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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Natalie Panek: Let's clean up the space junk orbiting Earth | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

propellant

n. a substance that provides the force to propel (= to cause something to move forwards) something, such as a rocket or spray can

synonym: fuel, driving force, impelling agent

(1) **propellant** mixture, (2) **propellant** tank

The **propellant** in the rocket provided the force needed to reach outer space.

malfunction

v. to fail to operate or work properly; to break down or stop functioning as expected or intended; (noun) a failure or defect in the way a machine, system, or device is supposed to operate

synonym: misfunction, break down, fail

(1) **malfunction** alarm, (2) **malfunction** and start moving unpredictably

The car's engine **malfunctioned** on the highway, so we had to call for a tow truck.

errand

n. a short trip that is taken to perform a specified task, such as to take a message or to take or collect something

synonym: task, chore

(1) **errand** boy, (2) run an **errand**

He sent me on an **errand**.

crank

n. a mechanical device that converts rotary motion into linear motion or vice versa; an eccentric or unpredictable person

synonym : eccentric, oddball, kook

(1) **crank** handle, (2) **crank** caller

The fishing reel had a **crank** that made it easy to reel in the catch.

stutter

v. to speak with sudden involuntary pauses or repetitions of sounds, syllables, or words; (noun) a speech disorder characterized by the repetition or prolongation of sounds, syllables, or words, or by pauses or blocks in speech

synonym : stammer, falter, stumble

(1) **stutter** speech, (2) **stutter** out an apology

He tends to **stutter** when he gets nervous, making it difficult for others to understand him.

roadway

n. the part of a thoroughfare or highway that is used by vehicles for driving, including the hard surface and shoulders

synonym : highway, street, thoroughfare

(1) busy **roadway**, (2) **roadway** asphalt

Cyclists are not allowed on the highway **roadway** for safety reasons.

strew

v. to scatter or spread things over an area; to scatter something in an untidy way

synonym : scatter, sprinkle, disperse

(1) **strew** the room with balloons, (2) **strew** garbage

The wind **strew** the leaves all over the lawn.

industrious

adj. hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort

synonym : diligent, hardworking, assiduous

(1) **industrious** worker, (2) **industrious** student

He was known to be very **industrious** and would often work late into the night.

constellation

n. a group of stars that form a recognizable pattern and have a name; a group of related or similar ideas, things, or people

synonym: asterism, array, pattern

(1) the stars of the Scorpion **constellation**, (2) northern **constellation**

Navigators still use the Little Bear **constellation** at sea.

geostationary

n. describes a satellite that revolves around the Earth in a fixed position about the planet's rotation; remaining above the same point on the equator

synonym: fixed, stationary, orbiting

(1) **geostationary** orbit, (2) **geostationary** position

The **geostationary** satellite remained in a fixed position in the sky.

rot

v. to decay, or cause something to decay, naturally and gradually

synonym: perish, decay, corrode

(1) begin to **rot**, (2) **rot** with age

Please refrigerate the meat, or it will **rot**.

graveyard

n. a cemetery, especially one in a churchyard

synonym: cemetery, burial ground, churchyard

(1) **graveyard** of life, (2) bodies in a **graveyard**

The ancestral **graveyard** was peaceful, with rows of headstones and tall trees.

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.

worrisome

adj. causing worry, trouble, or anxiety; indicating the possible presence of danger, difficulty, or harm

synonym : concerning, troubling, bothersome

(1) **worrisome** issue, (2) **worrisome** development

The **worrisome** news about the impending storm caused many people to evacuate.

dubious

adj. having doubts or reservations; uncertain

synonym : uncertain, questionable, skeptical

(1) **dubious** credibility, (2) direct a **dubious** look

The evidence presented in court had a **dubious** origin, raising questions about its authenticity.

conquest

n. the act or process of taking control of a country, area, or situation

synonym : subjugation, domination, mastery

(1) imperial **conquest**, (2) make a **conquest**

He continued to grow his empire through **conquest**.

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.

opportune

adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

synonym : suitable, timely, practical

(1) **opportune** occasion, (2) an **opportune** remark

The phone rang at the most **opportune** time.

recycle

v. to sort and collect things to process them and produce valuable materials that can be used again

synonym : reclaim, reuse, reprocess

(1) **recycle** the cardboard boxes, (2) **recycle** milk packaging into new paper

We largely **recycle** the circuit board of cell phones because

they contain a lot of valuable metals.

tug v. to pull something quickly and hard, often several times
synonym: draw, jerk, pull
(1) **tug** a rope, (2) **tug** at his hand
This movie **tugs** at everyone's heartstrings.

tether v. to tie or secure an animal, person, or object with a rope, chain, or other similar devices to prevent it from moving too far away; (noun) a rope or chain used to tie up or restrain an animal, such as a horse or dog
synonym: tie, fasten, secure
(1) **tether** a horse, (2) **tether** strap
The hiker **tethered** their dog to a tree while they camped for the night.

robotic *adj.* of or relating to mechanical robots; (robotics) the interdisciplinary branch of computer science and engineering with the practical use of robots
synonym: automated, mechanical, laborsaving
(1) **robotic** arm, (2) **robotic** guide operation
The surgeon removed the tumor using **robotic** video assistance.

refuel v. to put additional fuel into a plane, ship, car, etc.
(1) **refuel** air-to-air, (2) **refuel** bombers in flight
Our plane stopped in the country to **refuel**.

propulsion *n.* the act or process of propelling or driving something forward, often using a motor, engine, or other mechanical means
synonym: propelling, driving, actuation
(1) **propulsion** technology, (2) nuclear **propulsion**
The spacecraft's **propulsion** system helped it travel through space.

innovate

v. to introduce new methods, ideas, or products

synonym: bring in, introduce, found

(1) **innovate** a new method, (2) **innovate** the quality of his life

Companies developing self-driving cars consistently **innovate** the emerging technologies.

congest

v. to make something blocked or crowded so as to hinder or prevent freedom of movement or flow of liquid

synonym: clog, choke, crowd

(1) **congest** in a vein, (2) **congest** a highway

The roads to the airport were heavily **congested**.

Session 2: Spelling

1. sp_____te on the outcome *v.* to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence
2. re___l air-to-air *v.* to put additional fuel into a plane, ship, car, etc.
3. mal_____on alarm *v.* to fail to operate or work properly; to break down or stop functioning as expected or intended; (noun) a failure or defect in the way a machine, system, or device is supposed to operate
4. busy ro_____y *n.* the part of a thoroughfare or highway that is used by vehicles for driving, including the hard surface and shoulders
5. geo_____ary position *n.* describes a satellite that revolves around the Earth in a fixed position about the planet's rotation; remaining above the same point on the equator
6. northern con_____ion *n.* a group of stars that form a recognizable pattern and have a name; a group of related or similar ideas, things, or people
7. mal_____on and start moving unpredictably *v.* to fail to operate or work properly; to break down or stop functioning as expected or intended; (noun) a failure or defect in the way a machine, system, or device is supposed to operate
8. wo_____me development *adj.* causing worry, trouble, or anxiety; indicating the possible presence of danger, difficulty, or harm

ANSWERS: 1. speculate, 2. refuel, 3. malfunction, 4. roadway, 5. geostationary, 6. constellation, 7. malfunction, 8. worrisome

9. ro____c guide operation *adj.* of or relating to mechanical robots; (robotics) the interdisciplinary branch of computer science and engineering with the practical use of robots
10. st____r speech *v.* to speak with sudden involuntary pauses or repetitions of sounds, syllables, or words; (noun) a speech disorder characterized by the repetition or prolongation of sounds, syllables, or words, or by pauses or blocks in speech
11. re____e the cardboard boxes *v.* to sort and collect things to process them and produce valuable materials that can be used again
12. pro____nt tank *n.* a substance that provides the force to propel (= to cause something to move forwards) something, such as a rocket or spray can
13. an om____s silence *adj.* giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding
14. ind____us worker *adj.* hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort
15. te____r strap *v.* to tie or secure an animal, person, or object with a rope, chain, or other similar devices to prevent it from moving too far away; (noun) a rope or chain used to tie up or restrain an animal, such as a horse or dog
16. sp____te about the reason *v.* to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence
17. in____te the quality of his life *v.* to introduce new methods, ideas, or products

ANSWERS: 9. robotic, 10. stutter, 11. recycle, 12. propellant, 13. ominous, 14. industrious, 15. tether, 16. speculate, 17. innovate

18. imperial co____st *n.* the act or process of taking control of a country, area, or situation
19. co____t in a vein *v.* to make something blocked or crowded so as to hinder or prevent freedom of movement or flow of liquid
20. st__w the room with balloons *v.* to scatter or spread things over an area; to scatter something in an untidy way
21. direct a du____s look *adj.* having doubts or reservations; uncertain
22. cr__k handle *n.* a mechanical device that converts rotary motion into linear motion or vice versa; an eccentric or unpredictable person
23. geo_____ary orbit *n.* describes a satellite that revolves around the Earth in a fixed position about the planet's rotation; remaining above the same point on the equator
24. in____te a new method *v.* to introduce new methods, ideas, or products
25. pro_____on technology *n.* the act or process of propelling or driving something forward, often using a motor, engine, or other mechanical means
26. begin to r_t *v.* to decay, or cause something to decay, naturally and gradually
27. nuclear pro_____on *n.* the act or process of propelling or driving something forward, often using a motor, engine, or other mechanical means
28. run an er____d *n.* a short trip that is taken to perform a specified task, such as to take a message or to take or collect something

ANSWERS: 18. conquest, 19. congest, 20. strew, 21. dubious, 22. crank, 23. geostationary, 24. innovate, 25. propulsion, 26. rot, 27. propulsion, 28. errand

29. pro_____nt mixture *n.* a substance that provides the force to propel (= to cause something to move forwards) something, such as a rocket or spray can
30. ro_____c arm *adj.* of or relating to mechanical robots; (robotics) the interdisciplinary branch of computer science and engineering with the practical use of robots
31. op_____ne occasion *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
32. cr__k caller *n.* a mechanical device that converts rotary motion into linear motion or vice versa; an eccentric or unpredictable person
33. re___l bombers in flight *v.* to put additional fuel into a plane, ship, car, etc.
34. er___d boy *n.* a short trip that is taken to perform a specified task, such as to take a message or to take or collect something
35. bodies in a gr_____rd *n.* a cemetery, especially one in a churchyard
36. ro_____y asphalt *n.* the part of a thoroughfare or highway that is used by vehicles for driving, including the hard surface and shoulders
37. re_____e milk packaging into new paper *v.* to sort and collect things to process them and produce valuable materials that can be used again

ANSWERS: 29. propellant, 30. robotic, 31. opportune, 32. crank, 33. refuel, 34. errand, 35. graveyard, 36. roadway, 37. recycle

38. t_g a rope v. to pull something quickly and hard, often several times
39. co____t a highway v. to make something blocked or crowded so as to hinder or prevent freedom of movement or flow of liquid
40. make a co____st n. the act or process of taking control of a country, area, or situation
41. st____r out an apology v. to speak with sudden involuntary pauses or repetitions of sounds, syllables, or words; (noun) a speech disorder characterized by the repetition or prolongation of sounds, syllables, or words, or by pauses or blocks in speech
42. te____r a horse v. to tie or secure an animal, person, or object with a rope, chain, or other similar devices to prevent it from moving too far away; (noun) a rope or chain used to tie up or restrain an animal, such as a horse or dog
43. r_t with age v. to decay, or cause something to decay, naturally and gradually
44. an op_____ne remark adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
45. t_g at his hand v. to pull something quickly and hard, often several times
46. om____s sign adj. giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding
47. du____s credibility adj. having doubts or reservations; uncertain

ANSWERS: 38. tug, 39. congest, 40. conquest, 41. stutter, 42. tether, 43. rot, 44. opportune, 45. tug, 46. ominous, 47. dubious

48. ind_____us student *adj.* hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort
49. the stars of the Scorpion
con_____ion *n.* a group of stars that form a recognizable pattern and have a name; a group of related or similar ideas, things, or people
50. st__w garbage *v.* to scatter or spread things over an area; to scatter something in an untidy way
51. gr_____rd of life *n.* a cemetery, especially one in a churchyard
52. wo_____me issue *adj.* causing worry, trouble, or anxiety; indicating the possible presence of danger, difficulty, or harm

ANSWERS: 48. industrious, 49. constellation, 50. strew, 51. graveyard, 52. worrisome

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The fishing reel had a _____ that made it easy to reel in the catch.
n. a mechanical device that converts rotary motion into linear motion or vice versa; an eccentric or unpredictable person
2. Please refrigerate the meat, or it will _____.
v. to decay, or cause something to decay, naturally and gradually
3. He _____ that this investment would lead to success.
v. to form a theory or conjecture or guess about a subject without solid evidence
4. The _____ satellite remained in a fixed position in the sky.
n. describes a satellite that revolves around the Earth in a fixed position about the planet's rotation; remaining above the same point on the equator
5. The hiker _____ their dog to a tree while they camped for the night.
v. to tie or secure an animal, person, or object with a rope, chain, or other similar devices to prevent it from moving too far away; (noun) a rope or chain used to tie up or restrain an animal, such as a horse or dog
6. The _____ in the rocket provided the force needed to reach outer space.
n. a substance that provides the force to propel (= to cause something to move forwards) something, such as a rocket or spray can
7. The _____ clouds in the sky foretold of an approaching storm.
adj. giving the impression that something bad is going to happen; foreboding
8. Navigators still use the Little Bear _____ at sea.
n. a group of stars that form a recognizable pattern and have a name; a group of related or similar ideas, things, or people

ANSWERS: 1. crank, 2. rot, 3. speculated, 4. geostationary, 5. tethered, 6. propellant, 7. ominous, 8. constellation

9. The car's engine _____ on the highway, so we had to call for a tow truck.
- v.* to fail to operate or work properly; to break down or stop functioning as expected or intended; (noun) a failure or defect in the way a machine, system, or device is supposed to operate
10. The spacecraft's _____ system helped it travel through space.
- n.* the act or process of propelling or driving something forward, often using a motor, engine, or other mechanical means
11. We largely _____ the circuit board of cell phones because they contain a lot of valuable metals.
- v.* to sort and collect things to process them and produce valuable materials that can be used again
12. The _____ news about the impending storm caused many people to evacuate.
- adj.* causing worry, trouble, or anxiety; indicating the possible presence of danger, difficulty, or harm
13. The wind _____ the leaves all over the lawn.
- v.* to scatter or spread things over an area; to scatter something in an untidy way
14. He continued to grow his empire through _____.
- n.* the act or process of taking control of a country, area, or situation
15. He sent me on an _____.
- n.* a short trip that is taken to perform a specified task, such as to take a message or to take or collect something

ANSWERS: 9. malfunctioned, 10. propulsion, 11. recycle, 12. worrisome, 13. strew, 14. conquest, 15. errand

16. The ancestral _____ was peaceful, with rows of headstones and tall trees.
n. a cemetery, especially one in a churchyard
17. He was known to be very _____ and would often work late into the night.
adj. hardworking, diligent, and persistent in effort
18. The surgeon removed the tumor using _____ video assistance.
adj. of or relating to mechanical robots; (robotics) the interdisciplinary branch of computer science and engineering with the practical use of robots
19. This movie _____ at everyone's heartstrings.
v. to pull something quickly and hard, often several times
20. The phone rang at the most _____ time.
adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
21. Cyclists are not allowed on the highway _____ for safety reasons.
n. the part of a thoroughfare or highway that is used by vehicles for driving, including the hard surface and shoulders
22. He tends to _____ when he gets nervous, making it difficult for others to understand him.
v. to speak with sudden involuntary pauses or repetitions of sounds, syllables, or words; (noun) a speech disorder characterized by the repetition or prolongation of sounds, syllables, or words, or by pauses or blocks in speech
23. The evidence presented in court had a _____ origin, raising questions about its authenticity.
adj. having doubts or reservations; uncertain

ANSWERS: 16. graveyard, 17. industrious, 18. robotic, 19. tugs, 20. opportune, 21. roadway, 22. stutter, 23. dubious

24. Our plane stopped in the country to _____.

- v. to put additional fuel into a plane, ship, car, etc.

25. The roads to the airport were heavily _____.

- v. to make something blocked or crowded so as to hinder or prevent freedom of movement or flow of liquid

26. Companies developing self-driving cars consistently _____ the emerging technologies.

- v. to introduce new methods, ideas, or products

ANSWERS: 24. refuel, 25. congested, 26. innovate