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## Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

*Ilan Stavans: Infinity according to Jorge Luis Borges | TED Talk*

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### Advanced Words Only

#### IMPORTANT

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## Session 1: Word List

**vine** *n.* a climbing plant that produces grapes; any plant with a growth habit of trailing or climbing stems

(1) a green **vine**, (2) **vine** of ore

A **vine** remains productive throughout the year.

**recollection** *n.* the act of remembering or the state of being remembered

*synonym*: memory, reminiscence, remembrance

(1) a vague **recollection**, (2) **recollection** of a traumatic event

The older man's **recollections** of his youth were filled with stories of adventure and romance.

**oar** *n.* a pole with a flat blade at one end used for rowing a boat through the water

*synonym*: paddle, row, scull

(1) sculling **oar**, (2) wooden **oar**

The rowing team coordinated their **oars** to move through the water smoothly.

**Negro** *n.* ("Negro" is now considered out of date and offensive) a term that was once used to refer to people of African descent, especially those living in the United States

*synonym* : African American

(1) **Negro** literature, (2) American **Negro**

They developed **Negro** blues with a lively rhythm.

## incapable

*adj.* unable to do, control, or achieve something

*synonym* : unable, incompetent, unskilled

(1) drunk and **incapable**, (2) **incapable** of being resisted

He seems **incapable** of understanding what she says.

## replete

*adj.* fully or abundantly filled or supplied; overflowing or teeming with; rich or well-stocked

*synonym* : full, abundant, well-stocked

(1) **replete** with flavors, (2) **replete** with meaning

The summer garden was **replete** with colorful flowers and lush greenery.

## limitless

*adj.* without end, limit, or boundary; infinite

*synonym* : boundless, infinite, unrestricted

(1) for a **limitless** time, (2) **limitless** potential

The possibilities for scientific discovery are **limitless**.

## marvel

*n.* someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise

*synonym* : wonder, phenomenon, amazement

(1) a **marvel** of beauty, (2) technical **marvel**

The space shuttle is a modern engineering **marvel**.

## avid

*adj.* characterized by enthusiasm and vigorous pursuit, especially of an interest or activity

*synonym* : enthusiastic, eager, fervent

(1) **avid** baseball fan, (2) have **avid** eyes

She was an **avid** reader and spent hours every day lost in a book.

## babel

*n.* a loud noise, typically referring to the confusion of many voices talking at once, derived from the biblical story of

the Tower of Babel, in which God caused confusion among people by making them speak different languages

*synonym*: confusion, chaos, disorder

(1) a **babel** of confusion, (2) **babel** of languages

The classroom was a **babel** of excitement as the students prepared for their field trip.

## tome

*n.* a large, heavy book, usually referring to a scholarly work or reference book

*synonym*: book, volume, opus

(1) **tome** of knowledge, (2) ancient **tome**

I spent the whole weekend reading an academic **tome** about medieval history.

## gibberish

*n.* unintelligible or nonsensical language or speech; meaningless or difficult to comprehend talk or writing

*synonym*: nonsense, babble, drivel

(1) **gibberish** language, (2) meaningless **gibberish**

He spoke in **gibberish**, and no one could understand what he was trying to say.

## narrator

*n.* a person who tells a story, especially in a book or film

*synonym*: teller, storyteller

(1) first-person **narrator**, (2) the **narrator** of the TV program

The **narrator** makes use of the local dialect.

## labyrinth

*n.* a complicated network of paths or passages, often with twists and turns, making it difficult to find one's way out

*synonym*: maze, puzzle, network

(1) a **labyrinth** of relationships, (2) **labyrinthine** pathways

It was easy to get lost in the **labyrinth** of narrow alleyways in the old city.

## futile

*adj.* incapable of producing any useful result; pointless

*synonym*: useless, worthless, ineffective

(1) **futile** talk, (2) make a **futile** protest

It was **futile** to try and fix the broken vase, as it was too badly damaged.

## ancestor

*n.* a person from whom one is descended; a forefather

*synonym*: forebear, forefather, progenitor

(1) **ancestor** language, (2) earliest human **ancestor**

My remote **ancestor** immigrated to the United States from Ireland in the 1800s.

## 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.

## 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**.

## beget

*v.* to cause or produce something as a result or effect; to become the father of

*synonym*: be father, procreate, reproduce

(1) **beget** children, (2) **beget** fear

His irresponsible behavior may **beget** many problems for him in the future.

## divergent

*adj.* different or becoming different from another or a standard; tending to move apart in different directions

*synonym*: differing, disparate, atypical

(1) follow a **divergent** path, (2) wildly **divergent** results

The prime minister had to reconcile **divergent** opinions on controversial issues like abortion.

## expanse

*n.* a substance, such as water or oil, that flows freely and is neither a solid nor a gas

*synonym* : stretch, field, spread

(1) vast **expanse**, (2) large **expanses**

She looked over the immense **expanse** of the sea.

## 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.

## jaguar

*n.* a large animal of the cat family that has a yellowish-brown coat with black spots, mainly found in parts of Central and South America

*synonym* : cat, feline, panther

(1) a wild **jaguar**, (2) a female **jaguar**

Humans have developed the **jaguar's** habitat over several decades.

## cavern

*n.* a large, natural underground space

*synonym* : grotto, cave, cavity

(1) a yawning **cavern**, (2) **cavern** tour

The explorer discovered a large **cavern** deep underground.

## memorize

*v.* to learn something carefully so that you will remember it exactly

*synonym* : learn, remember, remind

(1) **memorize** musical scores, (2) try hard to **memorize** the lines

Lawyers need to **memorize** even the most minor provisions

of the law.

## decipher

*v.* to read or understand something that is written in code or in a difficult or obscure way

*synonym*: interpret, decode, translate

(1) **decipher** code, (2) **decipher** message

He spent hours trying to **decipher** the ancient text.

## culminate

*v.* to reach a peak or climax

*synonym*: end, finish, conclude

(1) **culminate** in a heart attack, (2) **culminate** in failure

The event will **culminate** in a grand fireworks display.

## epiphany

*n.* a moment of sudden and great realization or revelation; a Christian festival, held on 6 January, celebrating the visit of the three wise men to the infant Jesus

*synonym*: revelation, enlightenment, insight

(1) **epiphany** about life, (2) Feast of **Epiphany**

She had an **epiphany** while meditating and realized the answer to her problem.

## imprison

*v.* to confine a person to a prison, a detention facility, or a place of involuntary confinement

*synonym*: incarcerate, detain, confine

(1) **imprison** illegal immigrant, (2) **imprison** myself within the room

He was **imprisoned** for embezzlement.

## Session 2: Spelling

1. re\_\_\_\_e with flavors *adj.* fully or abundantly filled or supplied; overflowing or teeming with; rich or well-stocked
2. in\_\_\_\_\_le of being resisted *adj.* unable to do, control, or achieve something
3. ba\_\_l of languages *n.* a loud noise, typically referring to the confusion of many voices talking at once, derived from the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, in which God caused confusion among people by making them speak different languages
4. 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
5. wildly di\_\_\_\_\_nt results *adj.* different or becoming different from another or a standard; tending to move apart in different directions
6. technical ma\_\_\_\_l *n.* someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise
7. 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
8. for a li\_\_\_\_\_ss time *adj.* without end, limit, or boundary; infinite

ANSWERS: 1. replete, 2. incapable, 3. babel, 4. rev, 5. divergent, 6. marvel, 7. condense, 8. limitless

9. be\_\_t fear *v.* to cause or produce something as a result or effect; to become the father of
10. a female ja\_\_\_r *n.* a large animal of the cat family that has a yellowish-brown coat with black spots, mainly found in parts of Central and South America
11. im\_\_\_\_\_on myself within the room *v.* to confine a person to a prison, a detention facility, or a place of involuntary confinement
12. labyrinth m\_\_e *n.* a complex network of winding passages or pathways designed as a puzzle or challenge for people to navigate through
13. American Ne\_\_o *n.* ("Negro" is now considered out of date and offensive) a term that was once used to refer to people of African descent, especially those living in the United States
14. rec\_\_\_\_\_ion of a traumatic event *n.* the act of remembering or the state of being remembered
15. fu\_\_\_e talk *adj.* incapable of producing any useful result; pointless
16. Feast of Ep\_\_\_\_\_ny *n.* a moment of sudden and great realization or revelation; a Christian festival, held on 6 January, celebrating the visit of the three wise men to the infant Jesus
17. be\_\_t children *v.* to cause or produce something as a result or effect; to become the father of

ANSWERS: 9. beget, 10. jaguar, 11. imprison, 12. maze, 13. Negro, 14. recollection, 15. futile, 16. epiphany, 17. beget



18. a\_\_d baseball fan *adj.* characterized by enthusiasm and vigorous pursuit, especially of an interest or activity
19. me\_\_\_\_\_ze musical scores *v.* to learn something carefully so that you will remember it exactly
20. the na\_\_\_\_\_or of the TV program *n.* a person who tells a story, especially in a book or film
21. a yawning ca\_\_\_n *n.* a large, natural underground space
22. a wild ja\_\_\_r *n.* a large animal of the cat family that has a yellowish-brown coat with black spots, mainly found in parts of Central and South America
23. cu\_\_\_\_\_te in failure *v.* to reach a peak or climax
24. earliest human an\_\_\_\_\_or *n.* a person from whom one is descended; a forefather
25. a ma\_\_\_l of beauty *n.* someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise
26. 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
27. de\_\_\_\_\_er message *v.* to read or understand something that is written in code or in a difficult or obscure way
28. im\_\_\_\_\_on illegal immigrant *v.* to confine a person to a prison, a detention facility, or a place of involuntary confinement

ANSWERS: 18. avid, 19. memorize, 20. narrator, 21. cavern, 22. jaguar, 23. culminate, 24. ancestor, 25. marvel, 26. rev, 27. decipher, 28. imprison

29. li\_\_\_\_\_ss potential *adj.* without end, limit, or boundary; infinite
30. a la\_\_\_\_\_th of relationships *n.* a complicated network of paths or passages, often with twists and turns, making it difficult to find one's way out
31. an\_\_\_\_\_or language *n.* a person from whom one is descended; a forefather
32. ep\_\_\_\_\_ny about life *n.* a moment of sudden and great realization or revelation; a Christian festival, held on 6 January, celebrating the visit of the three wise men to the infant Jesus
33. a ba\_\_l of confusion *n.* a loud noise, typically referring to the confusion of many voices talking at once, derived from the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, in which God caused confusion among people by making them speak different languages
34. gi\_\_\_\_\_sh language *n.* unintelligible or nonsensical language or speech; meaningless or difficult to comprehend talk or writing
35. a vague rec\_\_\_\_\_ion *n.* the act of remembering or the state of being remembered
36. drunk and in\_\_\_\_\_le *adj.* unable to do, control, or achieve something
37. follow a di\_\_\_\_\_nt path *adj.* different or becoming different from another or a standard; tending to move apart in different directions
38. large ex\_\_\_\_\_es *n.* a substance, such as water or oil, that flows freely and is neither a solid nor a gas

ANSWERS: 29. limitless, 30. labyrinth, 31. ancestor, 32. epiphany, 33. babel, 34. gibberish, 35. recollection, 36. incapable, 37. divergent, 38. expanse

39. cu\_\_\_\_\_te in a heart attack      *v.*    to reach a peak or climax
40. meaningless gi\_\_\_\_\_sh      *n.*    unintelligible or nonsensical language or speech; meaningless or difficult to comprehend talk or writing
41. have a\_\_d eyes      *adj.* characterized by enthusiasm and vigorous pursuit, especially of an interest or activity
42. wooden o\_r      *n.*    a pole with a flat blade at one end used for rowing a boat through the water
43. la\_\_\_\_\_thine pathways      *n.*    a complicated network of paths or passages, often with twists and turns, making it difficult to find one's way out
44. puzzle m\_\_e      *n.*    a complex network of winding passages or pathways designed as a puzzle or challenge for people to navigate through
45. Ne\_\_o literature      *n.*    ("Negro" is now considered out of date and offensive) a term that was once used to refer to people of African descent, especially those living in the United States
46. t\_\_e of knowledge      *n.*    a large, heavy book, usually referring to a scholarly work or reference book
47. 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
48. first-person na\_\_\_\_\_or      *n.*    a person who tells a story, especially in a book or film

ANSWERS: 39. culminate, 40. gibberish, 41. avid, 42. oar, 43. labyrinth, 44. maze, 45. Negro, 46. tome, 47. condense, 48. narrator

49. v\_\_e of ore *n.* a climbing plant that produces grapes; any plant with a growth habit of trailing or climbing stems
50. de\_\_\_\_er code *v.* to read or understand something that is written in code or in a difficult or obscure way
51. re\_\_\_\_e with meaning *adj.* fully or abundantly filled or supplied; overflowing or teeming with; rich or well-stocked
52. sculling o\_r *n.* a pole with a flat blade at one end used for rowing a boat through the water
53. vast ex\_\_\_\_e *n.* a substance, such as water or oil, that flows freely and is neither a solid nor a gas
54. ancient t\_\_e *n.* a large, heavy book, usually referring to a scholarly work or reference book
55. ca\_\_\_\_n tour *n.* a large, natural underground space
56. make a fu\_\_\_\_e protest *adj.* incapable of producing any useful result; pointless
57. try hard to me\_\_\_\_ze the lines *v.* to learn something carefully so that you will remember it exactly
58. a green v\_\_e *n.* a climbing plant that produces grapes; any plant with a growth habit of trailing or climbing stems

ANSWERS: 49. vine, 50. decipher, 51. replete, 52. oar, 53. expanse, 54. tome, 55. cavern, 56. futile, 57. memorize, 58. vine

## Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. He spoke in \_\_\_\_\_ and no one could understand what he was trying to say.  
*n.* unintelligible or nonsensical language or speech; meaningless or difficult to comprehend talk or writing
2. She looked over the immense \_\_\_\_\_ of the sea.  
*n.* a substance, such as water or oil, that flows freely and is neither a solid nor a gas
3. The older man's \_\_\_\_\_ of his youth were filled with stories of adventure and romance.  
*n.* the act of remembering or the state of being remembered
4. His irresponsible behavior may \_\_\_\_\_ many problems for him in the future.  
*v.* to cause or produce something as a result or effect; to become the father of
5. The rowing team coordinated their \_\_\_\_\_ to move through the water smoothly.  
*n.* a pole with a flat blade at one end used for rowing a boat through the water
6. She was an \_\_\_\_\_ reader and spent hours every day lost in a book.  
*adj.* characterized by enthusiasm and vigorous pursuit, especially of an interest or activity
7. 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

ANSWERS: 1. gibberish, 2. expanse, 3. recollections, 4. beget, 5. oars, 6. avid, 7. maze

8. He spent hours trying to \_\_\_\_\_ the ancient text.  
*v.* to read or understand something that is written in code or in a difficult or obscure way
9. The summer garden was \_\_\_\_\_ with colorful flowers and lush greenery.  
*adj.* fully or abundantly filled or supplied; overflowing or teeming with; rich or well-stocked
10. The classroom was a \_\_\_\_\_ of excitement as the students prepared for their field trip.  
*n.* a loud noise, typically referring to the confusion of many voices talking at once, derived from the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, in which God caused confusion among people by making them speak different languages
11. The prime minister had to reconcile \_\_\_\_\_ opinions on controversial issues like abortion.  
*adj.* different or becoming different from another or a standard; tending to move apart in different directions
12. I spent the whole weekend reading an academic \_\_\_\_\_ about medieval history.  
*n.* a large, heavy book, usually referring to a scholarly work or reference book
13. My remote \_\_\_\_\_ immigrated to the United States from Ireland in the 1800s.  
*n.* a person from whom one is descended; a forefather
14. A \_\_\_\_\_ remains productive throughout the year.  
*n.* a climbing plant that produces grapes; any plant with a growth habit of trailing or climbing stems
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

ANSWERS: 8. decipher, 9. replete, 10. babel, 11. divergent, 12. tome, 13. ancestor, 14. vine, 15. rev

16. He was \_\_\_\_\_ for embezzlement.

- v.* to confine a person to a prison, a detention facility, or a place of involuntary confinement

17. The \_\_\_\_\_ makes use of the local dialect.

- n.* a person who tells a story, especially in a book or film

18. It was \_\_\_\_\_ to try and fix the broken vase, as it was too badly damaged.

- adj.* incapable of producing any useful result; pointless

19. It was easy to get lost in the \_\_\_\_\_ of narrow alleyways in the old city.

- n.* a complicated network of paths or passages, often with twists and turns, making it difficult to find one's way out

20. They developed \_\_\_\_\_ blues with a lively rhythm.

- n.* ("Negro" is now considered out of date and offensive) a term that was once used to refer to people of African descent, especially those living in the United States

21. The space shuttle is a modern engineering \_\_\_\_\_.

- n.* something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise

22. The event will \_\_\_\_\_ in a grand fireworks display.

- v.* to reach a peak or climax

23. He seems \_\_\_\_\_ of understanding what she says.

- adj.* unable to do, control, or achieve something

24. Humans have developed the \_\_\_\_\_ habitat over several decades.

- n.* a large animal of the cat family that has a yellowish-brown coat with black spots, mainly found in parts of Central and South America

ANSWERS: 16. imprisoned, 17. narrator, 18. futile, 19. labyrinth, 20. Negro, 21. marvel, 22. culminate, 23. incapable, 24. jaguar's

25. The explorer discovered a large \_\_\_\_\_ deep underground.  
*n.* a large, natural underground space
26. Lawyers need to \_\_\_\_\_ even the most minor provisions of the law.  
*v.* to learn something carefully so that you will remember it exactly
27. 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
28. The possibilities for scientific discovery are \_\_\_\_\_.  
*adj.* without end, limit, or boundary; infinite
29. She had an \_\_\_\_\_ while meditating and realized the answer to her problem.  
*n.* a moment of sudden and great realization or revelation; a Christian festival, held on 6 January, celebrating the visit of the three wise men to the infant Jesus

ANSWERS: 25. cavern, 26. memorize, 27. condense, 28. limitless, 29. epiphany