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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Emily Esfahani Smith: There's more to life than being happy | TED Talk

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Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

adrift

adj. without purpose or direction; floating with no clear destination or goal; lacking a stable or secure position or status

synonym : afloat, aimless, unanchored

(1) **adrift** boat, (2) **adrift** at sea

After their boat engine failed, they were left **adrift** in the middle of the ocean.

conceivable

adj. imaginable or possible to understand or believe in the mind

synonym : believable, imaginable, probable

(1) **conceivable** way, (2) **conceivable** emergency

It is challenging to defend every **conceivable** target.

hopeless

adj. having no hope; despairing; having no chance of success

synonym : despairing, helpless, futile

(1) **hopeless** situation, (2) **hopeless** at everything

After months of job searching, he felt **hopeless** and unsure of his future.

gnaw

v. to bite or chew on something persistently or nervously; to wear away at something gradually

synonym : chew, bite, annoy

(1) **gnaw** a hole in a wall, (2) **gnaw** at the national sentiment
She couldn't stop **gnawing** on her nails.

obsess

v. to fill the mind of someone continually so that one can't think of anything else

synonym : torment, beset, engross

(1) **obsess** over her weight, (2) he is **obsessed** with the fear

He's utterly **obsessed** with his promotion.

resilient

adj. able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions

synonym : robust, sturdy, tough

(1) a hard and **resilient** steel, (2) **resilient** population

She is a **resilient** person and has always bounced back from setbacks.

neuroscience

n. the scientific study of the function, structure, and disorder of the brain and the nervous system

(1) the branch of **neuroscience**, (2) a theoretical concept in **neuroscience**

Our university is famous for its professors, who are well-versed in behavioral **neuroscience**.

cultivate

v. to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants

synonym : boost, foster, nurture

(1) **cultivate** a field, (2) **cultivate** relationships

University is a great place to **cultivate** our minds and expertise.

devalue

v. to reduce the value or worth of something

synonym : diminish, depreciate, reduce

(1) **devalue** the pound, (2) **devalue** a brand

Her negative comments about the project only **devalued** the team's efforts.

custodian

n. a person who is responsible for the care and maintenance of a building, institution, or collection; a guardian or keeper of something valuable or important

synonym : caretaker, keeper, guardian

(1) **custodian** bank, (2) **custodian** of the records

The school **custodian** worked tirelessly to keep the building clean and maintained for the students and faculty.

disengage

v. to withdraw or separate oneself from a situation or relationship

synonym : withdraw, separate, detach

(1) **disengage** the clutch, (2) **disengage** socially

He **disengaged** from the conversation and walked away.

flounder

v. to struggle or stumble awkwardly; to move or act clumsily or in confusion; to be in a difficult or uncertain situation

synonym : struggle, stumble, falter

(1) **flounder** with decisions, (2) **flounder** in water

I watched him **flounder** through the difficult math problem, unable to find a solution.

transcendent

adj. going beyond the limits of ordinary experience or knowledge; surpassing the usual or expected; exalted or sublime

synonym : beyond human experience, divine, spiritual

(1) **transcendent** wisdom, (2) **transcendent** joy

The **transcendent** beauty of the Grand Canyon took his breath away.

hustle

v. to cause someone to move quickly by pushing them in a rough, aggressive way

synonym : bustle, rush, haste

(1) **hustle** on business, (2) **hustle** up money

You must **hustle** and struggle on the court to win an acquittal.

bustle

v. to move or act energetically and noisily; (noun) a rapid active commotion

synonym : hurry, rush, flurry

(1) **bustle** around a kitchen, (2) hustle- **bustle** lifestyle

The city **bustled** with activity as people rushed to work.

eucalyptus

n. a genus of flowering trees and shrubs native to Australia that are known for their aromatic leaves and medicinal properties

synonym : gum tree, Australian tree

(1) **eucalyptus** oil, (2) **eucalyptus** leaves

The scent of **eucalyptus** is often used in aromatherapy to promote relaxation.

afterward

adv. after the time mentioned

synonym : later, thereafter, following

(1) a few years **afterward**, (2) go there **afterward**

We will explain the countermeasure concerning this problem **afterward**.

storytelling

n. the act or art of narrating or writing stories

synonym : narrating, relating, recounting

(1) **storytelling** performance, (2) courtroom **storytelling**

She was skilled in **storytelling** techniques, such as using different voices for other characters.

retell

v. to tell someone about something again or differently

synonym : reiterate, repeat, restate

(1) **retell** a story, (2) **retell** an old tale

He **retells** the truth to plead not guilty.

constrain

v. to restrict or limit someone or something's freedom or ability to do something

synonym : restrict, limit, confine

(1) **constrain** his freedom, (2) **constrain** information flow

The political situation **constrained** the country's economic

growth and foreign relations.

paralyze

v. to cause a person or part of the body to become unable to move or feel

synonym: immobilize, disable, numb

(1) **paralyze** a city, (2) **paralyze** a person

The venom from the snake bite **paralyzed** his arm.

weave

v. to make cloth, a carpet, a basket, etc., by repeatedly crossing a single thread through two sets of long threads at a right angle to them

synonym: braid, unite, contrive

(1) **weave** on a loom, (2) **weave** a story

The girl **weaves** a garland for her friend.

purposeful

adj. having a specific aim or purpose; determined

synonym: determined, resolved, resolute

(1) **purposeful** series of actions, (2) at a **purposeful** pace

She had a **purposeful** look and was determined to complete the task.

redeem

v. to compensate for the faults or bad aspects of something; to regain possession or assume ownership of something by paying a sum of money or fulfilling a condition; to rescue or save someone from a difficult or hopeless situation

synonym: rescue, save, recover

(1) **redeem** a coupon, (2) **redeem** a government bond

He tried to **redeem** himself by volunteering at the local charity after his mistakes.

whirl

v. to spin or turn rapidly; to move or be moved quickly in a circular manner; (noun) a spinning or rotating movement, often rapid or chaotic in nature

synonym: spin, rotate, swirl

(1) **whirl** in the washing machine, (2) **whirl** around the dance floor

The leaves began to **whirl** around in the windy weather.

dervish

n. a Muslim ascetic who belongs to a Sufi order, known for their ecstatic dancing and other forms of physical and spiritual discipline

synonym : Sufi dancer, mystic

(1) whirling **dervish**, (2) the Sufi **dervish**

The sound of the **dervish's** tambourine and flute filled the air with a haunting melody.

Sufi

n. a follower or practitioner of Islam's mystical or ascetic branch, known as Sufism. Sufis emphasize the personal experience of God and spiritual growth through contemplation, prayer, and devotion

synonym : mystic, dervish

(1) **Sufi** music, (2) **Sufi** philosophy

The **Sufi** mystic preached a message of love and tolerance to his followers.

rein

n. a long, narrow strap attached to a horse's bit, used to control the animal while riding; a means of controlling or limiting something or someone's actions and behavior; (verb) to control or restrain something, especially something that is becoming excessive or out of control

synonym : strap, harness, headstall

(1) tight **rein**, (2) **rein** in costs

The new driver struggled to keep a firm grip on the **rein** as the horse bolted.

moor

n. a large area of open country, typically on high ground, covered with rough grass or heath, especially in Britain

synonym : heath, upland, bog

(1) low- **moor** bog, (2) **moor** the ship

The rolling **moor** was a large, open area of high ground covered with heather.

institutionalize

v. to establish or make something a part of an institution (= a place such as a university, hospital, etc.)

synonym: formalize, establish, regularize

(1) **institutionalize** a system, (2) **institutionalize** customary laws

The new policy aims to **institutionalize** the use of renewable energy sources.

sever

v. to break or separate something by cutting, especially suddenly and forcibly

synonym: cut apart, separate, detach

(1) **sever** a rope, (2) **sever** a positive relationship

He **severed** a branch from a tree quickly.

anesthesia

n. a state of controlled, temporary loss of bodily sensation or awareness that is induced for medical purposes

(1) **anesthesia** for surgery, (2) local **anesthesia**

He is in general **anesthesia** under the surgeon.

mantra

n. a word or phrase, often repeated, that is used as a focus for the mind during meditation

synonym: hymn, chant, phrase

(1) campaign **mantra**, (2) chant the **mantra** of structural reform

She repeated her personal **mantra** to herself to stay motivated.

carpenter

n. a woodworker whose job is to make or repair wooden objects

synonym: woodworker, artisan

(1) a short **carpenter** nail, (2) an apprentice **carpenter**

Carpenter bees are boring holes into the wall.

lye

n. a highly alkaline solution made by soaking hardwood ashes in the water, used in the production of soap, detergents, and other cleaning agents; a caustic substance

synonym : caustic soda, sodium hydroxide, alkaline solution

(1) **lye** soap, (2) **lye** water

The drain cleaner contains caustic **lye**, and should be handled with care.

Session 2: Spelling

1. tra_____ent joy *adj.* going beyond the limits of ordinary experience or knowledge; surpassing the usual or expected; exalted or sublime
2. co_____in information flow *v.* to restrict or limit someone or something's freedom or ability to do something
3. re_____nt population *adj.* able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions
4. pa_____ze a city *v.* to cause a person or part of the body to become unable to move or feel
5. tight r__n *n.* a long, narrow strap attached to a horse's bit, used to control the animal while riding; a means of controlling or limiting something or someone's actions and behavior; (verb) to control or restrain something, especially something that is becoming excessive or out of control
6. ho_____ss at everything *adj.* having no hope; despairing; having no chance of success
7. co_____in his freedom *v.* to restrict or limit someone or something's freedom or ability to do something
8. ins_____ize customary laws *v.* to establish or make something a part of an institution (= a place such as a university, hospital, etc.)

ANSWERS: 1. transcendent, 2. constrain, 3. resilient, 4. paralyze, 5. rein, 6. hopeless, 7. constrain, 8. institutionalize

9. go there af_____rd *adv.* after the time mentioned
10. local ane_____ia *n.* a state of controlled, temporary loss of bodily sensation or awareness that is induced for medical purposes
11. ane_____ia for surgery *n.* a state of controlled, temporary loss of bodily sensation or awareness that is induced for medical purposes
12. fl_____er with decisions *v.* to struggle or stumble awkwardly; to move or act clumsily or in confusion; to be in a difficult or uncertain situation
13. re___m a government bond *v.* to compensate for the faults or bad aspects of something; to regain possession or assume ownership of something by paying a sum of money or fulfilling a condition; to rescue or save someone from a difficult or hopeless situation
14. ho_____ss situation *adj.* having no hope; despairing; having no chance of success
15. cu_____te relationships *v.* to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants
16. ad___t boat *adj.* without purpose or direction; floating with no clear destination or goal; lacking a stable or secure position or status
17. a few years af_____rd *adv.* after the time mentioned
18. hustle-bu___e lifestyle *v.* to move or act energetically and noisily; (noun) a rapid active commotion
19. wh__l in the washing machine *v.* to spin or turn rapidly; to move or be moved quickly in a circular manner; (noun) a spinning or rotating movement, often rapid or chaotic in nature

ANSWERS: 9. afterward, 10. anesthesia, 11. anesthesia, 12. flounder, 13. redeem, 14. hopeless, 15. cultivate, 16. adrift, 17. afterward, 18. bustle, 19. whirl

20. cu_____te a field *v.* to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants
21. ins_____ize a system *v.* to establish or make something a part of an institution (= a place such as a university, hospital, etc.)
22. re___m a coupon *v.* to compensate for the faults or bad aspects of something; to regain possession or assume ownership of something by paying a sum of money or fulfilling a condition; to rescue or save someone from a difficult or hopeless situation
23. a theoretical concept in
 neu_____nce *n.* the scientific study of the function, structure, and disorder of the brain and the nervous system
24. the Sufi de_____h *n.* a Muslim ascetic who belongs to a Sufi order, known for their ecstatic dancing and other forms of physical and spiritual discipline
25. g__w at the national sentiment *v.* to bite or chew on something persistently or nervously; to wear away at something gradually
26. ob___s over her weight *v.* to fill the mind of someone continually so that one can't think of anything else
27. the branch of neu_____nce *n.* the scientific study of the function, structure, and disorder of the brain and the nervous system
28. chant the ma___a of structural
 reform *n.* a word or phrase, often repeated, that is used as a focus for the mind during meditation

ANSWERS: 20. cultivate, 21. institutionalize, 22. redeem, 23. neuroscience, 24. dervish, 25. gnaw, 26. obsess, 27. neuroscience, 28. mantra

29. we__e on a loom *v.* to make cloth, a carpet, a basket, etc., by repeatedly crossing a single thread through two sets of long threads at a right angle to them
30. sto_____ing performance *n.* the act or art of narrating or writing stories
31. euc_____us leaves *n.* a genus of flowering trees and shrubs native to Australia that are known for their aromatic leaves and medicinal properties
32. S__i philosophy *n.* a follower or practitioner of Islam's mystical or ascetic branch, known as Sufism. Sufis emphasize the personal experience of God and spiritual growth through contemplation, prayer, and devotion
33. hu___e up money *v.* to cause someone to move quickly by pushing them in a rough, aggressive way
34. campaign ma___a *n.* a word or phrase, often repeated, that is used as a focus for the mind during meditation
35. ad___t at sea *adj.* without purpose or direction; floating with no clear destination or goal; lacking a stable or secure position or status
36. l_e water *n.* a highly alkaline solution made by soaking hardwood ashes in the water, used in the production of soap, detergents, and other cleaning agents; a caustic substance

ANSWERS: 29. weave, 30. storytelling, 31. eucalyptus, 32. Sufi, 33. hustle, 34. mantra, 35. adrift, 36. lye

37. cu_____an of the records *n.* a person who is responsible for the care and maintenance of a building, institution, or collection; a guardian or keeper of something valuable or important
38. fl_____er in water *v.* to struggle or stumble awkwardly; to move or act clumsily or in confusion; to be in a difficult or uncertain situation
39. whirling de_____h *n.* a Muslim ascetic who belongs to a Sufi order, known for their ecstatic dancing and other forms of physical and spiritual discipline
40. tra_____ent wisdom *adj.* going beyond the limits of ordinary experience or knowledge; surpassing the usual or expected; exalted or sublime
41. he is ob___sed with the fear *v.* to fill the mind of someone continually so that one can't think of anything else
42. re___l a story *v.* to tell someone about something again or differently
43. a hard and re_____nt steel *adj.* able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions
44. con_____le emergency *adj.* imaginable or possible to understand or believe in the mind
45. we___e a story *v.* to make cloth, a carpet, a basket, etc., by repeatedly crossing a single thread through two sets of long threads at a right angle to them
46. cu_____an bank *n.* a person who is responsible for the care and maintenance of a building, institution, or collection; a guardian or keeper of something valuable or important

ANSWERS: 37. custodian, 38. flounder, 39. dervish, 40. transcendent, 41. obsess, 42. retell, 43. resilient, 44. conceivable, 45. weave, 46. custodian

47. di_____ge the clutch *v.* to withdraw or separate oneself from a situation or relationship
48. l_e soap *n.* a highly alkaline solution made by soaking hardwood ashes in the water, used in the production of soap, detergents, and other cleaning agents; a caustic substance
49. at a pur_____ul pace *adj.* having a specific aim or purpose; determined
50. se__r a positive relationship *v.* to break or separate something by cutting, especially suddenly and forcibly
51. re___l an old tale *v.* to tell someone about something again or differently
52. con_____le way *adj.* imaginable or possible to understand or believe in the mind
53. se__r a rope *v.* to break or separate something by cutting, especially suddenly and forcibly
54. m__r the ship *n.* a large area of open country, typically on high ground, covered with rough grass or heath, especially in Britain
55. pur_____ul series of actions *adj.* having a specific aim or purpose; determined
56. a short ca_____er nail *n.* a woodworker whose job is to make or repair wooden objects
57. pa_____ze a person *v.* to cause a person or part of the body to become unable to move or feel
58. de_____e a brand *v.* to reduce the value or worth of something

ANSWERS: 47. disengage, 48. lye, 49. purposeful, 50. sever, 51. retell, 52. conceivable, 53. sever, 54. moor, 55. purposeful, 56. carpenter, 57. paralyze, 58. devalue

59. low-m__r bog *n.* a large area of open country, typically on high ground, covered with rough grass or heath, especially in Britain
60. an apprentice ca_____er *n.* a woodworker whose job is to make or repair wooden objects
61. euc_____us oil *n.* a genus of flowering trees and shrubs native to Australia that are known for their aromatic leaves and medicinal properties
62. hu___e on business *v.* to cause someone to move quickly by pushing them in a rough, aggressive way
63. wh__l around the dance floor *v.* to spin or turn rapidly; to move or be moved quickly in a circular manner; (noun) a spinning or rotating movement, often rapid or chaotic in nature
64. bu___e around a kitchen *v.* to move or act energetically and noisily; (noun) a rapid active commotion
65. de_____e the pound *v.* to reduce the value or worth of something
66. courtroom sto_____ing *n.* the act or art of narrating or writing stories
67. r__n in costs *n.* a long, narrow strap attached to a horse's bit, used to control the animal while riding; a means of controlling or limiting something or someone's actions and behavior; (verb) to control or restrain something, especially something that is becoming excessive or out of control

ANSWERS: 59. moor, 60. carpenter, 61. eucalyptus, 62. hustle, 63. whirl, 64. bustle, 65. devalue, 66. storytelling, 67. rein

68. di_____ge socially *v.* to withdraw or separate oneself from a situation or relationship
69. S__i music *n.* a follower or practitioner of Islam's mystical or ascetic branch, known as Sufism. Sufis emphasize the personal experience of God and spiritual growth through contemplation, prayer, and devotion
70. g__w a hole in a wall *v.* to bite or chew on something persistently or nervously; to wear away at something gradually

ANSWERS: 68. disengage, 69. Sufi, 70. gnaw

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. She is a _____ person and has always bounced back from setbacks.
adj. able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions
2. She was skilled in _____ techniques, such as using different voices for other characters.
n. the act or art of narrating or writing stories
3. She repeated her personal _____ to herself to stay motivated.
n. a word or phrase, often repeated, that is used as a focus for the mind during meditation
4. The sound of the _____ tambourine and flute filled the air with a haunting melody.
n. a Muslim ascetic who belongs to a Sufi order, known for their ecstatic dancing and other forms of physical and spiritual discipline
5. He _____ from the conversation and walked away.
v. to withdraw or separate oneself from a situation or relationship
6. I watched him _____ through the difficult math problem, unable to find a solution.
v. to struggle or stumble awkwardly; to move or act clumsily or in confusion; to be in a difficult or uncertain situation
7. You must _____ and struggle on the court to win an acquittal.
v. to cause someone to move quickly by pushing them in a rough, aggressive way

ANSWERS: 1. resilient, 2. storytelling, 3. mantra, 4. dervish's, 5. disengaged, 6. flounder, 7. hustle

8. He's utterly _____ with his promotion.
v. to fill the mind of someone continually so that one can't think of anything else
9. We will explain the countermeasure concerning this problem _____.
adv. after the time mentioned
10. The political situation _____ the country's economic growth and foreign relations.
v. to restrict or limit someone or something's freedom or ability to do something
11. The girl _____ a garland for her friend.
v. to make cloth, a carpet, a basket, etc., by repeatedly crossing a single thread through two sets of long threads at a right angle to them
12. University is a great place to _____ our minds and expertise.
v. to prepare and foster land for growing crops or plants
13. It is challenging to defend every _____ target.
adj. imaginable or possible to understand or believe in the mind
14. The _____ beauty of the Grand Canyon took his breath away.
adj. going beyond the limits of ordinary experience or knowledge; surpassing the usual or expected; exalted or sublime
15. The new driver struggled to keep a firm grip on the _____ as the horse bolted.
n. a long, narrow strap attached to a horse's bit, used to control the animal while riding; a means of controlling or limiting something or someone's actions and behavior; (verb) to control or restrain something, especially something that is becoming excessive or out of control

ANSWERS: 8. obsessed, 9. afterward, 10. constrained, 11. weaves, 12. cultivate, 13. conceivable, 14. transcendent, 15. rein

16. He _____ a branch from a tree quickly.

v. to break or separate something by cutting, especially suddenly and forcibly

17. After their boat engine failed, they were left _____ in the middle of the ocean.

adj. without purpose or direction; floating with no clear destination or goal; lacking a stable or secure position or status

18. The school _____ worked tirelessly to keep the building clean and maintained for the students and faculty.

n. a person who is responsible for the care and maintenance of a building, institution, or collection; a guardian or keeper of something valuable or important

19. He is in general _____ under the surgeon.

n. a state of controlled, temporary loss of bodily sensation or awareness that is induced for medical purposes

20. He tried to _____ himself by volunteering at the local charity after his mistakes.

v. to compensate for the faults or bad aspects of something; to regain possession or assume ownership of something by paying a sum of money or fulfilling a condition; to rescue or save someone from a difficult or hopeless situation

21. The drain cleaner contains caustic _____ and should be handled with care.

n. a highly alkaline solution made by soaking hardwood ashes in the water, used in the production of soap, detergents, and other cleaning agents; a caustic substance

22. The city _____ with activity as people rushed to work.

v. to move or act energetically and noisily; (noun) a rapid active commotion

ANSWERS: 16. severed, 17. adrift, 18. custodian, 19. anesthesia, 20. redeem, 21. lye, 22. bustled

23. After months of job searching, he felt _____ and unsure of his future.

adj. having no hope; despairing; having no chance of success

24. She had a _____ look and was determined to complete the task.

adj. having a specific aim or purpose; determined

25. Our university is famous for its professors, who are well-versed in behavioral _____.

n. the scientific study of the function, structure, and disorder of the brain and the nervous system

26. The venom from the snake bite _____ his arm.

v. to cause a person or part of the body to become unable to move or feel

27. The new policy aims to _____ the use of renewable energy sources.

v. to establish or make something a part of an institution (= a place such as a university, hospital, etc.)

28. _____ bees are boring holes into the wall.

n. a woodworker whose job is to make or repair wooden objects

29. She couldn't stop _____ on her nails.

v. to bite or chew on something persistently or nervously; to wear away at something gradually

30. The rolling _____ was a large, open area of high ground covered with heather.

n. a large area of open country, typically on high ground, covered with rough grass or heath, especially in Britain

ANSWERS: 23. hopeless, 24. purposeful, 25. neuroscience, 26. paralyzed, 27. institutionalize, 28. Carpenter, 29. gnawing, 30. moor

31. Her negative comments about the project only _____ the team's efforts.
v. to reduce the value or worth of something
32. The leaves began to _____ around in the windy weather.
v. to spin or turn rapidly; to move or be moved quickly in a circular manner; (noun) a spinning or rotating movement, often rapid or chaotic in nature
33. He _____ the truth to plead not guilty.
v. to tell someone about something again or differently
34. The scent of _____ is often used in aromatherapy to promote relaxation.
n. a genus of flowering trees and shrubs native to Australia that are known for their aromatic leaves and medicinal properties
35. The _____ mystic preached a message of love and tolerance to his followers.
n. a follower or practitioner of Islam's mystical or ascetic branch, known as Sufism. Sufis emphasize the personal experience of God and spiritual growth through contemplation, prayer, and devotion

ANSWERS: 31. devalued, 32. whirl, 33. retells, 34. eucalyptus, 35. Sufi