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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Alex Gendler: Why doesn't the Leaning Tower of Pisa fall over? | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

enlist

v. to sign up to serve in the military or a particular organization

synonym: join, sign up, appoint

(1) **enlist** in a cause, (2) **enlist** for a soldier

He decided to **enlist** in the military after graduating from high school.

stabilize

v. to become or cause to become steady or unlikely to give way

synonym: brace, steady, secure

(1) **stabilize** prices, (2) **stabilize** blood sugar levels

The raising of interest rates **stabilizes** the inflation rate.

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**.

topple

v. to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing

synonym : overturn, capsize, upset

(1) **topple** communist rule, (2) **topple** off a ledge

The statue was old and unstable, so it easily **toppled** over.

stump

v. to cause to be perplexed or confused; (noun) the base part of a tree that remains standing after the tree has been felled

synonym : mix up

(1) the riddle **stumped** everybody, (2) we are **stumped** with the problem

He is **stumped** with the question.

cathedral

n. the main Christian church of a bishop's diocese, which is often the largest and most important church in the area

synonym : church, basilica, temple

(1) **cathedral** school, (2) **cathedral** choir

The **cathedral's** stained glass windows depicted scenes from the Bible.

embellish

v. to make something more beautiful, interesting, or attractive by adding decorative details or features; to exaggerate or enhance the truth or significance of something

synonym : decorate, adorn, beautify

(1) **embellish** a story, (2) **embellish** a room

I decided to **embellish** the plain white dress with some colorful accessories.

baptistry

n. a part of a church or other religious building that is specifically set aside for the administration of baptism, often containing a basin or pool of water for immersion or pouring

synonym : font, baptismal font

(1) medieval **baptistry**, (2) the church's **baptistry**

The ornate **baptistry** served as a place of religious

significance for the local community.

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**.

campanile

n. a bell tower, often a detached part of a larger building, contains one or more bells and is typically associated with a church or cathedral

synonym: bell tower, belfry, campana

(1) the top of the **campanile**, (2) historic **campanile**

The **campanile's** bells rang out across the city.

marshy

adj. characterized by the presence of low-lying, waterlogged areas of land that are often covered by tall grasses or other vegetation; of or relating to areas near wetlands, swamps, or estuaries

synonym: boggy, soggy, swampy

(1) **marshy** ground, (2) **marshy** soil

The **marshy** terrain made building a solid foundation for the house difficult.

counteract

v. to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it

synonym: balance, offset, compensate

(1) **counteract** the effect of poison, (2) **counteract** global warming

Our body's immune system produces antibodies to **counteract** disease.

bedrock

n. the solid rock underlying soil or alluvium

synonym: foundation, foundation stone, base

(1) **bedrock** foundation, (2) **bedrock** geology

The **bedrock** beneath the soil is extremely solid and stable.

suffice

v. to be enough or sufficient; to meet the needs or requirements of something or someone; to satisfy or fulfill a purpose

synonym : satisfy, meet, be enough

(1) **suffice** to live, (2) **suffice** as evidence

Would one cup of flour **suffice** for this recipe?

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.

prolong

v. to extend the duration or length of something, particularly a period of time or an event

synonym : extend, lengthen, stretch

(1) **prolong** the agony, (2) measures to **prolong** the lifespan

We need to **prolong** the meeting for another hour to discuss all the issues.

masonry

n. the art or work of constructing buildings, walls, or other structures from carefully shaped and arranged blocks of stone, brick, or other materials

synonym : brickwork, stonework, bricklaying

(1) **masonry** wall, (2) **masonry** restoration

The cathedral's **masonry** sculptures were intricately carved and carefully placed.

walkway

n. a path or trail for people to walk on, typically in a park or garden

synonym : pathway, footpath, trail

(1) install a **walkway**, (2) **walkway** bridge

The **walkway** through the park was a popular spot for joggers and walkers.

worsen

v. to become or make something worse

synonym: languish, degenerate, degrade

(1) **worsen** a relation, (2) **worsen** the food problem

Unilateral import bans have **worsened** that country's terms of trade.

inject

v. to put a liquid such as a drug or other substance into a person's or an animal's body using a needle and syringe (= small tube)

synonym: shoot, infiltrate, insinuate

(1) **inject** under the skin, (2) **inject** a personal opinion into a debate

Let's try to **inject** a bit of enthusiasm into your performance.

mortar

n. a mixture of cement, sand, and water used for binding building materials together; a heavy, deep bowl used to pound or grind substances

synonym: howitzer, cement mixer, masonry tool

(1) **mortar** joints, (2) apply **mortar**

The bricklayer started on the second course of bricks, laying them in fresh **mortar**.

pinpoint

v. to locate or identify the exact position in space or time of something

synonym: name, direct, identify

(1) **pinpoint** the problem, (2) **pinpoint** signs of manipulation

This radar quickly **pinpoints** the position of the enemy.

devise

v. to come up with an idea, plan, theory, etc., using your intelligence or imagination

synonym: create, concoct, invent

(1) **devise** a plan, (2) **devise** a literary plot

They had to **devise** a system that did not depend on fossil fuels.

trajectory

n. the curved path followed by an object moving through space

synonym : course, curve, orbit

(1) career **trajectory**, (2) a **trajectory** missile

The company has shown an excellent growth **trajectory** over the years.

excavation

n. the act or process of removing soil, rock, or other material to reveal or extract something, such as an archaeological site or underground structure, or the hole or area created by this process

synonym : digging, mining, unearthing

(1) fossil **excavation**, (2) **excavation** work

The archaeological **excavation** of the site revealed many artifacts from the ancient civilization.

counterbalance

v. to offset or balance the effect of something by applying an equal or opposite force or effect; to provide a counteracting or balancing influence for something;
(*noun*) a weight or force that is used to balance or offset another weight or force

synonym : offset, counteract, neutralize

(1) **counterbalance** the seriousness of the topic,

(2) **counterbalance** the effects

The heavyweights on one end of the scale **counterbalanced** the lighter weights on the other end.

ingot

n. a solid block of metal or alloy that has been cast or formed into a convenient shape for storage, transportation, or further processing

synonym : bar, block, brick

(1) aluminum **ingot**, (2) gold **ingot**

The foundry worker poured the molten metal into an **ingot** mold to create a solid metal bar.

imperfectly

adv. in a faulty or incomplete way

synonym : amiss, insufficiently, clumsily

(1) **imperfectly** developed, (2) **imperfectly** known disease

He created an **imperfectly** shaped torso.

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. measures to pr_____g the lifespan | v. | to extend the duration or length of something, particularly a period of time or an event |
| 3. pr_____g the agony | v. | to extend the duration or length of something, particularly a period of time or an event |
| 4. pi_____nt the problem | v. | to locate or identify the exact position in space or time of something |
| 5. historic ca_____le | n. | a bell tower, often a detached part of a larger building, contains one or more bells and is typically associated with a church or cathedral |
| 6. wa_____y bridge | n. | a path or trail for people to walk on, typically in a park or garden |
| 7. ma_____y wall | n. | the art or work of constructing buildings, walls, or other structures from carefully shaped and arranged blocks of stone, brick, or other materials |
| 8. wo_____n a relation | v. | to become or make something worse |
| 9. cou_____ct the effect of poison | v. | to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it |
| 10. imp_____ly developed | adv. | in a faulty or incomplete way |

ANSWERS: 1. descend, 2. prolong, 3. prolong, 4. pinpoint, 5. campanile, 6. walkway, 7. masonry, 8. worsen, 9. counteract, 10. imperfectly

11. apply mo___r *n.* a mixture of cement, sand, and water used for binding building materials together; a heavy, deep bowl used to pound or grind substances
12. in___t under the skin *v.* to put a liquid such as a drug or other substance into a person's or an animal's body using a needle and syringe (= small tube)
13. imp_____ly known disease *adv.* in a faulty or incomplete way
14. install a wa___y *n.* a path or trail for people to walk on, typically in a park or garden
15. main pl__a *n.* a public square, marketplace, or similar open area in a town, especially in Spanish-speaking countries
16. pi_____nt signs of manipulation *v.* to locate or identify the exact position in space or time of something
17. em_____sh a room *v.* to make something more beautiful, interesting, or attractive by adding decorative details or features; to exaggerate or enhance the truth or significance of something
18. cou_____ct global warming *v.* to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it
19. st_____ze blood sugar levels *v.* to become or cause to become steady or unlikely to give way
20. de___e a plan *v.* to come up with an idea, plan, theory, etc., using your intelligence or imagination
21. ma___y soil *adj.* characterized by the presence of low-lying, waterlogged areas of land that are often covered by tall grasses or other vegetation; of or relating to areas near wetlands, swamps, or estuaries

ANSWERS: 11. mortar, 12. inject, 13. imperfectly, 14. walkway, 15. plaza, 16. pinpoint, 17. embellish, 18. counteract, 19. stabilize, 20. devise, 21. marshy

22. a tra_____ry missile *n.* the curved path followed by an object moving through space
23. to___e off a ledge *v.* to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing
24. aluminum in__t *n.* a solid block of metal or alloy that has been cast or formed into a convenient shape for storage, transportation, or further processing
25. fossil exc_____on *n.* the act or process of removing soil, rock, or other material to reveal or extract something, such as an archaeological site or underground structure, or the hole or area created by this process
26. we are st__ped with the problem *v.* to cause to be perplexed or confused; (noun) the base part of a tree that remains standing after the tree has been felled
27. wo___n the food problem *v.* to become or make something worse
28. ma_____y restoration *n.* the art or work of constructing buildings, walls, or other structures from carefully shaped and arranged blocks of stone, brick, or other materials
29. career tra_____ry *n.* the curved path followed by an object moving through space
30. cou_____nce the effects *v.* to offset or balance the effect of something by applying an equal or opposite force or effect; to provide a counteracting or balancing influence for something; (noun) a weight or force that is used to balance or offset another weight or force

ANSWERS: 22. trajectory, 23. topple, 24. ingot, 25. excavation, 26. stump, 27. worsen, 28. masonry, 29. trajectory, 30. counterbalance

31. to___e communist rule *v.* to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing
32. exc_____on work *n.* the act or process of removing soil, rock, or other material to reveal or extract something, such as an archaeological site or underground structure, or the hole or area created by this process
33. cou_____nce the seriousness of the topic *v.* to offset or balance the effect of something by applying an equal or opposite force or effect; to provide a counteracting or balancing influence for something; (noun) a weight or force that is used to balance or offset another weight or force
34. ma___y ground *adj.* characterized by the presence of low-lying, waterlogged areas of land that are often covered by tall grasses or other vegetation; of or relating to areas near wetlands, swamps, or estuaries
35. su_____e to live *v.* to be enough or sufficient; to meet the needs or requirements of something or someone; to satisfy or fulfill a purpose
36. st_____ze prices *v.* to become or cause to become steady or unlikely to give way
37. mo___r joints *n.* a mixture of cement, sand, and water used for binding building materials together; a heavy, deep bowl used to pound or grind substances
38. memorial pl__a *n.* a public square, marketplace, or similar open area in a town, especially in Spanish-speaking countries

ANSWERS: 31. topple, 32. excavation, 33. counterbalance, 34. marshy, 35. suffice, 36. stabilize, 37. mortar, 38. plaza

39. en___t for a soldier *v.* to sign up to serve in the military or a particular organization
40. de____d a steep hill *v.* to move downward and lower; to come from, or to be connected by a relationship of blood
41. 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
42. be____k foundation *n.* the solid rock underlying soil or alluvium
43. the church's ba____ry *n.* a part of a church or other religious building that is specifically set aside for the administration of baptism, often containing a basin or pool of water for immersion or pouring
44. 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
45. the top of the ca____le *n.* a bell tower, often a detached part of a larger building, contains one or more bells and is typically associated with a church or cathedral
46. ca____al school *n.* the main Christian church of a bishop's diocese, which is often the largest and most important church in the area
47. the riddle st__ped everybody *v.* to cause to be perplexed or confused; (noun) the base part of a tree that remains standing after the tree has been felled

ANSWERS: 39. enlist, 40. descend, 41. rev, 42. bedrock, 43. baptistry, 44. rev, 45. campanile, 46. cathedral, 47. stump

48. en___t in a cause *v.* to sign up to serve in the military or a particular organization
49. em_____sh a story *v.* to make something more beautiful, interesting, or attractive by adding decorative details or features; to exaggerate or enhance the truth or significance of something
50. in___t a personal opinion into a debate *v.* to put a liquid such as a drug or other substance into a person's or an animal's body using a needle and syringe (= small tube)
51. de___e a literary plot *v.* to come up with an idea, plan, theory, etc., using your intelligence or imagination
52. medieval ba_____ry *n.* a part of a church or other religious building that is specifically set aside for the administration of baptism, often containing a basin or pool of water for immersion or pouring
53. su_____e as evidence *v.* to be enough or sufficient; to meet the needs or requirements of something or someone; to satisfy or fulfill a purpose
54. be_____k geology *n.* the solid rock underlying soil or alluvium
55. ca_____al choir *n.* the main Christian church of a bishop's diocese, which is often the largest and most important church in the area
56. gold in__t *n.* a solid block of metal or alloy that has been cast or formed into a convenient shape for storage, transportation, or further processing

ANSWERS: 48. enlist, 49. embellish, 50. inject, 51. devise, 52. baptistry, 53. suffice, 54. bedrock, 55. cathedral, 56. ingot

ANSWERS:

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The heavyweights on one end of the scale _____ the lighter weights on the other end.
 - v. to offset or balance the effect of something by applying an equal or opposite force or effect; to provide a counteracting or balancing influence for something; (noun) a weight or force that is used to balance or offset another weight or force

2. They had to _____ a system that did not depend on fossil fuels.
 - v. to come up with an idea, plan, theory, etc., using your intelligence or imagination

3. He decided to _____ in the military after graduating from high school.
 - v. to sign up to serve in the military or a particular organization

4. We need to _____ the meeting for another hour to discuss all the issues.
 - v. to extend the duration or length of something, particularly a period of time or an event

5. The _____ terrain made building a solid foundation for the house difficult.
 - adj. characterized by the presence of low-lying, waterlogged areas of land that are often covered by tall grasses or other vegetation; of or relating to areas near wetlands, swamps, or estuaries

6. Unilateral import bans have _____ that country's terms of trade.
 - v. to become or make something worse

7. The _____ beneath the soil is extremely solid and stable.
 - n. the solid rock underlying soil or alluvium

ANSWERS: 1. counterbalanced, 2. devise, 3. enlist, 4. prolong, 5. marshy, 6. worsened, 7. bedrock

8. The ornate _____ served as a place of religious significance for the local community.
- n.* a part of a church or other religious building that is specifically set aside for the administration of baptism, often containing a basin or pool of water for immersion or pouring
9. The _____ stained glass windows depicted scenes from the Bible.
- n.* the main Christian church of a bishop's diocese, which is often the largest and most important church in the area
10. Our body's immune system produces antibodies to _____ disease.
- v.* to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it
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. Would one cup of flour _____ for this recipe?
- v.* to be enough or sufficient; to meet the needs or requirements of something or someone; to satisfy or fulfill a purpose
13. I decided to _____ the plain white dress with some colorful accessories.
- v.* to make something more beautiful, interesting, or attractive by adding decorative details or features; to exaggerate or enhance the truth or significance of something
14. 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

ANSWERS: 8. baptistry, 9. cathedral's, 10. counteract, 11. descended, 12. suffice, 13. embellish, 14. plaza

15. 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
16. Let's try to _____ a bit of enthusiasm into your performance.
- v.* to put a liquid such as a drug or other substance into a person's or an animal's body using a needle and syringe (= small tube)
17. The _____ through the park was a popular spot for joggers and walkers.
- n.* a path or trail for people to walk on, typically in a park or garden
18. He created an _____ shaped torso.
- adv.* in a faulty or incomplete way
19. The company has shown an excellent growth _____ over the years.
- n.* the curved path followed by an object moving through space
20. The raising of interest rates _____ the inflation rate.
- v.* to become or cause to become steady or unlikely to give way
21. The _____ bells rang out across the city.
- n.* a bell tower, often a detached part of a larger building, contains one or more bells and is typically associated with a church or cathedral
22. The foundry worker poured the molten metal into an _____ mold to create a solid metal bar.
- n.* a solid block of metal or alloy that has been cast or formed into a convenient shape for storage, transportation, or further processing

ANSWERS: 15. rev, 16. inject, 17. walkway, 18. imperfectly, 19. trajectory, 20. stabilizes, 21. campanile's, 22. ingot

23. He is _____ with the question.

- v.* to cause to be perplexed or confused; (noun) the base part of a tree that remains standing after the tree has been felled

24. This radar quickly _____ the position of the enemy.

- v.* to locate or identify the exact position in space or time of something

25. The archaeological _____ of the site revealed many artifacts from the ancient civilization.

- n.* the act or process of removing soil, rock, or other material to reveal or extract something, such as an archaeological site or underground structure, or the hole or area created by this process

26. The statue was old and unstable, so it easily _____ over.

- v.* to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing

27. The bricklayer started on the second course of bricks, laying them in fresh _____.

- n.* a mixture of cement, sand, and water used for binding building materials together; a heavy, deep bowl used to pound or grind substances

28. The cathedral's _____ sculptures were intricately carved and carefully placed.

- n.* the art or work of constructing buildings, walls, or other structures from carefully shaped and arranged blocks of stone, brick, or other materials

ANSWERS: 23. stumped, 24. pinpoints, 25. excavation, 26. toppled, 27. mortar, 28. masonry