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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Iseult Gillespie: Why should you read "Midnight's Children"? | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

countdown

n. a counting sequence leading up to an event, often marked by a series of signals or cues, also used as a term to describe the final stages leading up to a major event or deadline

synonym : timer

(1) **countdown** clock, (2) wedding **countdown**

The **countdown** to launch began as the astronauts prepared for their mission.

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.

synchronicity

n. the simultaneous occurrence of seemingly unrelated events that are connected in a meaningful way, suggesting the presence of a deeper, more significant pattern or purpose

synonym : coincidence, simultaneity, concurrence

(1) **synchronicity** theory, (2) **synchronicity** effect

The occurrence of events in **synchronicity** is often taken as

a sign of divine intervention.

dazzling

adj. shining brightly; highly attractive or exciting

synonym : astonishing, breathtaking, flashy

(1) **dazzling** debut, (2) **dazzling** views

Last night, the team delivered a **dazzling** performance.

protagonist

n. the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories

synonym : hero, central figure, leading character

(1) **protagonist** of drama, (2) play a **protagonist**

The **protagonist's** triumph over adversity was the theme of this play.

speculate

v. to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence

synonym : assume, conjecture, infer

(1) **speculate** about the reason, (2) **speculate** on the outcome

He **speculated** that this investment would lead to success.

enigma

n. a puzzling or mysterious person, place, or thing; something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain; a riddle or mysterious puzzle that requires a solution

synonym : mystery, puzzle, riddle

(1) mysterious **enigma**, (2) artistic **enigma**

The ancient text remains an **enigma**, challenging scholars to unravel its meaning.

imbue

v. to inspire or permeate something or someone with a particular feeling or quality; to saturate or fill something with a specific color, taste, or smell

synonym : infuse, permeate, instill

(1) **imbue** with confidence, (2) **imbue** with meaning

He tried to **imbue** his children with a love of learning and curiosity.

conjure

v. to call forth by magic; to create or bring about through the imagination

synonym: summon, evoke, call forth

(1) **conjure** evil spirits away, (2) **conjure** a vision

The magician **conjured** up a rabbit out of thin air.

nemesis

n. an archenemy, opponent, or rival who is often seen as a personification of retribution or divine justice; a downfall or undoing that is a consequence of one's actions

synonym: foe, adversary, rival

(1) personal **nemesis**, (2) athletic **nemesis**

The CEO's **nemesis** was a competing business that refused to go out of business.

telepathy

n. the supposed ability to communicate directly with someone else's mind without the need for words or physical gestures; the transfer of thoughts or emotions from one person to another by means other than the physical senses

synonym: mind-reading, esp, thought transference

(1) **telepathy** test, (2) **telepathy** experiment

The comic book hero had a **telepathy** power, which allowed him to read and control minds, making him a formidable foe

immerse

v. to become fully involved in a particular activity; to dip or submerge in a liquid, especially so that they or it are entirely covered

synonym: dip, inundate, submerge

(1) **immerse** the cloth in the dye, (2) completely **immerse** the ingredient

He **immersed** himself in his research.

multilingual

adj. skilled in or using multiple languages; involving or relating to multiple languages or language groups

synonym: polyglot

(1) **multilingual** education, (2) **multilingual** staff

My friend is **multilingual**, speaking five different languages

fluently.

conjoin

v. to join or unite two or more things, especially in a way that makes them inseparable; to be joined or united closely

synonym: unite, connect, link

(1) **conjoin** two words, (2) **conjoin** multiple theories

We need to **conjoin** our efforts to achieve a common goal.

turbulent

adj. marked by a lot of sudden changes, confusion, or uncertainty; characterized by intense activity or agitation

synonym: chaotic, stormy, tumultuous

(1) **turbulent** waves, (2) **turbulent** age

The stock market has been **turbulent** lately, with prices fluctuating rapidly.

assassin

n. a person who murders a prominent or well-known person for political reasons or in exchange for money

synonym: killer, manslayer

(1) fall victim to an **assassin**, (2) would-be **assassin**

She hired an **assassin** to kill her opponent.

coincide

v. to take place at or near the same time

synonym: overlap, coexist, concur

(1) partly **coincide**, (2) **coincide** with reality

These results **coincide** with our hypothesis.

illuminating

adj. making something clear or easy to understand; providing light

synonym: enlightening, informative, clarifying

(1) **illuminating** light, (2) an **illuminating** answer

The lecture was **illuminating** and gave me a new perspective on the topic.

fallout

n. the radioactive dust in the air that settle to the ground after a nuclear explosion

(1) nuclear **fallout**, (2) the **fallout** from the incident

they had no protection from the radioactive **fallout**.

enrich

v. to make better or improve in quality by adding something else

synonym: enhance, improve, augment

(1) **enrich** a gas with a balloon, (2) **enrich** public services
Reading not only increases knowledge but also **enriches** life.

plethora

n. an overabundance or excess of something; a state of having too much of something

synonym: abundance, excess, surplus

(1) **plethora** of information, (2) **plethora** of opportunities
The restaurant's menu offered a **plethora** of options for vegetarians.

scribble

v. to write or draw carelessly and in a hurry

synonym: scabble, scrawl, jot

(1) **scribble** on paper, (2) **scribble** notes
The words were **scribbled** in pencil.

dazzle

v. to cause someone to lose clear vision temporarily, especially from bright light; to amaze or bewilder somebody with your brilliant wit, intellect, beauty, skill, etc.

synonym: sparkle, flash, astonish

(1) **dazzle** his eyes, (2) **dazzle** all who see it
The audience was **dazzled** by her realistic acting.

rollercoaster

n. a type of amusement ride that goes up and down very steep slopes and around very sudden bends on which people ride in small and open carriages

synonym: turbulence, upheaval

(1) emotional **rollercoaster**, (2) wooden **rollercoaster**
We finally divorced after experiencing a **rollercoaster** marriage.

narrate

v. to tell a story or give an account of events, often in a chronological or logical sequence; to provide a voiceover or commentary for a film or other media

synonym : tell, recount, describe

(1) **narrate** a news article, (2) **narrate** an event

The audiobook hired a professional actor to **narrate** the story, making it more engaging for listeners.

breathless

adj. feeling or causing a lack of breath, often due to exertion or excitement; intense or exciting to the point of causing a feeling of breathlessness

synonym : panting, winded, out of breath

(1) with **breathless** interest, (2) **breathless** anticipation

After running up the stairs, I was left **breathless** and sweaty.

depict

v. to illustrate someone or something in a photograph

synonym : illustrate, describe, express

(1) **depict** a scene, (2) **depict** a feeling of isolation

His son had accurately **depicted** the bloom.

cosmology

n. the scientific study of the nature and origin of the universe

synonym : cosmogony

(1) physical **cosmology**, (2) modern **cosmology**

Cosmology evolved from people's philosophical questions about the natural world.

condense

v. to reduce the volume or size of something, often by removing water or other liquid; to make something shorter, more concise, or more concentrated

synonym : compress, compact, shorten

(1) **condense** the text, (2) **condense** water vapor

I need to **condense** all of my notes into a manageable summary for my presentation.

garner

v. to acquire or accumulate something through effort or attention

synonym : acquire, collect, obtain

(1) **garner** good reviews, (2) **garner** attention

He used his charm and charisma to **garner** support for his campaign.

fascination

n. the state of being intensely interested in someone or something, or a powerful attraction

synonym : allure, attraction, charm

(1) rapt in **fascination**, (2) the **fascination** with classical music

I looked at the painting in **fascination**.

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**.

Session 2: Spelling

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. an ill_____ing answer | <i>adj.</i> making something clear or easy to understand; providing light |
| 2. the fa_____t from the incident | <i>n.</i> the radioactive dust in the air that settle to the ground after a nuclear explosion |
| 3. de_____t a scene | <i>v.</i> to illustrate someone or something in a photograph |
| 4. with bre_____ss interest | <i>adj.</i> feeling or causing a lack of breath, often due to exertion or excitement; intense or exciting to the point of causing a feeling of breathlessness |
| 5. da_____e his eyes | <i>v.</i> to cause someone to lose clear vision temporarily, especially from bright light; to amaze or bewilder somebody with your brilliant wit, intellect, beauty, skill, etc. |
| 6. sp_____te on the outcome | <i>v.</i> to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence |
| 7. na_____e an event | <i>v.</i> to tell a story or give an account of events, often in a chronological or logical sequence; to provide a voiceover or commentary for a film or other media |
| 8. da_____ng views | <i>adj.</i> shining brightly; highly attractive or exciting |
| 9. athletic ne_____s | <i>n.</i> an archenemy, opponent, or rival who is often seen as a personification of retribution or divine justice; a downfall or undoing that is a consequence of one's actions |

ANSWERS: 1. illuminating, 2. fallout, 3. depict, 4. breathless, 5. dazzle, 6. speculate, 7. narrate, 8. dazzling, 9. nemesis

10. mysterious en___a *n.* a puzzling or mysterious person, place, or thing; something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain; a riddle or mysterious puzzle that requires a solution
11. partly co____de *v.* to take place at or near the same time
12. sp____te about the reason *v.* to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence
13. da____ng debut *adj.* shining brightly; highly attractive or exciting
14. en___h a gas with a balloon *v.* to make better or improve in quality by adding something else
15. co____e a vision *v.* to call forth by magic; to create or bring about through the imagination
16. syn____ity theory *n.* the simultaneous occurrence of seemingly unrelated events that are connected in a meaningful way, suggesting the presence of a deeper, more significant pattern or purpose
17. bre____ss anticipation *adj.* feeling or causing a lack of breath, often due to exertion or excitement; intense or exciting to the point of causing a feeling of breathlessness
18. personal ne____s *n.* an archenemy, opponent, or rival who is often seen as a personification of retribution or divine justice; a downfall or undoing that is a consequence of one's actions
19. de___t a feeling of isolation *v.* to illustrate someone or something in a photograph

ANSWERS: 10. enigma, 11. coincide, 12. speculate, 13. dazzling, 14. enrich, 15. conjure, 16. synchronicity, 17. breathless, 18. nemesis, 19. depict

20. emotional rol_____ter *n.* a type of amusement ride that goes up and down very steep slopes and around very sudden bends on which people ride in small and open carriages
21. co_____n two words *v.* to join or unite two or more things, especially in a way that makes them inseparable; to be joined or united closely
22. co_____se water vapor *v.* to reduce the volume or size of something, often by removing water or other liquid; to make something shorter, more concise, or more concentrated
23. artistic en____a *n.* a puzzling or mysterious person, place, or thing; something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain; a riddle or mysterious puzzle that requires a solution
24. would-be as_____in *n.* a person who murders a prominent or well-known person for political reasons or in exchange for money
25. fall victim to an as_____in *n.* a person who murders a prominent or well-known person for political reasons or in exchange for money
26. pro_____st of drama *n.* the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories
27. tu_____nt waves *adj.* marked by a lot of sudden changes, confusion, or uncertainty; characterized by intense activity or agitation
28. im_____e the cloth in the dye *v.* to become fully involved in a particular activity; to dip or submerge in a liquid, especially so that they or it are entirely covered

ANSWERS: 20. rollercoaster, 21. conjoin, 22. condense, 23. enigma, 24. assassin, 25. assassin, 26. protagonist, 27. turbulent, 28. immerse

29. rapt in fas_____on *n.* the state of being intensely interested in someone or something, or a powerful attraction
30. te_____hy experiment *n.* the supposed ability to communicate directly with someone else's mind without the need for words or physical gestures; the transfer of thoughts or emotions from one person to another by means other than the physical senses
31. 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
32. da___e all who see it *v.* to cause someone to lose clear vision temporarily, especially from bright light; to amaze or bewilder somebody with your brilliant wit, intellect, beauty, skill, etc.
33. ga___r good reviews *v.* to acquire or accumulate something through effort or attention
34. syn_____ity effect *n.* the simultaneous occurrence of seemingly unrelated events that are connected in a meaningful way, suggesting the presence of a deeper, more significant pattern or purpose
35. ill_____ing light *adj.* making something clear or easy to understand; providing light
36. co_____wn clock *n.* a counting sequence leading up to an event, often marked by a series of signals or cues, also used as a term to describe the final stages leading up to a major event or deadline

ANSWERS: 29. fascination, 30. telepathy, 31. rev, 32. dazzle, 33. garner, 34. synchronicity, 35. illuminating, 36. countdown

37. play a pro_____st *n.* the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories
38. 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
39. co_____e evil spirits away *v.* to call forth by magic; to create or bring about through the imagination
40. te_____hy test *n.* the supposed ability to communicate directly with someone else's mind without the need for words or physical gestures; the transfer of thoughts or emotions from one person to another by means other than the physical senses
41. the fas_____on with classical music *n.* the state of being intensely interested in someone or something, or a powerful attraction
42. modern co_____gy *n.* the scientific study of the nature and origin of the universe
43. pl_____ra of opportunities *n.* an overabundance or excess of something; a state of having too much of something
44. completely im_____e the ingredient *v.* to become fully involved in a particular activity; to dip or submerge in a liquid, especially so that they or it are entirely covered
45. sq_____m uncomfortably *v.* to twist, wiggle, or contort the body uncomfortably or awkwardly, often due to embarrassment, discomfort, or nervousness

ANSWERS: 37. protagonist, 38. rev, 39. conjure, 40. telepathy, 41. fascination, 42. cosmology, 43. plethora, 44. immerse, 45. squirm

46. co_____se the text
v. to reduce the volume or size of something, often by removing water or other liquid; to make something shorter, more concise, or more concentrated
47. mul_____ual staff
adj. skilled in or using multiple languages; involving or relating to multiple languages or language groups
48. en____h public services
v. to make better or improve in quality by adding something else
49. ga____r attention
v. to acquire or accumulate something through effort or attention
50. tu_____nt age
adj. marked by a lot of sudden changes, confusion, or uncertainty; characterized by intense activity or agitation
51. sc_____le notes
v. to write or draw carelessly and in a hurry
52. sc_____le on paper
v. to write or draw carelessly and in a hurry
53. wooden rol_____ter
n. a type of amusement ride that goes up and down very steep slopes and around very sudden bends on which people ride in small and open carriages
54. nuclear fa_____t
n. the radioactive dust in the air that settle to the ground after a nuclear explosion
55. wedding co_____wn
n. a counting sequence leading up to an event, often marked by a series of signals or cues, also used as a term to describe the final stages leading up to a major event or deadline

ANSWERS: 46. condense, 47. multilingual, 48. enrich, 49. garner, 50. turbulent, 51. scribble, 52. scribble, 53. rollercoaster, 54. fallout, 55. countdown

56. im__e with confidence *v.* to inspire or permeate something or someone with a particular feeling or quality; to saturate or fill something with a specific color, taste, or smell
57. im__e with meaning *v.* to inspire or permeate something or someone with a particular feeling or quality; to saturate or fill something with a specific color, taste, or smell
58. co____de with reality *v.* to take place at or near the same time
59. pl____ra of information *n.* an overabundance or excess of something; a state of having too much of something
60. sq___m with excitement *v.* to twist, wiggle, or contort the body uncomfortably or awkwardly, often due to embarrassment, discomfort, or nervousness
61. co____n multiple theories *v.* to join or unite two or more things, especially in a way that makes them inseparable; to be joined or united closely
62. na____e a news article *v.* to tell a story or give an account of events, often in a chronological or logical sequence; to provide a voiceover or commentary for a film or other media
63. physical co____gy *n.* the scientific study of the nature and origin of the universe
64. mul____ual education *adj.* skilled in or using multiple languages; involving or relating to multiple languages or language groups

ANSWERS: 56. imbue, 57. imbue, 58. coincide, 59. plethora, 60. squirm, 61. conjoin, 62. narrate, 63. cosmology, 64. multilingual

ANSWERS:

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The restaurant's menu offered a _____ of options for vegetarians.
n. an overabundance or excess of something; a state of having too much of something

2. My friend is _____ speaking five different languages fluently.
adj. skilled in or using multiple languages; involving or relating to multiple languages or language groups

3. Last night, the team delivered a _____ performance.
adj. shining brightly; highly attractive or exciting

4. The comic book hero had a _____ power, which allowed him to read and control minds, making him a formidable foe
n. the supposed ability to communicate directly with someone else's mind without the need for words or physical gestures; the transfer of thoughts or emotions from one person to another by means other than the physical senses

5. The audiobook hired a professional actor to _____ the story, making it more engaging for listeners.
v. to tell a story or give an account of events, often in a chronological or logical sequence; to provide a voiceover or commentary for a film or other media

6. The _____ to launch began as the astronauts prepared for their mission.
n. a counting sequence leading up to an event, often marked by a series of signals or cues, also used as a term to describe the final stages leading up to a major event or deadline

7. I need to _____ all of my notes into a manageable summary for my presentation.
v. to reduce the volume or size of something, often by removing water or other liquid; to make something shorter, more concise, or more concentrated

ANSWERS: 1. plethora, 2. multilingual, 3. dazzling, 4. telepathy, 5. narrate, 6. countdown, 7. condense

8. His son had accurately _____ the bloom.
v. to illustrate someone or something in a photograph
9. We need to _____ our efforts to achieve a common goal.
v. to join or unite two or more things, especially in a way that makes them inseparable; to be joined or united closely
10. He used his charm and charisma to _____ support for his campaign.
v. to acquire or accumulate something through effort or attention
11. _____ evolved from people's philosophical questions about the natural world.
n. the scientific study of the nature and origin of the universe
12. He tried to _____ his children with a love of learning and curiosity.
v. to inspire or permeate something or someone with a particular feeling or quality; to saturate or fill something with a specific color, taste, or smell
13. The stock market has been _____ lately, with prices fluctuating rapidly.
adj. marked by a lot of sudden changes, confusion, or uncertainty; characterized by intense activity or agitation
14. they had no protection from the radioactive _____.
n. the radioactive dust in the air that settle to the ground after a nuclear explosion
15. The _____ triumph over adversity was the theme of this play.
n. the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories
16. Reading not only increases knowledge but also _____ life.
v. to make better or improve in quality by adding something else

ANSWERS: 8. depicted, 9. conjoin, 10. garner, 11. Cosmology, 12. imbue, 13. turbulent, 14. fallout, 15. protagonist's, 16. enriches

17. 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
18. The CEO's _____ was a competing business that refused to go out of business.
- n.* an archenemy, opponent, or rival who is often seen as a personification of retribution or divine justice; a downfall or undoing that is a consequence of one's actions
19. After running up the stairs, I was left _____ and sweaty.
- adj.* feeling or causing a lack of breath, often due to exertion or excitement; intense or exciting to the point of causing a feeling of breathlessness
20. The occurrence of events in _____ is often taken as a sign of divine intervention.
- n.* the simultaneous occurrence of seemingly unrelated events that are connected in a meaningful way, suggesting the presence of a deeper, more significant pattern or purpose
21. 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
22. The audience was _____ by her realistic acting.
- v.* to cause someone to lose clear vision temporarily, especially from bright light; to amaze or bewilder somebody with your brilliant wit, intellect, beauty, skill, etc.

ANSWERS: 17. rev, 18. nemesis, 19. breathless, 20. synchronicity, 21. squirmed, 22. dazzled

23. She hired an _____ to kill her opponent.

- n.* a person who murders a prominent or well-known person for political reasons or in exchange for money

24. He _____ that this investment would lead to success.

- v.* to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence

25. I looked at the painting in _____.

- n.* the state of being intensely interested in someone or something, or a powerful attraction

26. The lecture was _____ and gave me a new perspective on the topic.

- adj.* making something clear or easy to understand; providing light

27. The words were _____ in pencil.

- v.* to write or draw carelessly and in a hurry

28. He _____ himself in his research.

- v.* to become fully involved in a particular activity; to dip or submerge in a liquid, especially so that they or it are entirely covered

29. These results _____ with our hypothesis.

- v.* to take place at or near the same time

30. We finally divorced after experiencing a _____ marriage.

- n.* a type of amusement ride that goes up and down very steep slopes and around very sudden bends on which people ride in small and open carriages

31. The ancient text remains an _____ challenging scholars to unravel its meaning.

- n.* a puzzling or mysterious person, place, or thing; something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain; a riddle or mysterious puzzle that requires a solution

ANSWERS: 23. assassin, 24. speculated, 25. fascination, 26. illuminating, 27. scribbled, 28. immersed, 29. coincide, 30. rollercoaster, 31. enigma,

32. The magician _____ up a rabbit out of thin air.

v. to call forth by magic; to create or bring about through the imagination

ANSWERS: 32. conjured