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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Chris Anderson (TED): Questions no one knows the answers to | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

IMPORTANT

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Session 1: Word List

pinprick

n. a very small hole in something, especially made by a pin or needle; a minor annoyance

(1) a tiny **pinprick**, (2) feel a **pinprick** sensation

He felt a **pinprick** of disgust.

detectable

adj. capable of being discovered or identified

synonym: perceptible, noticeable, observable

(1) a barely **detectable** change, (2) **detectable** by the human ear

The object is **detectable** at ultraviolet wavelengths.

hawk

n. a bird of prey typically having short rounded wings and a long tail; an advocate of an aggressive policy on foreign relations

synonym: militarist, jingo, aggressor

(1) cast off a **hawk**, (2) congressional **hawk**

That team signed a center forward who was a ball- **hawk**.

physicist

n. a scientist who specializes in the field of physics

(1) talented **physicist**, (2) theoretical **physicist**

Einstein was an outstanding and famous **physicist** of the 20th century.

imaginable

adj. capable of being imagined

synonym: conceivable, plausible, possible

(1) easily **imaginable**, (2) worst **imaginable** case

This is the only **imaginable** strategy.

minuscule

adj. extremely small; tiny

synonym: tiny, insignificant, microscopic

(1) **minuscule** amount, (2) **minuscule** letters

This ore emits **minuscule** quantities of radiation

edifice

n. a large and imposing building

synonym: structure, palace, skyscraper

(1) a sacred **edifice**, (2) add to the **edifice** of knowledge

The city is famous for its magnificent **edifice**.

proton

n. a very small particle with a positive charge equal to the negative charge of an electron that forms part of the nucleus of all atoms

(1) **proton** decay, (2) **proton** conductivity

The solar wind is composed almost entirely of electrons and **protons**.

quark

n. a type of elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter that make up the heavier elementary particles, such as protons, neutrons, etc.; fresh unripened cheese of a smooth texture made from pasteurized milk, a starter, and rennet

(1) **quark** physics, (2) the antiparticle of a **quark**

The Big Bang theory states that **quark-gluon** plasma filled the entire universe before matter as we know it was created.

neutrino

n. a very small and electrically neutral particle with a very small mass that rarely reacts with other matter

(1) **neutrino** capture, (2) sterile **neutrinos**

This laboratory has a pool consisting of thousands of **neutrino** detectors.

nanosecond

n. one thousand millionth or billionth (= 0.000,000,001) of a second

(1) **nanosecond** response, (2) **nanosecond** laser pulse

The processor performs calculations on the **nanosecond** timescale.

multiverse

n. a hypothetical space or realm consisting of multiple universes, of which our universe is just one of them

(1) the **multiverse** hypothesis, (2) the concept of the **multiverse**

The various universes within the **multiverse** are sometimes called parallel universes.

observable

adj. that can be noticed or seen

synonym: visible, perceptible, detectable

(1) **observable** change, (2) experimentally **observable**

Any theorem relies on both **observable** fact and assumption.

wrinkle

n. a small line or fold in something, especially fabric or the skin of the face; a minor difficulty

synonym: crinkle, fold, crumple

(1) a fine **wrinkle** on a fabric, (2) a facial **wrinkle**

This suit is made of **wrinkle-proof** material.

baffle

v. to bewilder or perplex someone completely and to be unable to understand or explain something

synonym: perplex, astound, hinder

(1) **baffle** his plan, (2) **baffle** outside noises

The paradox **baffled** most philosophers.

spawn

v. to lay eggs or to produce offspring; to cause something to develop

synonym: beget, breed, generate

(1) **spawn** in spring, (2) **spawn** a new concept

The salmon swims upstream to **spawn** in the place they were released.

hogwash

n. an idea, behavior, argument, etc., that you think is stupid and unacceptable

synonym: nonsense, bunk, ludicrousness

(1) complete **hogwash**, (2) **hogwash** of quiet diplomacy

This media has long been criticized for spreading paranoid **hogwash**.

mystic

adj. having spiritual powers or qualities that are beyond ordinary understanding; (noun) someone who believes in the existence of realities beyond human comprehension

synonym: secret, mystical, supernatural

(1) **mystic** teaching, (2) medieval **mystic**

He is interested in the **mystic** rites of that religion.

teem

v. to be abuzz; to move in large numbers; to fall heavily

synonym: brim, swarm, overflow

(1) **teem** with activity, (2) **teem** down

The city **teems** with traffic on holiday.

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.

observatory

n. a building designed and equipped to observe the planets, the stars, the weather, etc.

(1) space **observatory**, (2) a meteorological **observatory**

That astronomical **observatory** stands at the top of the mountain.

extrapolate

v. to guess or think about what might happen or estimate something using the facts that you have now

synonym: deduce, reason, infer

(1) **extrapolate** the results, (2) **extrapolate** animal dose

This predictive model mechanically **extrapolates** past trends into the future.

artifact

n. a person-made object, especially one of historical or cultural interest

synonym: antique, relic, heirloom

(1) paleolithic **artifacts**, (2) Peruvian **artifacts**

The museum has a vast collection of Greek **artifacts**.

spaceship

n. (especially in science fiction) a spacecraft designed to carry a crew into interstellar space

synonym: starship, rocket, spacecraft

(1) a **spaceship** to survey the moon, (2) alien **spaceship**

They launched a crewless **spaceship** into space.

superintelligence

n. a hypothetical agent, for example, a computer or space alien, that possesses intelligence far surpassing that of humankind

(1) digital **superintelligence**, (2) artificial **superintelligence**

He is looking for evidence of the existence of **superintelligence** from cosmic signals.

paranoid

adj. unreasonably or obsessively believing that other people do not like you or want to harm you

(1) **paranoid** about issues, (2) **paranoid** disorder

A **paranoid** person may have delusions that people want to harm.

obliterate

v. to wipe out, destroy, or conceal all signs of something utterly; to remove completely from recognition or memory

synonym: destroy, eliminate, erase

(1) **obliterate** all traces, (2) **obliterate** data

The accident at that nuclear power plant **obliterated** the local ecosystem.

pitiful

adj. making people feel sorrow or sympathy; very small or poor

synonym : miserable, contemptible, sorry

(1) a **pitiful** fate, (2) cast **pitiful** eyes

We heard their **pitiful** laments throughout the night.

clunky

adj. heavy, awkward, and old-fashioned; not graceful and clumsy in style, form, or movement

synonym : clumsy, bulky, burdensome

(1) **clunky** phrasing, (2) **clunky** robot

Refined character portrayal makes up for **clunky** gameplay.

footprint

n. a mark of a foot, shoe, or animal's foot left on a surface

synonym : footmark, imprint, impression

(1) **footprints** in the snow, (2) the **footprints** of an earlier civilization

We choose transportation that has a smaller carbon **footprint**.

microscopic

adj. tiny; exceedingly precise and detail-oriented; of or used in microscopy

synonym : infinitesimal, tiny, atomic

(1) **microscopic** inquiry, (2) **microscopic** analysis

Inspectors noticed **microscopic** cracks in the submarine's hull.

outlive

v. to live longer than another person

synonym : continue, outlast, survive

(1) **outlive** its usefulness, (2) **outlive** our child

She **outlived** her husband for many years.

spectroscope

n. an optical instrument used for spectrographic analysis (= measurement of properties of light over a specific portion of the electromagnetic spectrum)

(1) infrared **spectroscope**, (2) Fourier **spectroscope**

An X-ray **spectroscope** can determine the composition of the elements in a sample.

awe-inspiring

adj. making you feel great respect or admiration through being impressive or formidable

synonym: magnificent, amazing, astonishing

(1) **awe-inspiring** painting, (2) **awe-inspiring** power

The moment the glacier collapses is an **awe-inspiring** sight.

unanswered

adj. not responded to or explained

synonym: ignored, unrequited, undecided

(1) **unanswered** love, (2) **unanswered** e-mail

Pardon me for leaving some of your questions **unanswered**.

Session 2: Spelling

1. cl___y phrasing *adj.* heavy, awkward, and old-fashioned; not graceful and clumsy in style, form, or movement
2. mic_____ic analysis *adj.* tiny; exceedingly precise and detail-oriented; of or used in microscopy
3. the concept of the mul_____se *n.* a hypothetical space or realm consisting of multiple universes, of which our universe is just one of them
4. the fo_____nts of an earlier civilization *n.* a mark of a foot, shoe, or animal's foot left on a surface
5. ba___e his plan *v.* to bewilder or perplex someone completely and to be unable to understand or explain something
6. ou_____e our child *v.* to live longer than another person
7. pr___n decay *n.* a very small particle with a positive charge equal to the negative charge of an electron that forms part of the nucleus of all atoms
8. artificial sup_____nce *n.* a hypothetical agent, for example, a computer or space alien, that possesses intelligence far surpassing that of humankind
9. pr___n conductivity *n.* a very small particle with a positive charge equal to the negative charge of an electron that forms part of the nucleus of all atoms

ANSWERS: 1. clunky, 2. microscopic, 3. multiverse, 4. footprint, 5. baffle, 6. outlive, 7. proton, 8. superintelligence, 9. proton

10. awe_____ing power *adj.* making you feel great respect or admiration through being impressive or formidable
11. mic_____ic inquiry *adj.* tiny; exceedingly precise and detail-oriented; of or used in microscopy
12. sp__n in spring *v.* to lay eggs or to produce offspring; to cause something to develop
13. ne_____no capture *n.* a very small and electrically neutral particle with a very small mass that rarely reacts with other matter
14. ba___e outside noises *v.* to bewilder or perplex someone completely and to be unable to understand or explain something
15. a facial wr_____e *n.* a small line or fold in something, especially fabric or the skin of the face; a minor difficulty
16. feel a pi_____ck sensation *n.* a very small hole in something, especially made by a pin or needle; a minor annoyance
17. nan_____nd response *n.* one thousand millionth or billionth (= 0.000,000,001) of a second
18. t__m with activity *v.* to be abuzz; to move in large numbers; to fall heavily
19. cl___y robot *adj.* heavy, awkward, and old-fashioned; not graceful and clumsy in style, form, or movement
20. ho_____h of quiet diplomacy *n.* an idea, behavior, argument, etc., that you think is stupid and unacceptable
21. fo_____nts in the snow *n.* a mark of a foot, shoe, or animal's foot left on a surface

ANSWERS: 10. awe-inspiring, 11. microscopic, 12. spawn, 13. neutrino, 14. baffle, 15. wrinkle, 16. pinprick, 17. nanosecond, 18. teem, 19. clunky, 20. hogwash, 21. footprint

22. a fine wr_____e on a fabric *n.* a small line or fold in something, especially fabric or the skin of the face; a minor difficulty
23. ext_____te the results *v.* to guess or think about what might happen or estimate something using the facts that you have now
24. obs_____le change *adj.* that can be noticed or seen
25. alien sp_____ip *n.* (especially in science fiction) a spacecraft designed to carry a crew into interstellar space
26. the antiparticle of a qu__k *n.* a type of elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter that make up the heavier elementary particles, such as protons, neutrons, etc.; fresh unripened cheese of a smooth texture made from pasteurized milk, a starter, and rennet
27. a barely det_____le change *adj.* capable of being discovered or identified
28. complete ho_____h *n.* an idea, behavior, argument, etc., that you think is stupid and unacceptable
29. the mul_____se hypothesis *n.* a hypothetical space or realm consisting of multiple universes, of which our universe is just one of them
30. det_____le by the human ear *adj.* capable of being discovered or identified
31. a tiny pi_____ck *n.* a very small hole in something, especially made by a pin or needle; a minor annoyance

ANSWERS: 22. wrinkle, 23. extrapolate, 24. observable, 25. spaceship, 26. quark, 27. detectable, 28. hogwash, 29. multiverse, 30. detectable, 31. pinprick

32. una_____ed e-mail *adj.* not responded to or explained
33. ext_____te animal dose *v.* to guess or think about what might happen or estimate something using the facts that you have now
34. awe_____ing painting *adj.* making you feel great respect or admiration through being impressive or formidable
35. pa_____id disorder *adj.* unreasonably or obsessively believing that other people do not like you or want to harm you
36. talented ph_____st *n.* a scientist who specializes in the field of physics
37. t__m down *v.* to be abuzz; to move in large numbers; to fall heavily
38. worst ima_____le case *adj.* capable of being imagined
39. congressional h__k *n.* a bird of prey typically having short rounded wings and a long tail; an advocate of an aggressive policy on foreign relations
40. solve the ri___e *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
41. obl_____te data *v.* to wipe out, destroy, or conceal all signs of something utterly; to remove completely from recognition or memory
42. sp__n a new concept *v.* to lay eggs or to produce offspring; to cause something to develop

ANSWERS: 32. unanswered, 33. extrapolate, 34. awe-inspiring, 35. paranoid, 36. physicist, 37. teem, 38. imaginable, 39. hawk, 40. riddle, 41. obliterate, 42. spawn

43. theoretical ph_____st *n.* a scientist who specializes in the field of physics
44. medieval my____c *adj.* having spiritual powers or qualities that are beyond ordinary understanding; (noun) someone who believes in the existence of realities beyond human comprehension
45. experimentally obs_____le *adj.* that can be noticed or seen
46. qu__k physics *n.* a type of elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter that make up the heavier elementary particles, such as protons, neutrons, etc.; fresh unripened cheese of a smooth texture made from pasteurized milk, a starter, and rennet
47. sterile ne_____nos *n.* a very small and electrically neutral particle with a very small mass that rarely reacts with other matter
48. Peruvian ar_____cts *n.* a person-made object, especially one of historical or cultural interest
49. pa_____id about issues *adj.* unreasonably or obsessively believing that other people do not like you or want to harm you
50. easily ima_____le *adj.* capable of being imagined
51. cast off a h__k *n.* a bird of prey typically having short rounded wings and a long tail; an advocate of an aggressive policy on foreign relations
52. mi_____le letters *adj.* extremely small; tiny

ANSWERS: 43. physicist, 44. mystic, 45. observable, 46. quark, 47. neutrino, 48. artifact, 49. paranoid, 50. imaginable, 51. hawk, 52. minuscule

53. a sacred ed_____e *n.* a large and imposing building
54. ou_____e its usefulness *v.* to live longer than another person
55. a meteorological obs_____ry *n.* a building designed and equipped to observe the planets, the stars, the weather, etc.
56. digital sup_____nce *n.* a hypothetical agent, for example, a computer or space alien, that possesses intelligence far surpassing that of humankind
57. ri___e me a 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
58. cast pi_____l eyes *adj.* making people feel sorrow or sympathy; very small or poor
59. Fourier spe_____ope *n.* an optical instrument used for spectrographic analysis (= measurement of properties of light over a specific portion of the electromagnetic spectrum)
60. a sp_____ip to survey the moon *n.* (especially in science fiction) a spacecraft designed to carry a crew into interstellar space
61. space obs_____ry *n.* a building designed and equipped to observe the planets, the stars, the weather, etc.
62. una_____ed love *adj.* not responded to or explained
63. nan_____nd laser pulse *n.* one thousand millionth or billionth (= 0.000,000,001) of a second

ANSWERS: 53. edifice, 54. outlive, 55. observatory, 56. superintelligence, 57. riddle, 58. pitiful, 59. spectroscope, 60. spaceship, 61. observatory, 62. unanswered, 63. nanosecond

64. my___c teaching *adj.* having spiritual powers or qualities that are beyond ordinary understanding; (noun) someone who believes in the existence of realities beyond human comprehension
65. paleolithic ar_____cts *n.* a person-made object, especially one of historical or cultural interest
66. obl_____te all traces *v.* to wipe out, destroy, or conceal all signs of something utterly; to remove completely from recognition or memory
67. infrared spe_____ope *n.* an optical instrument used for spectrographic analysis (= measurement of properties of light over a specific portion of the electromagnetic spectrum)
68. add to the ed_____e of knowledge *n.* a large and imposing building
69. a pi_____l fate *adj.* making people feel sorrow or sympathy; very small or poor
70. mi_____le amount *adj.* extremely small; tiny

ANSWERS: 64. mystic, 65. artifact, 66. obliterate, 67. spectroscope, 68. edifice, 69. pitiful, 70. minuscule

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The accident at that nuclear power plant _____ the local ecosystem.
v. to wipe out, destroy, or conceal all signs of something utterly; to remove completely from recognition or memory

2. That astronomical _____ stands at the top of the mountain.
n. a building designed and equipped to observe the planets, the stars, the weather, etc.

3. He felt a _____ of disgust.
n. a very small hole in something, especially made by a pin or needle; a minor annoyance

4. 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

5. The various universes within the _____ are sometimes called parallel universes.
n. a hypothetical space or realm consisting of multiple universes, of which our universe is just one of them

6. This is the only _____ strategy.
adj. capable of being imagined

7. The Big Bang theory states that _____ plasma filled the entire universe before matter as we know it was created.
n. a type of elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter that make up the heavier elementary particles, such as protons, neutrons, etc.; fresh unripened cheese of a smooth texture made from pasteurized milk, a starter, and rennet

ANSWERS: 1. obliterated, 2. observatory, 3. pinprick, 4. riddle, 5. multiverse, 6. imaginable, 7. quark-gluon

8. They launched a crewless _____ into space.
n. (especially in science fiction) a spacecraft designed to carry a crew into interstellar space
9. The processor performs calculations on the _____ timescale.
n. one thousand millionth or billionth (= 0.000,000,001) of a second
10. The moment the glacier collapses is an _____ sight.
adj. making you feel great respect or admiration through being impressive or formidable
11. Pardon me for leaving some of your questions _____.
adj. not responded to or explained
12. This predictive model mechanically _____ past trends into the future.
v. to guess or think about what might happen or estimate something using the facts that you have now
13. He is looking for evidence of the existence of _____ from cosmic signals.
n. a hypothetical agent, for example, a computer or space alien, that possesses intelligence far surpassing that of humankind
14. Einstein was an outstanding and famous _____ of the 20th century.
n. a scientist who specializes in the field of physics
15. This laboratory has a pool consisting of thousands of _____ detectors.
n. a very small and electrically neutral particle with a very small mass that rarely reacts with other matter

ANSWERS: 8. spaceship, 9. nanosecond, 10. awe-inspiring, 11. unanswered, 12. extrapolates, 13. superintelligence, 14. physicist, 15. neutrino

16. This media has long been criticized for spreading paranoid _____.
- n.* an idea, behavior, argument, etc., that you think is stupid and unacceptable
17. This suit is made of _____ material.
- n.* a small line or fold in something, especially fabric or the skin of the face; a minor difficulty
18. The city _____ with traffic on holiday.
- v.* to be abuzz; to move in large numbers; to fall heavily
19. The city is famous for its magnificent _____.
- n.* a large and imposing building
20. We heard their _____ laments throughout the night.
- adj.* making people feel sorrow or sympathy; very small or poor
21. The salmon swims upstream to _____ in the place they were released.
- v.* to lay eggs or to produce offspring; to cause something to develop
22. She _____ her husband for many years.
- v.* to live longer than another person
23. Inspectors noticed _____ cracks in the submarine's hull.
- adj.* tiny; exceedingly precise and detail-oriented; of or used in microscopy
24. A _____ person may have delusions that people want to harm.
- adj.* unreasonably or obsessively believing that other people do not like you or want to harm you

ANSWERS: 16. hogwash, 17. wrinkle-proof, 18. teems, 19. edifice, 20. pitiful, 21. spawn, 22. outlived, 23. microscopic, 24. paranoid

25. Any theorem relies on both _____ fact and assumption.

adj. that can be noticed or seen

26. We choose transportation that has a smaller carbon _____.

n. a mark of a foot, shoe, or animal's foot left on a surface

27. This ore emits _____ quantities of radiation

adj. extremely small; tiny

28. The solar wind is composed almost entirely of electrons and _____.

n. a very small particle with a positive charge equal to the negative charge of an electron that forms part of the nucleus of all atoms

29. An X-ray _____ can determine the composition of the elements in a sample.

n. an optical instrument used for spectrographic analysis (= measurement of properties of light over a specific portion of the electromagnetic spectrum)

30. The object is _____ at ultraviolet wavelengths.

adj. capable of being discovered or identified

31. Refined character portrayal makes up for _____ gameplay.

adj. heavy, awkward, and old-fashioned; not graceful and clumsy in style, form, or movement

32. The museum has a vast collection of Greek _____.

n. a person-made object, especially one of historical or cultural interest

33. He is interested in the _____ rites of that religion.

adj. having spiritual powers or qualities that are beyond ordinary understanding;
(noun) someone who believes in the existence of realities beyond human comprehension

ANSWERS: 25. observable, 26. footprint, 27. minuscule, 28. protons, 29. spectroscopy, 30. detectable, 31. clunky, 32. artifacts, 33. mystic

34. That team signed a center forward who was a ball-_____.

- n.* a bird of prey typically having short rounded wings and a long tail; an advocate of an aggressive policy on foreign relations

35. The paradox _____ most philosophers.

- v.* to bewilder or perplex someone completely and to be unable to understand or explain something

ANSWERS: 34. hawk, 35. baffled