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Iseult Gillespie: The Japanese myth of the trickster raccoon | TED Talk

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Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

dusty

adj. covered with or characterized by dust; having a dry, powdery texture or appearance; having a lot of dust or dirt in the air

synonym : stale, filthy, grimy

(1) **dusty** road, (2) **dusty** bookshelf

The abandoned warehouse was covered in a thick layer of **dusty** debris.

salesperson

n. a person whose job is to sell goods in a shop or directly to customers

synonym : dealer, seller, vendor

(1) a **salesperson** in a store, (2) a drapery **salesperson**

He received the title of the best **salesperson** in all our branches worldwide.

traverse

v. to cross or move through a land or water area

synonym : cross, pass through, travel over

(1) **traverse** the region, (2) **traverse** a vast extent of sea

Approximately 1000 automobiles **traverse** the bridge every day.

villager

n. a person who lives in a village or small rural community; a person who is part of a close-knit and traditional

community

synonym: resident, inhabitant, countryperson

(1) **villager** community, (2) local **villager**

The rural **villagers** were saddened by the destruction of their homes in the natural disaster.

outskirt

n. the part of a town or city away from the center, typically the suburbs; the fringe or border of something.

synonym: suburb, periphery, edge

(1) the **outskirt** of the forest, (2) on the western **outskirts**

The **outskirt** of the city was quieter and more peaceful than the busy downtown area.

deserted

adj. empty or abandoned; lacking inhabitants or visitors; left alone or left behind

synonym: abandoned, empty, vacated

(1) **deserted** city, (2) **deserted** island

The **deserted** street was quiet and eerie, with no signs of life.

yelp

n. a sharp, high-pitched bark or cry, typically made by a dog or fox

synonym: bark, cry, howl

(1) **yelp** in pain, (2) **yelp** of excitement

The dog let out a sharp **yelp** when he stepped on its tail.

raccoon

n. a nocturnal mammal with a distinctive black mask-like marking around the eyes, known for its omnivorous diet, dexterous paws, and bushy tail

(1) cunning **raccoon**, (2) **raccoon** fur

I saw a cute **raccoon** family crossing the road while driving home from camping.

wily

adj. characterized by slyness, deviousness, or cunning; using trickery or stratagems to achieve one's goals

synonym: cunning, sly, crafty

(1) **wily** politician, (2) **wily** tactics

The **wily** fox was able to outsmart the hunters and escape unscathed.

terrify

v. to frighten someone very much

synonym: unnerve, scare, horrify

(1) **terrify** people, (2) the threats **terrify** him

It would be best not to **terrify** your associates into doing complex tasks.

powerless

adj. lacking power, strength, or authority; unable to act or affect change

synonym: helpless, impotent, feeble

(1) **powerless** position, (2) **powerless** in the organization

During the hurricane, we felt **powerless** against the winds and rain.

undergrowth

n. the plants, bushes, and vegetation that grow beneath the surface of a forest or woodland; the layer of plant life that exists at ground level beneath the taller trees and shrubs in a natural ecosystem

synonym: underbrush, underwood, understory

(1) dense **undergrowth**, (2) jungle **undergrowth**

The **undergrowth** in the forest was so thick that it was difficult to see the trail.

trudge

v. to walk or march slowly and heavily, typically due to exhaustion, difficulty, or reluctance; to move with effort or laboriously

synonym: plod, slog, hike

(1) **trudge** through mud, (2) **trudge** up the hill

The hiker **trudged** through the dense forest, chopping his way with a machete.

kettle

n. a metal container with a lid and handle, used for boiling water or other liquids over a heat source, commonly used for making tea or cooking pasta or soup

synonym: pot, cauldron, timpani

(1) electric **kettle**, (2) whistle **kettle**

The **kettle** on the stove started to whistle, signaling that the water was boiling.

rusty

adj. covered with rust (= a reddish-brown coating or corrosion layer); deteriorated or corroded due to lack of use or exposure to the elements; affected by disuse or neglect

synonym: corroded, oxidized, weathered

(1) **rusty** metal, (2) **rusty** nail

The **rusty** gate creaked loudly as it opened.

monk

n. a member of a religious community of men living under vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience

synonym: friar, cleric, brother

(1) **monk** lifestyle, (2) cloistered **monk**

The ascetic **monk** spent his days in prayer and contemplation in the monastery.

sparkle

v. to emit or reflect bright flashes of light, especially with animation and joy

synonym: shine, glimmer, twinkle

(1) **sparkle** like a gem, (2) **sparkle** from receiving light

The diamond **sparkled** in the sunlight.

solemn

adj. formal and dignified, often with an emphasis on religious or ceremonial attitudes or practices; characterized by an earnest sense of importance or gravity; serious or grave in tone or demeanor

synonym: serious, grave, somber

(1) **solemn** vow, (2) **solemn** ceremony

The priest led the **solemn** procession through the church.

reheat

v. to heat something again, typically to make it hot enough to eat or drink

(1) **reheat** bathwater, (2) **reheat** a pizza

Can you please help me **reheat** this food in the microwave?

squirm

v. to twist, wiggle, or contort the body uncomfortably or awkwardly, often due to embarrassment, discomfort, or nervousness

synonym: squiggle, wiggle, writhe

(1) **squirm** uncomfortably, (2) **squirm** with excitement

The child **squirmed** out of his mother's grasp and ran off.

sprout

v. to grow or develop new parts typically leaves or shoots, from a plant; to emerge, develop, or arise gradually or suddenly

synonym: germinate, grow, bud

(1) **sprout** seeds, (2) **sprout** wings

The flowers in the garden began to **sprout** after the first rain of the season.

scrub

v. to clean something thoroughly, typically with a brush and soap or detergent

synonym: clean, wash, sanitize

(1) **scrub** off graffiti, (2) **scrub** dirt from potatoes

She decided to **scrub** the kitchen floor to remove all the dirt and grime.

furry

adj. covered in fur or a furry material; resembling fur

synonym: hairy, fuzzy, feathered

(1) the **furry** skin, (2) have **furry** leaves

The stuffed animal was so **furry** and soft that it was hard to resist hugging it.

paw

n. the foot of an animal that has claws or nails, such as a cat, dog, or bear; a person's hand, especially a clumsy or heavy-handed one

synonym: mitt, manus, talon

(1) **paw** print, (2) **paw** pad

The cat batted at the toy with its **paw**.

testicle

n. one of the two oval-shaped organs in men that produce sperm and testosterone; in animals, the equivalent

organ responsible for producing sperm and often also regulating testosterone levels

synonym: ballock, gonad, ball

(1) **testicle** injury, (2) swollen **testicles**

The athlete was hit in the **testicle** during the game and had to be removed.

troublesome

adj. causing difficulty or annoyance for someone

synonym: disconcerting, unsettling, upsetting

(1) undertake a **troublesome** task, (2) **troublesome** behavior

He had to resolve a **troublesome** event that happened unexpectedly

trickster

n. a person or character who uses cunning and deceit to achieve their goals, often in traditional folklore or mythology

synonym: swindler, cheat, deceiver

(1) **trickster** character, (2) cunning **trickster**

The con artist was known as a notorious **trickster** who scammed people out of their money.

embarrass

v. to cause someone to feel awkward, worried, or ashamed

synonym: disconcert, unsettle, agitate

(1) **embarrass** political enemy, (2) **embarrass** my project

He looked for an opportunity to **embarrass** that actor in public.

prank

n. a playful or mischievous trick, practical joke, or act of mischief performed with the intention of amusing or surprising others

synonym: hoax, trick, stunt

(1) **prank** caller, (2) harmless **prank**

The group of teenagers played an innocent **prank** on their teacher, but it backfired, and they got in trouble.

dissolve

v. to be or cause to be absorbed by a liquid to form a part of the solution; to close down or dismiss

synonym: disband, disappear, liquefy

(1) **dissolve** the sugar, (2) officially **dissolved** the marriage

The political party **dissolved** after much internal fighting.

antic

adj. ludicrously strange and unusual; playful or amusing

synonym: comical, whimsical, capricious

(1) **antic** disposition, (2) comedic **antic**

The children's **antics** made everyone laugh.

unsuspecting

adj. unaware of the presence of danger; not suspicious

synonym: unaware, unassuming, gullible

(1) **unsuspecting** boys and girls, (2) **unsuspecting** victim

The thief stole the wallet from the **unsuspecting** tourist.

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.

Session 2: Spelling

1. w__y tactics *adj.* characterized by slyness, deviousness, or cunning; using trickery or stratagems to achieve one's goals
2. sp____e from receiving light *v.* to emit or reflect bright flashes of light, especially with animation and joy
3. cunning ra____n *n.* a nocturnal mammal with a distinctive black mask-like marking around the eyes, known for its omnivorous diet, dexterous paws, and bushy tail
4. di____ve the sugar *v.* to be or cause to be absorbed by a liquid to form a part of the solution; to close down or dismiss
5. swollen te____les *n.* one of the two oval-shaped organs in men that produce sperm and testosterone; in animals, the equivalent organ responsible for producing sperm and often also regulating testosterone levels
6. cunning tr____er *n.* a person or character who uses cunning and deceit to achieve their goals, often in traditional folklore or mythology
7. ra____n fur *n.* a nocturnal mammal with a distinctive black mask-like marking around the eyes, known for its omnivorous diet, dexterous paws, and bushy tail
8. tr___e up the hill *v.* to walk or march slowly and heavily, typically due to exhaustion, difficulty, or reluctance; to move with effort or laboriously

ANSWERS: 1. wily, 2. sparkle, 3. raccoon, 4. dissolve, 5. testicle, 6. trickster, 7. raccoon, 8. trudge

9. undertake a tro_____me task *adj.* causing difficulty or annoyance for someone
10. the fu__y skin *adj.* covered in fur or a furry material; resembling fur
11. tr____se the region *v.* to cross or move through a land or water area
12. po_____ss in the organization *adj.* lacking power, strength, or authority; unable to act or affect change
13. ru__y nail *adj.* covered with rust (= a reddish-brown coating or corrosion layer); deteriorated or corroded due to lack of use or exposure to the elements; affected by disuse or neglect
14. po_____ss position *adj.* lacking power, strength, or authority; unable to act or affect change
15. tro_____me behavior *adj.* causing difficulty or annoyance for someone
16. harmless pr__k *n.* a playful or mischievous trick, practical joke, or act of mischief performed with the intention of amusing or surprising others
17. sc__b off graffiti *v.* to clean something thoroughly, typically with a brush and soap or detergent
18. pr__k caller *n.* a playful or mischievous trick, practical joke, or act of mischief performed with the intention of amusing or surprising others
19. on the western ou_____rts *n.* the part of a town or city away from the center, typically the suburbs; the fringe or border of something.

ANSWERS: 9. troublesome, 10. furry, 11. traverse, 12. powerless, 13. rusty, 14. powerless, 15. troublesome, 16. prank, 17. scrub, 18. prank, 19. outskirts

20. a drapery sal_____on *n.* a person whose job is to sell goods in a shop or directly to customers
21. uns_____ing victim *adj.* unaware of the presence of danger; not suspicious
22. sp____t seeds *v.* to grow or develop new parts typically leaves or shoots, from a plant; to emerge, develop, or arise gradually or suddenly
23. sp_____e like a gem *v.* to emit or reflect bright flashes of light, especially with animation and joy
24. sp____t wings *v.* to grow or develop new parts typically leaves or shoots, from a plant; to emerge, develop, or arise gradually or suddenly
25. officially di_____ved the marriage *v.* to be or cause to be absorbed by a liquid to form a part of the solution; to close down or dismiss
26. the ou_____rt of the forest *n.* the part of a town or city away from the center, typically the suburbs; the fringe or border of something.
27. ru__y metal *adj.* covered with rust (= a reddish-brown coating or corrosion layer); deteriorated or corroded due to lack of use or exposure to the elements; affected by disuse or neglect
28. a sal_____on in a store *n.* a person whose job is to sell goods in a shop or directly to customers
29. an__c disposition *adj.* ludicrously strange and unusual; playful or amusing

ANSWERS: 20. salesperson, 21. unsuspecting, 22. sprout, 23. sparkle, 24. sprout, 25. dissolve, 26. outskirts, 27. rusty, 28. salesperson, 29. antic

30. te____le injury *n.* one of the two oval-shaped organs in men that produce sperm and testosterone; in animals, the equivalent organ responsible for producing sperm and often also regulating testosterone levels
31. comedic an__c *adj.* ludicrously strange and unusual; playful or amusing
32. so____n vow *adj.* formal and dignified, often with an emphasis on religious or ceremonial attitudes or practices; characterized by an earnest sense of importance or gravity; serious or grave in tone or demeanor
33. du__y road *adj.* covered with or characterized by dust; having a dry, powdery texture or appearance; having a lot of dust or dirt in the air
34. w__y politician *adj.* characterized by slyness, deviousness, or cunning; using trickery or stratagems to achieve one's goals
35. uns_____ing boys and girls *adj.* unaware of the presence of danger; not suspicious
36. y__p in pain *n.* a sharp, high-pitched bark or cry, typically made by a dog or fox
37. sq____m with excitement *v.* to twist, wiggle, or contort the body uncomfortably or awkwardly, often due to embarrassment, discomfort, or nervousness
38. vi_____er community *n.* a person who lives in a village or small rural community; a person who is part of a close-knit and traditional community

ANSWERS: 30. testicle, 31. antic, 32. solemn, 33. dusty, 34. wily, 35. unsuspecting, 36. yelp, 37. squirm, 38. villager

39. p_w print *n.* the foot of an animal that has claws or nails, such as a cat, dog, or bear; a person's hand, especially a clumsy or heavy-handed one
40. tr____se a vast extent of sea *v.* to cross or move through a land or water area
41. re___t bathwater *v.* to heat something again, typically to make it hot enough to eat or drink
42. de____ed city *adj.* empty or abandoned; lacking inhabitants or visitors; left alone or left behind
43. de____ed island *adj.* empty or abandoned; lacking inhabitants or visitors; left alone or left behind
44. whistle ke___e *n.* a metal container with a lid and handle, used for boiling water or other liquids over a heat source, commonly used for making tea or cooking pasta or soup
45. re___t a pizza *v.* to heat something again, typically to make it hot enough to eat or drink
46. em____ss my project *v.* to cause someone to feel awkward, worried, or ashamed
47. du__y bookshelf *adj.* covered with or characterized by dust; having a dry, powdery texture or appearance; having a lot of dust or dirt in the air
48. te____y people *v.* to frighten someone very much
49. em____ss political enemy *v.* to cause someone to feel awkward, worried, or ashamed

ANSWERS: 39. paw, 40. traverse, 41. reheat, 42. deserted, 43. deserted, 44. kettle, 45. reheat, 46. embarrass, 47. dusty, 48. terrify, 49. embarrass

50. cloistered m__k *n.* a member of a religious community of men living under vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience
51. dense und _____th *n.* the plants, bushes, and vegetation that grow beneath the surface of a forest or woodland; the layer of plant life that exists at ground level beneath the taller trees and shrubs in a natural ecosystem
52. am__e guests *v.* to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh
53. jungle und _____th *n.* the plants, bushes, and vegetation that grow beneath the surface of a forest or woodland; the layer of plant life that exists at ground level beneath the taller trees and shrubs in a natural ecosystem
54. have fu__y leaves *adj.* covered in fur or a furry material; resembling fur
55. tr___e through mud *v.* to walk or march slowly and heavily, typically due to exhaustion, difficulty, or reluctance; to move with effort or laboriously
56. local vi_____er *n.* a person who lives in a village or small rural community; a person who is part of a close-knit and traditional community
57. am__e a baby with a rattle *v.* to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh
58. so___n ceremony *adj.* formal and dignified, often with an emphasis on religious or ceremonial attitudes or practices; characterized by an earnest sense of importance or gravity; serious or grave in tone or demeanor

ANSWERS: 50. monk, 51. undergrowth, 52. amuse, 53. undergrowth, 54. furry, 55. trudge, 56. villager, 57. amuse, 58. solemn

59. m__k lifestyle *n.* a member of a religious community of men living under vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience
60. sc__b dirt from potatoes *v.* to clean something thoroughly, typically with a brush and soap or detergent
61. y__p of excitement *n.* a sharp, high-pitched bark or cry, typically made by a dog or fox
62. tr_____er character *n.* a person or character who uses cunning and deceit to achieve their goals, often in traditional folklore or mythology
63. electric ke___e *n.* a metal container with a lid and handle, used for boiling water or other liquids over a heat source, commonly used for making tea or cooking pasta or soup
64. p_w pad *n.* the foot of an animal that has claws or nails, such as a cat, dog, or bear; a person's hand, especially a clumsy or heavy-handed one
65. sq___m uncomfortably *v.* to twist, wiggle, or contort the body uncomfortably or awkwardly, often due to embarrassment, discomfort, or nervousness
66. the threats te_____y him *v.* to frighten someone very much

ANSWERS: 59. monk, 60. scrub, 61. yelp, 62. trickster, 63. kettle, 64. paw, 65. squirm, 66. terrify

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. He _____ himself by playing video games during his free time.
v. to entertain or divert the mind; to make someone laugh
2. The priest led the _____ procession through the church.
adj. formal and dignified, often with an emphasis on religious or ceremonial attitudes or practices; characterized by an earnest sense of importance or gravity; serious or grave in tone or demeanor
3. He looked for an opportunity to _____ that actor in public.
v. to cause someone to feel awkward, worried, or ashamed
4. She decided to _____ the kitchen floor to remove all the dirt and grime.
v. to clean something thoroughly, typically with a brush and soap or detergent
5. The children's _____ made everyone laugh.
adj. ludicrously strange and unusual; playful or amusing
6. The _____ in the forest was so thick that it was difficult to see the trail.
n. the plants, bushes, and vegetation that grow beneath the surface of a forest or woodland; the layer of plant life that exists at ground level beneath the taller trees and shrubs in a natural ecosystem
7. The _____ street was quiet and eerie, with no signs of life.
adj. empty or abandoned; lacking inhabitants or visitors; left alone or left behind
8. The flowers in the garden began to _____ after the first rain of the season.
v. to grow or develop new parts typically leaves or shoots, from a plant; to emerge, develop, or arise gradually or suddenly

ANSWERS: 1. amused, 2. solemn, 3. embarrass, 4. scrub, 5. antics, 6. undergrowth, 7. deserted, 8. sprout

9. The abandoned warehouse was covered in a thick layer of _____ debris.
adj. covered with or characterized by dust; having a dry, powdery texture or appearance; having a lot of dust or dirt in the air
10. The hiker _____ through the dense forest, chopping his way with a machete.
v. to walk or march slowly and heavily, typically due to exhaustion, difficulty, or reluctance; to move with effort or laboriously
11. The dog let out a sharp _____ when he stepped on its tail.
n. a sharp, high-pitched bark or cry, typically made by a dog or fox
12. It would be best not to _____ your associates into doing complex tasks.
v. to frighten someone very much
13. He had to resolve a _____ event that happened unexpectedly
adj. causing difficulty or annoyance for someone
14. The _____ on the stove started to whistle, signaling that the water was boiling.
n. a metal container with a lid and handle, used for boiling water or other liquids over a heat source, commonly used for making tea or cooking pasta or soup
15. The _____ of the city was quieter and more peaceful than the busy downtown area.
n. the part of a town or city away from the center, typically the suburbs; the fringe or border of something.
16. The _____ fox was able to outsmart the hunters and escape unscathed.
adj. characterized by slyness, deviousness, or cunning; using trickery or stratagems to achieve one's goals

ANSWERS: 9. dusty, 10. trudged, 11. yelp, 12. terrify, 13. troublesome, 14. kettle, 15. outskirts, 16. wily

17. The diamond _____ in the sunlight.
v. to emit or reflect bright flashes of light, especially with animation and joy
18. The athlete was hit in the _____ during the game and had to be removed.
n. one of the two oval-shaped organs in men that produce sperm and testosterone; in animals, the equivalent organ responsible for producing sperm and often also regulating testosterone levels
19. The _____ gate creaked loudly as it opened.
adj. covered with rust (= a reddish-brown coating or corrosion layer); deteriorated or corroded due to lack of use or exposure to the elements; affected by disuse or neglect
20. I saw a cute _____ family crossing the road while driving home from camping.
n. a nocturnal mammal with a distinctive black mask-like marking around the eyes, known for its omnivorous diet, dexterous paws, and bushy tail
21. Can you please help me _____ this food in the microwave?
v. to heat something again, typically to make it hot enough to eat or drink
22. The group of teenagers played an innocent _____ on their teacher, but it backfired, and they got in trouble.
n. a playful or mischievous trick, practical joke, or act of mischief performed with the intention of amusing or surprising others
23. The thief stole the wallet from the _____ tourist.
adj. unaware of the presence of danger; not suspicious
24. He received the title of the best _____ in all our branches worldwide.
n. a person whose job is to sell goods in a shop or directly to customers

ANSWERS: 17. sparkled, 18. testicle, 19. rusty, 20. raccoon, 21. reheat, 22. prank, 23. unsuspecting, 24. salesperson

25. The rural _____ were saddened by the destruction of their homes in the natural disaster.
- n.* a person who lives in a village or small rural community; a person who is part of a close-knit and traditional community
26. The con artist was known as a notorious _____ who scammed people out of their money.
- n.* a person or character who uses cunning and deceit to achieve their goals, often in traditional folklore or mythology
27. The ascetic _____ spent his days in prayer and contemplation in the monastery.
- n.* a member of a religious community of men living under vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience
28. The stuffed animal was so _____ and soft that it was hard to resist hugging it.
- adj.* covered in fur or a furry material; resembling fur
29. During the hurricane, we felt _____ against the winds and rain.
- adj.* lacking power, strength, or authority; unable to act or affect change
30. The political party _____ after much internal fighting.
- v.* to be or cause to be absorbed by a liquid to form a part of the solution; to close down or dismiss
31. The cat batted at the toy with its _____.
- n.* the foot of an animal that has claws or nails, such as a cat, dog, or bear; a person's hand, especially a clumsy or heavy-handed one
32. The child _____ out of his mother's grasp and ran off.
- v.* to twist, wiggle, or contort the body uncomfortably or awkwardly, often due to embarrassment, discomfort, or nervousness

ANSWERS: 25. villagers, 26. trickster, 27. monk, 28. furry, 29. powerless, 30. dissolved, 31. paw, 32. squirmed

33. Approximately 1000 automobiles _____ the bridge every day.

v. to cross or move through a land or water area

ANSWERS: 33. traverse