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## Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Zahra Al-Mahdi: *The infinite alchemy of storytelling* |  
TED Talk

[https://www.ted.com/talks/zahra\\_al\\_mahdi\\_the\\_infinite\\_alchemy\\_of\\_storytelling](https://www.ted.com/talks/zahra_al_mahdi_the_infinite_alchemy_of_storytelling)

### Advanced Words Only

#### IMPORTANT

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## Session 1: Word List

### storytelling

*n.* the act or art of narrating or writing stories

*synonym*: narrating, relating, recounting

(1) **storytelling** performance, (2) courtroom **storytelling**

She was skilled in **storytelling** techniques, such as using different voices for other characters.

### contradict

*v.* to deny the truth of a statement by stating the opposite; to be in conflict with

*synonym*: conflict, oppose, belie

(1) **contradict** each other, (2) **contradict** the principle

The book contains numerous statements that **contradict** previous reports.

### gulf

*n.* a large ocean inlet or deep bay that is partially enclosed by land

*synonym*: chasm, divide, abyss

(1) **gulf** war, (2) **gulf** stream

The **Gulf** of Mexico is a body of water in the southern United States.

### crosshatched

*adj.* marked or drawn with intersecting parallel lines, creating a pattern of squares or rectangles

*synonym*: lined, streaked, interlaced

(1) **crosshatched** lines, (2) **crosshatched** pattern

The artist used **crosshatched** strokes to create shading in the portrait.

## smartphone

*n.* a mobile phone that functions as a computer and connects to the Internet

(1) **smartphone** app developer, (2) **smartphone** addict

Internet traffic volumes have increased significantly with the advent of **smartphones**.

## animate

*v.* to make something full of interest and energy

*synonym*: invigorate, energize, enliven

(1) **animate** the body, (2) **animate** his soul

The positive attitude of the supervisor **animated** the discussion.

## mockumentary

*n.* (a portmanteau of the words "mock" and "documentary") a type of film or television program that uses a documentary-style format to parody or satirize a particular subject or genre

*synonym*: mock documentary, fake documentary, parody documentary

(1) **mockumentary** film, (2) **mockumentary** style

The film was a hilarious **mockumentary** that parodied reality TV shows.

## ponder

*v.* to think deeply or carefully about something

*synonym*: think about, consider, reflect on

(1) **ponder** divine matters, (2) **ponder** life's meaning

She sat quietly, **pondering** the difficult decision.

## obsession

*n.* the state in which a person's mind is filled with thoughts of one single object or particular person

*synonym*: compulsion, fixation, enthusiasm

(1) **obsession** with character, (2) national **obsession**

Gambling became an **obsession** for him, and he eventually

lost everything.

## amuse

*v.* to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh  
*synonym* : entertain, delight, divert

(1) **amuse** a baby with a rattle, (2) **amuse** guests

He **amused** himself by playing video games during his free time.

## well-bred

*adj.* describing someone or something that has been raised or trained to behave correctly in society, often indicating good manners and education

*synonym* : refined, cultured, polished

(1) **well-bred** gentleman, (2) **well-bred** puppy

She was considered very **well-bred**, having impeccable manners and a refined upbringing.

## veil

*n.* a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure

*synonym* : cover, mask, (verb) conceal

(1) **veil** of mystery, (2) **veil** her face

He lifted her **veil** with both hands.

## repress

*v.* to restrain or control by force; to suppress feelings or memories

*synonym* : suppress, control, curb

(1) cannot **repress** laughter, (2) **repress** gene expression

He **repressed** the memories of his traumatic childhood.

## intolerant

*adj.* the inability or refusal to accept or respect views, beliefs, or behavior that differ from someone's own; unable to eat food without adverse effects

*synonym* : failure, impotence, shortcoming

(1) an **intolerant** person, (2) **intolerant** of criticism

His **intolerant** attitude towards other cultures made it difficult for him to get along with others.

## detachment

*n.* a state of being disconnected or disinterested; impartiality or emotional distance; a military unit or formation that separates from a larger force and operates independently

*synonym*: separation, aloofness, indifference

(1) **detachment** from reality, (2) emotional **detachment**

The **detachment** of the soldiers was evident as they carried out their mission with precision and focus.

## axiom

*n.* a statement or principle that is regarded as being self-evidently true and does not require proof or justification; a fundamental truth upon which other truths or theories are based

*synonym*: principle, maxim, postulate

(1) self-evident **axiom**, (2) fundamental **axiom**

It is an **axiom** in mathematics that two parallel lines never intersect.

## multiplicity

*n.* a large number or variety of something; the quality or state of being multiple or manifold

*synonym*: abundance, variety, diversity

(1) functional **multiplicity**, (2) **multiplicity** of languages

The **multiplicity** of colors in the sunset was truly breathtaking.

## confuse

*v.* to mistake one thing for another; to make somebody hard to understand

*synonym*: confound, obscure, disorient

(1) **confuse** the listener, (2) **confuse** fantasy with reality

Her remarks **confused** the debate.

## retell

*v.* to tell someone about something again or differently

*synonym*: reiterate, repeat, restate

(1) **retell** a story, (2) **retell** an old tale

He **retells** the truth to plead not guilty.

## **hindsight**

*n.* understanding or knowledge that comes after an event has occurred; the ability to perceive or understand events with greater clarity or accuracy in retrospect

*synonym* : retrospect, afterthought

(1) **hindsight** bias, (2) 20/20 **hindsight**

With **hindsight**, we can see that investing in that company was a mistake.

## **villain**

*n.* a character in a story, movie, or play which often opposes the hero, typically characterized as immoral, evil, or cruel

*synonym* : scoundrel, rogue, antagonist

(1) evil **villain**, (2) authoritarian **villain**

The **villain** in the movie was a complex character with a tragic backstory.

## Session 2: Spelling

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. ob_____on with character      | <i>n.</i> the state in which a person's mind is filled with thoughts of one single object or particular person  |
| 2. sto_____ing performance       | <i>n.</i> the act or art of narrating or writing stories  |
| 3. cro_____hed lines             | <i>adj.</i> marked or drawn with intersecting parallel lines, creating a pattern of squares or rectangles   |
| 4. po___r divine matters         | <i>v.</i> to think deeply or carefully about something  |
| 5. sma_____ne addict             | <i>n.</i> a mobile phone that functions as a computer and connects to the Internet  |
| 6. functional mul_____ity        | <i>n.</i> a large number or variety of something; the quality or state of being multiple or manifold  |
| 7. co_____e fantasy with reality | <i>v.</i> to mistake one thing for another; to make somebody hard to understand   |
| 8. int_____nt of criticism       | <i>adj.</i> the inability or refusal to accept or respect views, beliefs, or behavior that differ from someone's own; unable to eat food without adverse effects                                |
| 9. cannot re_____s laughter      | <i>v.</i> to restrain or control by force; to suppress feelings or memories   |
| 10. fundamental ax__m            | <i>n.</i> a statement or principle that is regarded as being self-evidently true and does not require proof or justification; a fundamental truth upon which other truths or theories are based |

ANSWERS: 1. obsession, 2. storytelling, 3. crosshatched, 4. ponder, 5. smartphone, 6. multiplicity, 7. confuse, 8. intolerant, 9. repress, 10. axiom

- |                              |      |   |
|------------------------------|------|---|
| 11. po___r life's meaning    | v.   | to think deeply or carefully about something  |
| 12. re___l a story           | v.   | to tell someone about something again or differently  |
| 13. we_____ed puppy          | adj. | describing someone or something that has been raised or trained to behave correctly in society, often indicating good manners and education |
| 14. co_____e the listener    | v.   | to mistake one thing for another; to make somebody hard to understand   |
| 15. sma_____ne app developer | n.   | a mobile phone that functions as a computer and connects to the Internet  |
| 16. g__f stream              | n.   | a large ocean inlet or deep bay that is partially enclosed by land  |
| 17. con_____ct the principle | v.   | to deny the truth of a statement by stating the opposite; to be in conflict with  |
| 18. an_____e the body        | v.   | to make something full of interest and energy   |
| 19. courtroom sto_____ing    | n.   | the act or art of narrating or writing stories  |
| 20. authoritarian vi_____n   | n.   | a character in a story, movie, or play which often opposes the hero, typically characterized as immoral, evil, or cruel                     |
| 21. cro_____hed pattern      | adj. | marked or drawn with intersecting parallel lines, creating a pattern of squares or rectangles   |
| 22. mul_____ity of languages | n.   | a large number or variety of something; the quality or state of being multiple or manifold  |

ANSWERS: 11. ponder, 12. retell, 13. well-bred, 14. confuse, 15. smartphone, 16. gulf, 17. contradict, 18. animate, 19. storytelling, 20. villain, 21. crosshatched, 22. multiplicity





32. 20/20 hi\_\_\_\_\_ht *n.* understanding or knowledge that comes after an event has occurred; the ability to perceive or understand events with greater clarity or accuracy in retrospect
33. am\_\_e guests *v.* to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh
34. evil vi\_\_\_\_\_n *n.* a character in a story, movie, or play which often opposes the hero, typically characterized as immoral, evil, or cruel
35. emotional det\_\_\_\_\_nt *n.* a state of being disconnected or disinterested; impartiality or emotional distance; a military unit or formation that separates from a larger force and operates independently
36. v\_\_l her face *n.* a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure
37. an\_\_\_\_\_e his soul *v.* to make something full of interest and energy
38. self-evident ax\_\_m *n.* a statement or principle that is regarded as being self-evidently true and does not require proof or justification; a fundamental truth upon which other truths or theories are based
39. we\_\_\_\_\_ed gentleman *adj.* describing someone or something that has been raised or trained to behave correctly in society, often indicating good manners and education
40. am\_\_e a baby with a rattle *v.* to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh

ANSWERS: 32. hindsight, 33. amuse, 34. villain, 35. detachment, 36. veil, 37. animate, 38. axiom, 39. well-bred, 40. amuse

41. an int\_\_\_\_\_nt person

*adj.* the inability or refusal to accept or respect views, beliefs, or behavior that differ from someone's own; unable to eat food without adverse effects

42. national ob\_\_\_\_\_on

*n.* the state in which a person's mind is filled with thoughts of one single object or particular person

ANSWERS: 41. intolerant, 42. obsession

## Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The film was a hilarious \_\_\_\_\_ that parodied reality TV shows.  
*n.* (a portmanteau of the words "mock" and "documentary") a type of film or television program that uses a documentary-style format to parody or satirize a particular subject or genre
2. She sat quietly, \_\_\_\_\_ the difficult decision.  
*v.* to think deeply or carefully about something
3. Her remarks \_\_\_\_\_ the debate.  
*v.* to mistake one thing for another; to make somebody hard to understand
4. He \_\_\_\_\_ the truth to plead not guilty.  
*v.* to tell someone about something again or differently
5. The positive attitude of the supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ the discussion.  
*v.* to make something full of interest and energy
6. He \_\_\_\_\_ the memories of his traumatic childhood.  
*v.* to restrain or control by force; to suppress feelings or memories
7. The book contains numerous statements that \_\_\_\_\_ previous reports.  
*v.* to deny the truth of a statement by stating the opposite; to be in conflict with
8. His \_\_\_\_\_ attitude towards other cultures made it difficult for him to get along with others.  
*adj.* the inability or refusal to accept or respect views, beliefs, or behavior that differ from someone's own; unable to eat food without adverse effects

ANSWERS: 1. mockumentary, 2. pondering, 3. confused, 4. retells, 5. animated, 6. repressed, 7. contradict, 8. intolerant

9. The artist used \_\_\_\_\_ strokes to create shading in the portrait.  
*adj.* marked or drawn with intersecting parallel lines, creating a pattern of squares or rectangles
10. She was considered very \_\_\_\_\_ having impeccable manners and a refined upbringing.  
*adj.* describing someone or something that has been raised or trained to behave correctly in society, often indicating good manners and education
11. She was skilled in \_\_\_\_\_ techniques, such as using different voices for other characters.  
*n.* the act or art of narrating or writing stories
12. The \_\_\_\_\_ of colors in the sunset was truly breathtaking.  
*n.* a large number or variety of something; the quality or state of being multiple or manifold
13. Internet traffic volumes have increased significantly with the advent of \_\_\_\_\_.  
*n.* a mobile phone that functions as a computer and connects to the Internet
14. He \_\_\_\_\_ himself by playing video games during his free time.  
*v.* to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh
15. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the soldiers was evident as they carried out their mission with precision and focus.  
*n.* a state of being disconnected or disinterested; impartiality or emotional distance; a military unit or formation that separates from a larger force and operates independently

ANSWERS: 9. crosshatched, 10. well-bred, 11. storytelling, 12. multiplicity, 13. smartphones, 14. amused, 15. detachment

16. He lifted her \_\_\_\_\_ with both hands.

- n.* a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure

17. It is an \_\_\_\_\_ in mathematics that two parallel lines never intersect.

- n.* a statement or principle that is regarded as being self-evidently true and does not require proof or justification; a fundamental truth upon which other truths or theories are based

18. With \_\_\_\_\_ we can see that investing in that company was a mistake.

- n.* understanding or knowledge that comes after an event has occurred; the ability to perceive or understand events with greater clarity or accuracy in retrospect

19. The \_\_\_\_\_ in the movie was a complex character with a tragic backstory.

- n.* a character in a story, movie, or play which often opposes the hero, typically characterized as immoral, evil, or cruel

20. Gambling became an \_\_\_\_\_ for him, and he eventually lost everything.

- n.* the state in which a person's mind is filled with thoughts of one single object or particular person

21. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Mexico is a body of water in the southern United States.

- n.* a large ocean inlet or deep bay that is partially enclosed by land

ANSWERS: 16. veil, 17. axiom, 18. hindsight, 19. villain, 20. obsession, 21. Gulf