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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Chris A. Kniesly: How corn conquered the world |
TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

dent

v. to make a depression or indentation in the surface of something; (noun) a depression scratched or carved into a surface

synonym: indent, depress, mark

(1) **dent** removal, (2) **dent** his pride

He acci **dentally** dented his car when he bumped into a tree.

domesticate

v. to take control of animals or plants to provide food, power, or company

synonym: tame, naturalize, cultivate

(1) easy to **domesticate**, (2) **domesticate** the plant

We **domesticate** cows to gain milk and meat.

teosinte

n. a wild grass of Mexico and Central America, from which maize or corn is believed to have been domesticated

(1) **teosinte** genome, (2) **teosinte** plant

Native people have been cultivating **teosinte** for food for thousands of years.

edible

adj. fit or safe to be eaten; able to be consumed as food

synonym: esculent, comestible, digestible

(1) non- **edible** ingredients, (2) **edible** vegetables

I made sure to pick only **edible** mushrooms for our dinner.

husk

n. the dry, outer covering of a seed, grain, or fruit, such as the shell of a nut or the skin of a corn kernel

synonym : shell, covering, outer layer

(1) **husk** removal, (2) seed **husk**

The **husk** of the coconut was removed to reveal the fruit inside.

staple

adj. essential, crucial, or regularly used

synonym : essential, fundamental, pivotal

(1) **staple** commodities, (2) **staple** crop

Rice and beans are a **staple** food in many cultures.

cob

n. a type of bread made from cornmeal, traditionally associated with Native American cuisine; the central hub or axis of a wheel or turbine; a small, delicately built horse, typically used for riding or light work

synonym : lump, clod, nugget

(1) **cob** construction, (2) **cob** loaf

The chef boiled the corn **cob** in water before roasting it on the grill.

rev

n. a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute

synonym : revolution, RPM, speed

(1) low- **rev** engine, (2) **rev** up the crowd

He stepped on the gas pedal, and the engine released a loud **rev**.

shun

v. to avoid deliberately or keep away from someone or something

synonym : avoid, evade, steer clear of

(1) **shun** a person, (2) **shun** office politics

He **shunned** going to the party and decided to stay home instead.

cultivate

v. to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants
synonym: boost, foster, nurture

(1) **cultivate** a field, (2) **cultivate** relationships

University is a great place to **cultivate** our minds and expertise.

settler

n. a person who moved with a group of others to live in a different country or area

synonym: frontiersperson, immigrant, emigrant

(1) new **settlers**, (2) **settlers** on some foreign shore

A large proportion of railway workers in **settler** colonies were white.

mechanized

adj. operated or characterized by machinery or automation; equipped with or reliant on machines or technology for operation or function

synonym: automated, robotic, mechanistic

(1) **mechanized** farming, (2) **mechanized** production

The **mechanized** assembly line increased production efficiency tenfold.

ammonium

n. a positively charged ion of nitrogen and hydrogen found in many organic compounds and the form of ammonia in the atmosphere

(1) **ammonium** chloride, (2) **ammonium** sulfate

Ammonium nitrate is commonly used as a fertilizer in agriculture.

nit

n. the egg of a louse (= that is a tiny insect that lives in human hair) or some other insect; a foolish person

(1) **nit** in the dog's fur, (2) she is a little **nit**

Careful brushing can remove **nit**.

explode

v. to burst or break open violently and noisily; to cause something to burst or break open

synonym: detonate, blast, rupture

(1) **explode** in anger, (2) **explode** in popularity

The old building **exploded** in a fiery inferno.

concoction

n. the mixture, often a complicated one; a preparation made by combining various ingredients

synonym : mixture, brew, composition

(1) **concoction** recipe, (2) coffee-milk **concoction**

The **concoction** of herbs and spices gave the soup a unique flavor.

cornstarch

n. a fine, powdery flour made from the starch of corn kernels, used as a thickener in cooking or for other industrial purposes

synonym : corn flour, cornmeal, maize flour

(1) **cornstarch** slurry, (2) **cornstarch** pudding

A mixture of vinegar and **cornstarch** can be used to clean silverware.

industrious

adj. hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort

synonym : diligent, hardworking, assiduous

(1) **industrious** worker, (2) **industrious** student

He was known to be very **industrious** and would often work late into the night.

polluted

adj. contaminated with harmful or poisonous substances

synonym : contaminated, poisoned, unclean

(1) **polluted** air, (2) cadmium- **polluted** area

The river was **polluted** with chemicals, causing harm to the wildlife.

fructose

n. a simple sugar that is found in many fruits and vegetables and is about twice as sweet as sucrose

synonym : fruit sugar, levulose, laevulose

(1) **fructose** content, (2) heredity **fructose** intolerance

High **fructose** corn syrup is a common ingredient in processed foods.

monoculture

n. the cultivation of a single crop or type of animal over a wide area

synonym: single crop, uniform, homogenous

(1) **monoculture** strategy, (2) corn **monoculture**

Monoculture farming can also increase the risk of pests and diseases, as the lack of diversity makes it easier for these organisms to spread and cause harm to the crop.

pathogen

n. a bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that causes disease

synonym: germ, microbe, bacterium

(1) plant **pathogen**, (2) the **pathogen** in the air

mRNA vaccines are approved faster because they do not contain inactivated **pathogens**.

infect

v. to affect a person, an animal, or a plant with a disease-causing organism

synonym: pollute, contaminate, affect

(1) **infect** other animal species, (2) **infect** a computer with a virus

Children often **infect** parents with this head cold.

ubiquitous

adj. being or existing everywhere at once

synonym: universal, omnipresent, everywhere

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

Sugar is **ubiquitous** in food.

maze

n. a complex network of winding passages or pathways designed as a puzzle or challenge for people to navigate through

synonym: labyrinth, puzzle, network

(1) puzzle **maze**, (2) labyrinth **maze**

We got lost in the **maze** of streets while exploring the city.

Session 2: Spelling

1. mec_____ed production *adj.* operated or characterized by machinery or automation; equipped with or reliant on machines or technology for operation or function
2. mon_____re strategy *n.* the cultivation of a single crop or type of animal over a wide area
3. heredity fr_____se intolerance *n.* a simple sugar that is found in many fruits and vegetables and is about twice as sweet as sucrose
4. cu_____te relationships *v.* to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants
5. st___e crop *adj.* essential, crucial, or regularly used
6. mec_____ed farming *adj.* operated or characterized by machinery or automation; equipped with or reliant on machines or technology for operation or function
7. st___e commodities *adj.* essential, crucial, or regularly used
8. labyrinth m___e *n.* a complex network of winding passages or pathways designed as a puzzle or challenge for people to navigate through
9. in___t a computer with a virus *v.* to affect a person, an animal, or a plant with a disease-causing organism
10. new se_____rs *n.* a person who moved with a group of others to live in a different country or area

ANSWERS: 1. mechanized, 2. monoculture, 3. fructose, 4. cultivate, 5. staple, 6. mechanized, 7. staple, 8. maze, 9. infect, 10. settler

11. seed h__k *n.* the dry, outer covering of a seed, grain, or fruit, such as the shell of a nut or the skin of a corn kernel
12. low-r_v engine *n.* a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute
13. am____um chloride *n.* a positively charged ion of nitrogen and hydrogen found in many organic compounds and the form of ammonia in the atmosphere
14. h__k removal *n.* the dry, outer covering of a seed, grain, or fruit, such as the shell of a nut or the skin of a corn kernel
15. s__n a person *v.* to avoid deliberately or keep away from someone or something
16. puzzle m__e *n.* a complex network of winding passages or pathways designed as a puzzle or challenge for people to navigate through
17. easy to dom_____te *v.* to take control of animals or plants to provide food, power, or company
18. te_____te plant *n.* a wild grass of Mexico and Central America, from which maize or corn is believed to have been domesticated
19. non-ed___e ingredients *adj.* fit or safe to be eaten; able to be consumed as food
20. dom_____te the plant *v.* to take control of animals or plants to provide food, power, or company

ANSWERS: 11. husk, 12. rev, 13. ammonium, 14. husk, 15. shun, 16. maze, 17. domesticate, 18. teosinte, 19. edible, 20. domesticate

32. po____ed air *adj.* contaminated with harmful or poisonous substances
33. n_t in the dog's fur *n.* the egg of a louse (= that is a tiny insect that lives in human hair) or some other insect; a foolish person
34. am____um sulfate *n.* a positively charged ion of nitrogen and hydrogen found in many organic compounds and the form of ammonia in the atmosphere
35. r_v up the crowd *n.* a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute
36. cor_____ch pudding *n.* a fine, powdery flour made from the starch of corn kernels, used as a thickener in cooking or for other industrial purposes
37. te_____te genome *n.* a wild grass of Mexico and Central America, from which maize or corn is believed to have been domesticated
38. s__n office politics *v.* to avoid deliberately or keep away from someone or something
39. cadmium-po____ed area *adj.* contaminated with harmful or poisonous substances
40. fr_____se content *n.* a simple sugar that is found in many fruits and vegetables and is about twice as sweet as sucrose
41. c_b construction *n.* a type of bread made from cornmeal, traditionally associated with Native American cuisine; the central hub or axis of a wheel or turbine; a small, delicately built horse, typically used for riding or light work

ANSWERS: 32. polluted, 33. nit, 34. ammonium, 35. rev, 36. cornstarch, 37. teosinte, 38. shun, 39. polluted, 40. fructose, 41. cob

42. cor_____ch slurry *n.* a fine, powdery flour made from the starch of corn kernels, used as a thickener in cooking or for other industrial purposes
43. plant pa_____en *n.* a bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that causes disease
44. corn mon_____re *n.* the cultivation of a single crop or type of animal over a wide area
45. ubi_____us across ecosystems *adj.* being or existing everywhere at once
46. ind_____us worker *adj.* hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort
47. c_b loaf *n.* a type of bread made from cornmeal, traditionally associated with Native American cuisine; the central hub or axis of a wheel or turbine; a small, delicately built horse, typically used for riding or light work
48. coffee-milk con_____on *n.* the mixture, often a complicated one; a preparation made by combining various ingredients
49. ubi_____us computing *adj.* being or existing everywhere at once
50. d__t removal *v.* to make a depression or indentation in the surface of something; (noun) a depression scratched or carved into a surface

ANSWERS: 42. cornstarch, 43. pathogen, 44. monoculture, 45. ubiquitous, 46. industrious, 47. cob, 48. concoction, 49. ubiquitous, 50. dent

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. Careful brushing can remove ____.
n. the egg of a louse (= that is a tiny insect that lives in human hair) or some other insect; a foolish person

2. The chef boiled the corn ____ in water before roasting it on the grill.
n. a type of bread made from cornmeal, traditionally associated with Native American cuisine; the central hub or axis of a wheel or turbine; a small, delicately built horse, typically used for riding or light work

3. Children often _____ parents with this head cold.
v. to affect a person, an animal, or a plant with a disease-causing organism

4. We got lost in the ____ of streets while exploring the city.
n. a complex network of winding passages or pathways designed as a puzzle or challenge for people to navigate through

5. Rice and beans are a _____ food in many cultures.
adj. essential, crucial, or regularly used

6. Native people have been cultivating _____ for food for thousands of years.
n. a wild grass of Mexico and Central America, from which maize or corn is believed to have been domesticated

7. A large proportion of railway workers in _____ colonies were white.
n. a person who moved with a group of others to live in a different country or area

8. mRNA vaccines are approved faster because they do not contain inactivated _____.
n. a bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that causes disease

ANSWERS: 1. nit, 2. cob, 3. infect, 4. maze, 5. staple, 6. teosinte, 7. settler, 8. pathogens

9. He acci_____dented his car when he bumped into a tree.
v. to make a depression or indentation in the surface of something; (noun) a depression scratched or carved into a surface
10. University is a great place to _____ our minds and expertise.
v. to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants
11. _____ farming can also increase the risk of pests and diseases, as the lack of diversity makes it easier for these organisms to spread and cause harm to the crop.
n. the cultivation of a single crop or type of animal over a wide area
12. He stepped on the gas pedal, and the engine released a loud _____.
n. a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute
13. The old building _____ in a fiery inferno.
v. to burst or break open violently and noisily; to cause something to burst or break open
14. The river was _____ with chemicals, causing harm to the wildlife.
adj. contaminated with harmful or poisonous substances
15. The _____ assembly line increased production efficiency tenfold.
adj. operated or characterized by machinery or automation; equipped with or reliant on machines or technology for operation or function
16. We _____ cows to gain milk and meat.
v. to take control of animals or plants to provide food, power, or company

ANSWERS: 9. dentally, 10. cultivate, 11. Monoculture, 12. rev, 13. exploded, 14. polluted, 15. mechanized, 16. domesticate

17. I made sure to pick only _____ mushrooms for our dinner.

adj. fit or safe to be eaten; able to be consumed as food

18. High _____ corn syrup is a common ingredient in processed foods.

n. a simple sugar that is found in many fruits and vegetables and is about twice as sweet as sucrose

19. A mixture of vinegar and _____ can be used to clean silverware.

n. a fine, powdery flour made from the starch of corn kernels, used as a thickener in cooking or for other industrial purposes

20. Sugar is _____ in food.

adj. being or existing everywhere at once

21. He _____ going to the party and decided to stay home instead.

v. to avoid deliberately or keep away from someone or something

22. He was known to be very _____ and would often work late into the night.

adj. hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort

23. _____ nitrate is commonly used as a fertilizer in agriculture.

n. a positively charged ion of nitrogen and hydrogen found in many organic compounds and the form of ammonia in the atmosphere

24. The _____ of the coconut was removed to reveal the fruit inside.

n. the dry, outer covering of a seed, grain, or fruit, such as the shell of a nut or the skin of a corn kernel

25. The _____ of herbs and spices gave the soup a unique flavor.

n. the mixture, often a complicated one; a preparation made by combining various ingredients

ANSWERS: 17. edible, 18. fructose, 19. cornstarch, 20. ubiquitous, 21. shunned, 22. industrious, 23. Ammonium, 24. husk, 25. concoction

ANSWERS: