most **inhospitable** mountains in the world.

marvel

n. someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise

synonym : wonder, phenomenon, amazement

(1) a **marvel** of beauty, (2) technical **marvel**

The space shuttle is a modern engineering **marvel**.

ravage

v. to cause damage to something badly

synonym : devastate, ruin, destroy

(1) **ravage** a country, (2) **ravage** the brain

A large fire **ravaged** the forest.

plaza

n. a public square, marketplace, or similar open area in a town, especially in Spanish-speaking countries

synonym : park, square, center

(1) main **plaza**, (2) memorial **plaza**

Three young men were busking in the shopping **plaza**.

staircase

n. a set of stairs inside a building, usually with posts and bars that are fixed at the side

synonym : stairway, stairwell

(1) spiral **staircase**, (2) beetle up the **staircase**

She walked urgently down the emergency **staircase**.

descend

v. to move downward and lower; to come from, or to be connected by a relationship of blood

synonym : dip, drop, come down

(1) **descend** a steep hill, (2) **descend** by elevator

She was **descended** from an old Italian noble family.

Session 2: Spelling

1. de____d by elevator *v.* to move downward and lower; to come from, or to be connected by a relationship of blood
2. M__s exploration *n.* a small reddish planet that revolves around the sun at the fourth position and is periodically visible to the naked eye
3. a pi_____am code *n.* a graphic symbol that conveys its meaning through its pictorial resemblance to a physical object
4. b__y in the earth *v.* to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb
5. for_____us encounters *adj.* not planned; happening by lucky chance
6. b__y emotion *v.* to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb
7. pi_____am color *n.* a graphic symbol that conveys its meaning through its pictorial resemblance to a physical object
8. ra___e a country *v.* to cause damage to something badly
9. M__s colonization *n.* a small reddish planet that revolves around the sun at the fourth position and is periodically visible to the naked eye
10. in an inh_____ble manner *adj.* harsh and difficult to stay in or grow; unfriendly and unwelcoming towards people who visit you

ANSWERS: 1. descend, 2. Mars, 3. pictogram, 4. bury, 5. fortuitous, 6. bury, 7. pictogram, 8. ravage, 9. Mars, 10. inhospitable

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|------------------------------------|---|
| 11. sub_____ean motives for murder | <i>adj.</i> under the ground |
| 12. for_____us timing | <i>adj.</i> not planned; happening by lucky chance |
| 13. a ma___l of beauty | <i>n.</i> someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise |
| 14. main pl__a | <i>n.</i> a public square, marketplace, or similar open area in a town, especially in Spanish-speaking countries |
| 15. the outside fa___e of a castle | <i>n.</i> the face or front of a building, especially a large one; superficial or false appearance intended to conceal something unpleasant |
| 16. inh_____ble environment | <i>adj.</i> harsh and difficult to stay in or grow; unfriendly and unwelcoming towards people who visit you |
| 17. ra___e the brain | <i>v.</i> to cause damage to something badly |
| 18. ri___e me a riddle | <i>n.</i> a type of question that describes something in a difficult and confusing way, and that has a surprising answer, often asked as a game |
| 19. memorial pl__a | <i>n.</i> a public square, marketplace, or similar open area in a town, especially in Spanish-speaking countries |
| 20. gl__n important information | <i>v.</i> to collect information, knowledge, etc., in small amounts and often with difficulty; to gather, as natural products |
| 21. solve the ri___e | <i>n.</i> a type of question that describes something in a difficult and confusing way, and that has a surprising answer, often asked as a game |

ANSWERS: 11. subterranean, 12. fortuitous, 13. marvel, 14. plaza, 15. facade, 16. inhospitable, 17. ravage, 18. riddle, 19. plaza, 20. glean, 21. riddle

22. beetle up the st_____se *n.* a set of stairs inside a building, usually with posts and bars that are fixed at the side
23. fa___e of wealth *n.* the face or front of a building, especially a large one; superficial or false appearance intended to conceal something unpleasant
24. de_____d a steep hill *v.* to move downward and lower; to come from, or to be connected by a relationship of blood
25. gl___n the fields *v.* to collect information, knowledge, etc., in small amounts and often with difficulty; to gather, as natural products
26. spiral st_____se *n.* a set of stairs inside a building, usually with posts and bars that are fixed at the side
27. sub_____ean rooms *adj.* under the ground
28. technical ma___l *n.* someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise

ANSWERS: 22. staircase, 23. facade, 24. descend, 25. glean, 26. staircase, 27. subterranean, 28. marvel

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. A gentle _____ concealed his powerfulness.
n. the face or front of a building, especially a large one; superficial or false appearance intended to conceal something unpleasant

2. The space shuttle is a modern engineering _____.
n. someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise

3. There is plenty of space to _____ everyone.
v. to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb

4. Three young men were busking in the shopping _____.
n. a public square, marketplace, or similar open area in a town, especially in Spanish-speaking countries

5. He carefully interviewed the victims and tried to _____ the details of the culprit.
v. to collect information, knowledge, etc., in small amounts and often with difficulty; to gather, as natural products

6. That town installed signs digitally displaying _____ to reduce traffic accidents.
n. a graphic symbol that conveys its meaning through its pictorial resemblance to a physical object

7. He trekked across some of the most _____ mountains in the world.
adj. harsh and difficult to stay in or grow; unfriendly and unwelcoming towards people who visit you

ANSWERS: 1. facade, 2. marvel, 3. bury, 4. plaza, 5. glean, 6. pictograms, 7. inhospitable

8. The ice caps on the poles of _____ are permanent.
n. a small reddish planet that revolves around the sun at the fourth position and is periodically visible to the naked eye
9. Profits were enhanced by a _____ drop in the cost of raw materials.
adj. not planned; happening by lucky chance
10. Such _____ passages span kilometers in London.
adj. under the ground
11. She was _____ from an old Italian noble family.
v. to move downward and lower; to come from, or to be connected by a relationship of blood
12. A large fire _____ the forest.
v. to cause damage to something badly
13. She walked urgently down the emergency _____.
n. a set of stairs inside a building, usually with posts and bars that are fixed at the side
14. The _____ remains mysterious to us.
n. a type of question that describes something in a difficult and confusing way, and that has a surprising answer, often asked as a game

ANSWERS: 8. Mars, 9. fortuitous, 10. subterranean, 11. descended, 12. ravaged, 13. staircase, 14. riddle