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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Dan Finkel: Can you solve the Ragnarok riddle? |

TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

IMPORTANT

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Session 1: Word List

fable

n. a short story, often with animal characters, that teaches a general truth or a moral lesson

synonym: fantasy, story, legend

(1) classic **fable**, (2) moralize a **fable**

In his speech, he quoted a passage from a well-known **fable**.

serpent

n. a large snake

synonym: snake, viper, reptile

(1) the feathered **serpent** god, (2) **Serpent** Bearer

That mythical chimera has a lion's body, a bird's wings, and a **serpent's** tail.

contort

v. to (cause something to) twist and press out of its natural or normal shape

synonym: deform, disfigure, distort

(1) **contort** my limbs, (2) **contort** the face

He **contorted** his smile with anger coming from his gut.

magnify

v. to make something look bigger than it really is, especially by looking at it through a lens; to make something bigger, stronger, or louder

synonym: enlarge, elaborate, intensify

(1) **magnify** the danger, (2) **magnify** the image for display

Terrorists often attempt to **magnify** the economic impact of their acts of destruction.

pierce

v. to cut or make a way through with a sharp instrument

synonym: jab, penetrate, stab

(1) **pierce** the armored shells, (2) **pierce** a mystery

The extreme cold **pierced** our bones.

intersect

v. to meet or cross one another

synonym: cross, bisect, cut

(1) **intersect** at a point, (2) railways **intersect** the country

Her multidisciplinary works **intersect** music and picture with writing.

zap

v. to strike, destroy, get rid of, or kill something or someone suddenly and with force

synonym: destroy, kill, exterminate

(1) **zap** a huge target, (2) **zap** bar code

They provided allies with powerful weapons that could **zap** the enemy from thousands of miles away.

regenerate

v. to improve or renew an area, institution, system, etc., especially by making it more active or successful

synonym: renew, revive, improve

(1) **regenerate** bone tissue, (2) a **regenerate** sinner

The new CEO's primary mission is to **regenerate** the company on the verge of bankruptcy.

nod

v. to lower and raise one's head, sometimes several times, as to show approval, agreement, greeting, or confirmation

synonym: respond, acknowledge, greet

(1) **nod** at each other, (2) **nod** courteously

She **noded** quietly in response to the question.

ubiquitous

adj. being or existing everywhere at once

synonym: universal, omnipresent, everywhere

(1) **ubiquitous** computing, (2) **ubiquitous** across ecosystems

Sugar is **ubiquitous** in food.

zigzag

adj. having short sharp turns or angles

synonym: bent, crinkled, crooked

(1) **zigzag** sewing machine, (2) a **zigzag** line

We had to go through a **zigzag** course.

opportune

adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

synonym: suitable, timely, practical

(1) **opportune** occasion, (2) an **opportune** remark

The phone rang at the most **opportune** time.

slouch

v. to stand, sit, or walk in a lazy, drooping way, often with the shoulders hanging forward and the head bent forward

synonym: slump, crouch, droop

(1) **slouch** along the street, (2) **slouch** down in a chair

After hearing the results, he **slouched** against a wall.

Session 2: Spelling

1. z_p bar code v. to strike, destroy, get rid of, or kill something or someone suddenly and with force
2. n_d courteously v. to lower and raise one's head, sometimes several times, as to show approval, agreement, greeting, or confirmation
3. ubi_____us across ecosystems *adj.* being or existing everywhere at once
4. ma_____y the danger v. to make something look bigger than it really is, especially by looking at it through a lens; to make something bigger, stronger, or louder
5. pi___e a mystery v. to cut or make a way through with a sharp instrument
6. ma_____y the image for display v. to make something look bigger than it really is, especially by looking at it through a lens; to make something bigger, stronger, or louder
7. a zi___g line *adj.* having short sharp turns or angles
8. pi___e the armored shells v. to cut or make a way through with a sharp instrument
9. the feathered se_____t god *n.* a large snake
10. in_____ct at a point v. to meet or cross one another
11. railways in_____ct the country v. to meet or cross one another

ANSWERS: 1. zap, 2. nod, 3. ubiquitous, 4. magnify, 5. pierce, 6. magnify, 7. zigzag, 8. pierce, 9. serpent, 10. intersect, 11. intersect

12. moralize a fa__e *n.* a short story, often with animal characters, that teaches a general truth or a moral lesson
13. co_____t the face *v.* to (cause something to) twist and press out of its natural or normal shape
14. an op_____ne remark *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
15. reg_____te bone tissue *v.* to improve or renew an area, institution, system, etc., especially by making it more active or successful
16. z_p a huge target *v.* to strike, destroy, get rid of, or kill something or someone suddenly and with force
17. sl___h down in a chair *v.* to stand, sit, or walk in a lazy, drooping way, often with the shoulders hanging forward and the head bent forward
18. a reg_____te sinner *v.* to improve or renew an area, institution, system, etc., especially by making it more active or successful
19. co_____t my limbs *v.* to (cause something to) twist and press out of its natural or normal shape
20. ubi_____us computing *adj.* being or existing everywhere at once
21. zi___g sewing machine *adj.* having short sharp turns or angles
22. Se_____t Bearer *n.* a large snake
23. op_____ne occasion *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

ANSWERS: 12. fable, 13. contort, 14. opportune, 15. regenerate, 16. zap, 17. slouch, 18. regenerate, 19. contort, 20. ubiquitous, 21. zigzag, 22. serpent, 23. opportune

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. Sugar is _____ in food.
adj. being or existing everywhere at once

2. They provided allies with powerful weapons that could ____ the enemy from thousands of miles away.
v. to strike, destroy, get rid of, or kill something or someone suddenly and with force

3. In his speech, he quoted a passage from a well-known _____.
n. a short story, often with animal characters, that teaches a general truth or a moral lesson

4. The new CEO's primary mission is to _____ the company on the verge of bankruptcy.
v. to improve or renew an area, institution, system, etc., especially by making it more active or successful

5. After hearing the results, he _____ against a wall.
v. to stand, sit, or walk in a lazy, drooping way, often with the shoulders hanging forward and the head bent forward

6. She _____ quietly in response to the question.
v. to lower and raise one's head, sometimes several times, as to show approval, agreement, greeting, or confirmation

7. The phone rang at the most _____ time.
adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

ANSWERS: 1. ubiquitous, 2. zap, 3. fable, 4. regenerate, 5. slouched, 6. nodded, 7. opportune

8. That mythical chimera has a lion's body, a bird's wings, and a _____ tail.
n. a large snake
9. Terrorists often attempt to _____ the economic impact of their acts of destruction.
v. to make something look bigger than it really is, especially by looking at it through a lens; to make something bigger, stronger, or louder
10. We had to go through a _____ course.
adj. having short sharp turns or angles
11. Her multidisciplinary works _____ music and picture with writing.
v. to meet or cross one another
12. He _____ his smile with anger coming from his gut.
v. to (cause something to) twist and press out of its natural or normal shape
13. The extreme cold _____ our bones.
v. to cut or make a way through with a sharp instrument

ANSWERS: 8. serpent's, 9. magnify, 10. zigzag, 11. intersect, 12. contorted, 13. pierced