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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Iseult Gillespie: Why should you read "Kafka on the Shore"? | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

sandstorm

n. a severe, and often violent, windstorm in which a cloud of sand and dust is blown over a wide area, reducing visibility and causing damage to structures and equipment

synonym : dust storm, haboob

(1) **sandstorm** warning, (2) **sandstorm** season

Many people experienced breathing difficulties during the severe **sandstorm**.

ominous

adj. giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding

synonym : foreboding, portentous, ominous

(1) an **ominous** silence, (2) **ominous** sign

The **ominous** clouds in the sky foretold of an approaching storm.

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.

turmoil

n. a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty, often marked by intense activity or strong emotions

synonym: chaos, confusion, disorder

(1) political **turmoil**, (2) the **turmoil** of the war

The company experienced financial **turmoil** after the CEO was arrested.

tyrannical

adj. using power or authority over people, especially in a specific country, group, etc., in an unfair and cruel way

synonym: despotic, oppressive, authoritarian

(1) a **tyrannical** government, (2) a **tyrannical** parent

Tyrannical Hollywood film moguls can easily rule the movie star's career.

doom

n. death, destruction, or some other terrible situation that cannot be avoided

synonym: judgment, destiny, fate

(1) economic **doom**, (2) prophet of **doom**

Everyone was aware of the impending **doom** but was unable to prevent it.

rename

v. to give a new name to something; to change the name of something

synonym: rebrand, rechristen, re-label

(1) **rename** the street, (2) **rename** in plain English

The new owners **renamed** the restaurant to give it a fresh start.

haunt

v. to frequent or visit repeatedly, often in a way that is disturbing or unsettling; to occupy or fill the mind, often in a way that is unpleasant or persistent

synonym: stalk, spook, obsess

(1) **haunt** memories, (2) **haunt** my conscience

The crowd's boos and jeers continued to **haunt** the performer long after the show ended.

outrun

v. to run faster or farther than someone or something else, often to escape from danger or capture; to outpace or outmaneuver someone or something in a competition or pursuit

synonym: outpace, outrank, outdistance

(1) **outrun** competitors, (2) **outrun** the cops

I'll need to **outrun** the rainstorm to make it home without getting soaked.

underworld

n. the criminal world or the world of organized crime; the realm of the dead in various mythologies

synonym: hell, netherworld, underworld

(1) god of the **underworld**, (2) criminal **underworld**

The story of Orpheus and Eurydice is said to have taken place in the **underworld**, where Orpheus attempted to rescue his wife from the realm of the dead.

whimsical

adj. unusual and not severe in a way that might be funny or annoying; determined by chance or impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason

synonym: capricious, impulsive, flighty

(1) **whimsical** reasons, (2) a **whimsical** person

Much of his painting has a **whimsical** quality.

eerie

adj. strange, or frightening; suggestive of the supernatural

synonym: bizarre, creepy, dreadful

(1) **eerie** silence, (2) the **eerie** whistle of dropping bombs

The street was entirely silent and a bit **eerie**.

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.

awaken

v. to stop sleeping or to cause someone to stop sleeping
synonym: rouse, arouse, revive

(1) **awaken** at daybreak, (2) **awaken** a child

The friend's death **awakens** them.

knack

n. a special talent or ability that comes naturally or with practice, particularly in a specific area or field; a clever or shrewd way of doing something

synonym: skill, talent, ability

(1) acquire a **knack** for painting, (2) artistic **knack**

She has a **knack** for solving difficult puzzles quickly.

prophecy

n. a statement or prediction that something will happen in the future, typically one made by a religious leader

synonym: prediction, foretelling, divination

(1) **prophecy** fulfillment, (2) **prophecy** of doom

The fortune teller's **prophecy** that I would meet my soulmate next year has yet to come true.

leech

n. a type of worm that feeds on the blood of humans or animals; a person who takes advantage of others for personal gain without giving anything in return

synonym: bloodsucker, parasite, sucker

(1) blood-sucking **leech**, (2) aquatic **leech** habitat

The pharmacy sells **leeches** for medicinal purposes, but they're not cheap.

supernatural

adj. of or relating to existence outside the natural world; not able to be explained by natural laws

synonym: paranormal, otherworldly, preternatural

(1) **supernatural** beings, (2) **supernatural** intuition

The **supernatural** powers of the witch were the stuff of legends.

shady

adj. characterized by darkness or obscurity, often referring to the atmosphere of a place; characterized by suspicious or dishonest behavior or dealings; relating to shade or

protection from sunlight

synonym: shadowy, dubious, questionable

(1) **shady** business, (2) **shady** deal

The tree provided some **shady** relief from the scorching sun.

blur

n. a faint or indistinct image or sound; something that is not clear or distinct; (verb) to become unclear; to lose clear vision

synonym: smudge, smear, fuzz

(1) **blur** image, (2) motion **blur**

The camera's focus was off, and the image was a **blur** of colors and shapes.

tumble

v. to fall suddenly, often uncontrollably; to topple or turn over; to decline sharply and quickly in value, quality, or performance

synonym: fall, stumble, plummet

(1) **tumble** down the hill, (2) confidence **tumbles** as unemployment rates rose

The value of the currency **tumbled** against major international currencies.

penchant

n. a strong and habitual liking or preference for something or someone

synonym: inclination, predilection, affinity

(1) **penchant** for music, (2) natural **penchant**

She has a **penchant** for spicy food and always adds hot sauce.

contemplate

v. to think about a possible future action or to think about something for a long time thoughtfully

synonym: think over, ponder, consider

(1) **contemplate** a marriage, (2) **contemplated** leaving school

I recently **contemplated** dropping out of school and getting a full-time job.

befriend

v. to become a friend of someone, especially when in need
synonym: support, advise, patronize

(1) **befriend** a young boy, (2) **befriend** other members
I'm willing to **befriend** the weak and the poor.

hypnotic

adj. inducing sleep; causing sleepiness, mainly as a result of a repetitive noise or motion

synonym: soothing, soporific, slumberous

(1) mild **hypnotic**, (2) **hypnotic** effect

His voice had a **hypnotic** quality for me.

lurk

v. to wait somewhere secretly, especially because you are about to attack someone or do something bad or illegal

synonym: hide, creep, stalk

(1) **lurked** behind the words, (2) **lurk** in the darkness

In the city, the risk of traffic accidents **lurks** at every corner.

mundane

adj. very ordinary and therefore lacking interest or excitement

synonym: ordinary, everyday, prosaic

(1) **mundane** affairs, (2) **mundane** objects

After returning from the war, he had a pretty **mundane** life.

otherworldly

adj. supernatural, other than worldly; not of this world

synonym: celestial, ethereal, unearthly

(1) **otherworldly** experience, (2) **otherworldly** creature

The **otherworldly** landscape was filled with strange, glowing plants.

distract

v. to draw someone's attention away from what they are trying to do

synonym: divert, preoccupy, confuse

(1) **distract** attention from the real issue, (2) **distract** public opinion

Please don't **distract** me while I'm studying.

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**.

resourceful

adj. showing creativity and ability to find quick and practical solutions to problems

synonym: inventive, imaginative, clever

(1) **resourceful** thinker, (2) **resourceful** cook in town

She was **resourceful** and found a solution to the problem on her own.

Session 2: Spelling

1. confidence tu___es as unemployment rates rose
v. to fall suddenly, often uncontrollably; to topple or turn over; to decline sharply and quickly in value, quality, or performance
2. sa_____rm warning
n. a severe, and often violent, windstorm in which a cloud of sand and dust is blown over a wide area, reducing visibility and causing damage to structures and equipment
3. ha__t my conscience
v. to frequent or visit repeatedly, often in a way that is disturbing or unsettling; to occupy or fill the mind, often in a way that is unpleasant or persistent
4. di_____ct attention from the real issue
v. to draw someone's attention away from what they are trying to do
5. aw___n at daybreak
v. to stop sleeping or to cause someone to stop sleeping
6. 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
7. res_____ul cook in town
adj. showing creativity and ability to find quick and practical solutions to problems
8. sa_____rm season
n. a severe, and often violent, windstorm in which a cloud of sand and dust is blown over a wide area, reducing visibility and causing damage to structures and equipment

ANSWERS: 1. tumble, 2. sandstorm, 3. haunt, 4. distract, 5. awaken, 6. narrate, 7. resourceful, 8. sandstorm

9. I__ked behind the words *v.* to wait somewhere secretly, especially because you are about to attack someone or do something bad or illegal
10. con_____te a marriage *v.* to think about a possible future action or to think about something for a long time thoughtfully
11. sup_____ral intuition *adj.* of or relating to existence outside the natural world; not able to be explained by natural laws
12. re___e in plain English *v.* to give a new name to something; to change the name of something
13. oth_____dly creature *adj.* supernatural, other than worldly; not of this world
14. a ma___l of beauty *n.* someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise
15. mild hy_____ic *adj.* inducing sleep; causing sleepiness, mainly as a result of a repetitive noise or motion
16. prophet of d__m *n.* death, destruction, or some other terrible situation that cannot be avoided
17. con_____ted leaving school *v.* to think about a possible future action or to think about something for a long time thoughtfully
18. economic d__m *n.* death, destruction, or some other terrible situation that cannot be avoided
19. the tu_____l of the war *n.* a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty, often marked by intense activity or strong emotions
20. ou___n the cops *v.* to run faster or farther than someone or something else, often to escape from danger or capture; to outpace or outmaneuver someone or something in a competition or pursuit

ANSWERS: 9. lurk, 10. contemplate, 11. supernatural, 12. rename, 13. otherworldly, 14. marvel, 15. hypnotic, 16. doom, 17. contemplate, 18. doom, 19. turmoil, 20. outrun

21. sup_____ral beings *adj.* of or relating to existence outside the natural world; not able to be explained by natural laws
22. ou___n competitors *v.* to run faster or farther than someone or something else, often to escape from danger or capture; to outpace or outmaneuver someone or something in a competition or pursuit
23. natural pe_____nt *n.* a strong and habitual liking or preference for something or someone
24. god of the und_____ld *n.* the criminal world or the world of organized crime; the realm of the dead in various mythologies
25. a wh_____al person *adj.* unusual and not severe in a way that might be funny or annoying; determined by chance or impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason
26. acquire a kn__k for painting *n.* a special talent or ability that comes naturally or with practice, particularly in a specific area or field; a clever or shrewd way of doing something
27. motion b__r *n.* a faint or indistinct image or sound; something that is not clear or distinct; (verb) to become unclear; to lose clear vision
28. ha__t memories *v.* to frequent or visit repeatedly, often in a way that is disturbing or unsettling; to occupy or fill the mind, often in a way that is unpleasant or persistent
29. mu_____e affairs *adj.* very ordinary and therefore lacking interest or excitement

ANSWERS: 21. supernatural, 22. outrun, 23. penchant, 24. underworld, 25. whimsical, 26. knack, 27. blur, 28. haunt, 29. mundane

30. be____nd a young boy *v.* to become a friend of someone, especially when in need
31. sh__y business *adj.* characterized by darkness or obscurity, often referring to the atmosphere of a place; characterized by suspicious or dishonest behavior or dealings; relating to shade or protection from sunlight
32. aquatic le__h habitat *n.* a type of worm that feeds on the blood of humans or animals; a person who takes advantage of others for personal gain without giving anything in return
33. l__k in the darkness *v.* to wait somewhere secretly, especially because you are about to attack someone or do something bad or illegal
34. play a pro____st *n.* the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories
35. di____ct public opinion *v.* to draw someone's attention away from what they are trying to do
36. criminal und____ld *n.* the criminal world or the world of organized crime; the realm of the dead in various mythologies
37. political tu____l *n.* a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty, often marked by intense activity or strong emotions
38. pro____st of drama *n.* the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories
39. a tyr____al government *adj.* using power or authority over people, especially in a specific country, group, etc., in an unfair and cruel way

ANSWERS: 30. befriend, 31. shady, 32. leech, 33. lurk, 34. protagonist, 35. distract, 36. underworld, 37. turmoil, 38. protagonist, 39. tyrannical

40. aw___n a child *v.* to stop sleeping or to cause someone to stop sleeping
41. an om____s silence *adj.* giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding
42. b__r image *n.* a faint or indistinct image or sound; something that is not clear or distinct; (verb) to become unclear; to lose clear vision
43. wh_____al reasons *adj.* unusual and not severe in a way that might be funny or annoying; determined by chance or impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason
44. blood-sucking le__h *n.* a type of worm that feeds on the blood of humans or animals; a person who takes advantage of others for personal gain without giving anything in return
45. re___e the street *v.* to give a new name to something; to change the name of something
46. pr_____cy of doom *n.* a statement or prediction that something will happen in the future, typically one made by a religious leader
47. artistic kn__k *n.* a special talent or ability that comes naturally or with practice, particularly in a specific area or field; a clever or shrewd way of doing something
48. pr_____cy fulfillment *n.* a statement or prediction that something will happen in the future, typically one made by a religious leader
49. pe_____nt for music *n.* a strong and habitual liking or preference for something or someone

ANSWERS: 40. awaken, 41. ominous, 42. blur, 43. whimsical, 44. leech, 45. rename, 46. prophecy, 47. knack, 48. prophecy, 49. penchant

50. res_____ul thinker *adj.* showing creativity and ability to find quick and practical solutions to problems
51. the ee__e whistle of dropping bombs *adj.* strange, or frightening; suggestive of the supernatural
52. ee__e silence *adj.* strange, or frightening; suggestive of the supernatural
53. mu_____e objects *adj.* very ordinary and therefore lacking interest or excitement
54. sh__y deal *adj.* characterized by darkness or obscurity, often referring to the atmosphere of a place; characterized by suspicious or dishonest behavior or dealings; relating to shade or protection from sunlight
55. om_____s sign *adj.* giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding
56. a tyr_____al parent *adj.* using power or authority over people, especially in a specific country, group, etc., in an unfair and cruel way
57. na_____e an event *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
58. oth_____dly experience *adj.* supernatural, other than worldly; not of this world
59. be_____nd other members *v.* to become a friend of someone, especially when in need
60. tu___e down the hill *v.* to fall suddenly, often uncontrollably; to topple or turn over; to decline sharply and quickly in value, quality, or performance

ANSWERS: 50. resourceful, 51. eerie, 52. eerie, 53. mundane, 54. shady, 55. ominous, 56. tyrannical, 57. narrate, 58. otherworldly, 59. befriend, 60. tumble

61. hy____ic effect

adj. inducing sleep; causing sleepiness, mainly as a result of a repetitive noise or motion

62. technical ma____l

n. someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise

ANSWERS: 61. hypnotic, 62. marvel

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The company experienced financial _____ after the CEO was arrested.
n. a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty, often marked by intense activity or strong emotions

2. His voice had a _____ quality for me.
adj. inducing sleep; causing sleepiness, mainly as a result of a repetitive noise or motion

3. The _____ clouds in the sky foretold of an approaching storm.
adj. giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding

4. I'm willing to _____ the weak and the poor.
v. to become a friend of someone, especially when in need

5. She was _____ and found a solution to the problem on her own.
adj. showing creativity and ability to find quick and practical solutions to problems

6. After returning from the war, he had a pretty _____ life.
adj. very ordinary and therefore lacking interest or excitement

7. Many people experienced breathing difficulties during the severe _____.
n. a severe, and often violent, windstorm in which a cloud of sand and dust is blown over a wide area, reducing visibility and causing damage to structures and equipment

8. Please don't _____ me while I'm studying.
v. to draw someone's attention away from what they are trying to do

ANSWERS: 1. turmoil, 2. hypnotic, 3. ominous, 4. befriend, 5. resourceful, 6. mundane, 7. sandstorm, 8. distract

9. _____ Hollywood film moguls can easily rule the movie star's career.
adj. using power or authority over people, especially in a specific country, group, etc., in an unfair and cruel way
10. The _____ triumph over adversity was the theme of this play.
n. the main character in a literary work, film, or other stories
11. The new owners _____ the restaurant to give it a fresh start.
v. to give a new name to something; to change the name of something
12. I'll need to _____ the rainstorm to make it home without getting soaked.
v. to run faster or farther than someone or something else, often to escape from danger or capture; to outpace or outmaneuver someone or something in a competition or pursuit
13. The value of the currency _____ against major international currencies.
v. to fall suddenly, often uncontrollably; to topple or turn over; to decline sharply and quickly in value, quality, or performance
14. The _____ landscape was filled with strange, glowing plants.
adj. supernatural, other than worldly; not of this world
15. In the city, the risk of traffic accidents _____ at every corner.
v. to wait somewhere secretly, especially because you are about to attack someone or do something bad or illegal
16. I recently _____ dropping out of school and getting a full-time job.
v. to think about a possible future action or to think about something for a long time thoughtfully

ANSWERS: 9. Tyrannical, 10. protagonist's, 11. renamed, 12. outrun, 13. tumbled, 14. otherworldly, 15. lurks, 16. contemplated

17. She has a _____ for spicy food and always adds hot sauce.
n. a strong and habitual liking or preference for something or someone
18. 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
19. She has a _____ for solving difficult puzzles quickly.
n. a special talent or ability that comes naturally or with practice, particularly in a specific area or field; a clever or shrewd way of doing something
20. The camera's focus was off, and the image was a _____ of colors and shapes.
n. a faint or indistinct image or sound; something that is not clear or distinct; (verb) to become unclear; to lose clear vision
21. The friend's death _____ them.
v. to stop sleeping or to cause someone to stop sleeping
22. The fortune teller's _____ that I would meet my soulmate next year has yet to come true.
n. a statement or prediction that something will happen in the future, typically one made by a religious leader
23. The pharmacy sells _____ for medicinal purposes, but they're not cheap.
n. a type of worm that feeds on the blood of humans or animals; a person who takes advantage of others for personal gain without giving anything in return
24. Much of his painting has a _____ quality.
adj. unusual and not severe in a way that might be funny or annoying; determined by chance or impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason

ANSWERS: 17. penchant, 18. narrate, 19. knack, 20. blur, 21. awakens, 22. prophecy, 23. leeches, 24. whimsical

25. Everyone was aware of the impending _____ but was unable to prevent it.
n. death, destruction, or some other terrible situation that cannot be avoided
26. The story of Orpheus and Eurydice is said to have taken place in the _____ where Orpheus attempted to rescue his wife from the realm of the dead.
n. the criminal world or the world of organized crime; the realm of the dead in various mythologies
27. The street was entirely silent and a bit _____.
adj. strange, or frightening; suggestive of the supernatural
28. The space shuttle is a modern engineering _____.
n. someone something that causes feelings of wonder or surprise
29. The _____ powers of the witch were the stuff of legends.
adj. of or relating to existence outside the natural world; not able to be explained by natural laws
30. The tree provided some _____ relief from the scorching sun.
adj. characterized by darkness or obscurity, often referring to the atmosphere of a place; characterized by suspicious or dishonest behavior or dealings; relating to shade or protection from sunlight
31. The crowd's boos and jeers continued to _____ the performer long after the show ended.
v. to frequent or visit repeatedly, often in a way that is disturbing or unsettling; to occupy or fill the mind, often in a way that is unpleasant or persistent

ANSWERS: 25. doom, 26. underworld, 27. eerie, 28. marvel, 29. supernatural, 30. shady, 31. haunt