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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Laura Schulz: The surprisingly logical minds of babies

| TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

witticism

n. a clever or amusing remark or comment; a humorous or witty saying or phrase

synonym: quip, jest, pun

(1) sarcastic **witticism**, (2) subtle **witticism**

The comedian entertained the audience with his witty **witticism**.

conjecture

n. an opinion or conclusion formed based on incomplete information; a theory or speculation that is unsupported by firm evidence or proof

synonym: theory, guess, speculation

(1) **conjecture** theory, (2) scientific **conjecture**

There was much **conjecture** about the cause of the fire, but the investigation is still ongoing.

trifling

adj. of little importance or value; insignificant

synonym: insignificant, negligible, minimal

(1) **trifling** accident, (2) **trifling** amount

The argument between the two coworkers was just a **trifling** matter that should have been easily resolved.

infer

v. to form an opinion or conclude that something is true based on existing facts

synonym : guess, deduce, assume

(1) **infer** quality from price, (2) **infer** the possibility

Animal desire and preference are always **inferred** from their behavior.

dinosaur

n. a large extinct reptile, often with an armored back, long neck, tail, and bony plates on the skin

synonym : reptile, beast, monster

(1) hulking **dinosaur**, (2) **dinosaur** fossil

The discovery of a new **dinosaur** species made headlines in the scientific community.

nebula

n. a cloud of gas and dust in space, visible in the night sky, typically as a diffuse light source

synonym : cloud, mist, stardust

(1) a spiral **nebula**, (2) emission **nebula**

The galactic **nebula** was a beautiful sight through the telescope, with its vibrant colors and swirling clouds.

reconstruct

v. to build or form something again that has been damaged or destroyed

synonym : rebuild, revamp, reorganize

(1) **reconstruct** an image, (2) **reconstruct** the original text

They've decided to **reconstruct** a ruined castle.

cognition

n. the psychological process of perception and learning and reasoning; the mental action or process by which knowledge and understanding are developed in the mind

synonym : awareness, understanding, comprehension

(1) social **cognition**, (2) **cognition** disorder

The professor focused on the research of infant **cognition**.

sparse

adj. only in small quantities or numbers and often spread over a wide area

synonym : scarce, exiguous, infrequent

(1) a **sparse** population, (2) **sparse** snowfall

There is a **sparse** area between galaxies.

indebted

adj. owing money or having financial obligations to another person or organization; feeling grateful or obligated to someone for their help, support, or kindness

synonym : owing, obligated, beholden

(1) **indebted** to creditors, (2) financially **indebted**

He felt **indebted** to his parents for all the sacrifices they had made for him.

generalize

v. to make something, such as a theory, idea, etc., more widespread or widely applicable based on what is true in some cases

synonym : conclude, derive, extrapolate

(1) **generalize** Kepler's first law, (2) **generalize** sophisticatedly

It's dangerous to **generalize** about people.

innumerable

adj. too many to be counted

synonym : many, infinite, countless

(1) **innumerable** stars, (2) give **innumerable** interviews

We have overcome **innumerable** difficulties since our founding.

squeak

v. to make a high-pitched, short, sharp noise; to speak or say something in a high-pitched, weak, or timid voice

synonym : squeal, whine, creak

(1) **squeak** out a few words, (2) mice **squeak**

The door **squeaked** when I opened it.

whack

v. to hit someone or something hard or noisily

synonym : hit, strike, bash

(1) **whack** him with a stick, (2) **whack** up the volume

He **whacked** the ball out of the park with his home run.

imitate

v. to copy the speech, behavior, appearance, etc. of someone or something

synonym : mimic, emulate, replicate

(1) **imitate** painting styles, (2) **imitate** animal sounds

He **imitated** the modus operandi of the famous phantom thief.

fuss

n. a state of agitation or excitement; an angry disturbance

synonym : commotion, agitation, disturbance

(1) make a **fuss**, (2) get into a **fuss**

There was a **fuss** about the broken vase, but it was quickly forgotten.

probabilistic

adj. characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks

synonym : probable, statistical, likely

(1) **probabilistic** model, (2) **probabilistic** approach

In a **probabilistic** system, the outcome is uncertain and can vary based on chance.

improbable

adj. not likely to happen or be true; unlikely; having a low probability or chance of occurring

synonym : unlikely, doubtful, implausible

(1) **improbable** story, (2) **improbable** event

It is **improbable** that we will find a solution to this problem overnight.

confound

v. to confuse or perplex; to mix up or throw into disorder; to prove to be false or illogical

synonym : confuse, mix up, perplex

(1) **confound** right and wrong, (2) **confound** the problem

The unexpected events **confounded** the scientists, who had to rethink their hypothesis.

Arthurian

adj. relating to king Arthur and the tales and legends associated with him

(1) the **Arthurian** cycle, (2) **Arthurian** romances

The **Arthurian** legends of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table are popular literary motifs.

underlie

v. to be the support, basis, hidden cause of something; to be located under or below

synonym: govern, control, determine

(1) **underlie** the theory of the big bang, (2) **underlie** the current economic deadlock

His bitter experiences **underlie** his moral principles.

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**.

neuron

n. a cell that is specialized to carry information within the brain and between the brain and other parts of the body

synonym: nerve cell

(1) excite the **neurons**, (2) **neuron** cell body

Our body transfers information along each **neuron** using an electrical impulse.

revolutionize

v. to bring about a complete or radical change in something, often through the introduction of new methods or ideas

synonym: transform, innovate, modernize

(1) **revolutionize** the industry, (2) **revolutionize** the technology

The invention of the smartphone **revolutionized** the way we communicate with each other.

envision

v. to imagine or expect what a situation will be like in the future

synonym: anticipate, foresee, picture

(1) **envision** the future, (2) **envision** the project's success
We cannot **envision** her as President.

caregiving

n. the act of providing care and support for someone who is ill, disabled, or elderly

synonym: nurturing, caring, assisting

(1) **caregiving** process, (2) **caregiving** responsibilities
She devoted her life to **caregiving**, looking after her aging parents.

unintentional

adj. not done or made on purpose; accidental

synonym: accidental, unforeseen, spontaneous

(1) avoid **unintentional** harm, (2) **unintentional** insult
The mistake was **unintentional** and made in good faith.

quirk

n. a peculiar behavior, habit, or characteristic that is distinctive to an individual or group

synonym: eccentricity, idiosyncrasy, peculiarity

(1) personality **quirk**, (2) a **quirk** of fate
One of her **quirks** is that she always wears mismatched socks.

buggy

n. a small, lightweight car, usually with no roof, especially drawn by a single horse; (adjective) infested with bugs

synonym: carriage, cart, wagon

(1) baby **buggy**, (2) **buggy** update
This Middle Eastern resort offers dune **buggy** tours through the desert.

veil

n. a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure

synonym: cover, mask, (verb) conceal

(1) **veil** of mystery, (2) **veil** her face
He lifted her **veil** with both hands.

occlude

v. to obstruct or block something, usually a passage or opening, in a way that prevents normal flow or access

synonym: block, obstruct, close

(1) **occlude** a blood vessel, (2) **occlude** the ureteral orifice

The traffic jam **occluded** the road and caused a significant delay in the journey.

effortless

adj. requiring little or no effort; not difficult or strenuous; easy to accomplish

synonym: easy, simple, uncomplicated

(1) **effortless** victory, (2) **effortless** beauty

The dancer made her performance look **effortless** and graceful.

chimpanzee

n. a small, very intelligent ape found in west and central Africa with black or brown fur

synonym: ape, chimp, pan troglodytes

(1) **chimpanzee** behavior, (2) **chimpanzee** society

Many zoos have **chimpanzee** exhibits, allowing visitors to observe these intelligent primates up close.

Session 2: Spelling

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. uni_____nal insult | <i>adj.</i> not done or made on purpose; accidental |
| 2. tr_____ng accident | <i>adj.</i> of little importance or value; insignificant |
| 3. chi_____ee society | <i>n.</i> a small, very intelligent ape found in west and central Africa with black or brown fur |
| 4. di_____ur fossil | <i>n.</i> a large extinct reptile, often with an armored back, long neck, tail, and bony plates on the skin |
| 5. co_____nd right and wrong | <i>v.</i> to confuse or perplex; to mix up or throw into disorder; to prove to be false or illogical |
| 6. mice sq____k | <i>v.</i> to make a high-pitched, short, sharp noise; to speak or say something in a high-pitched, weak, or timid voice |
| 7. car_____ng responsibilities | <i>n.</i> the act of providing care and support for someone who is ill, disabled, or elderly |
| 8. v__l of mystery | <i>n.</i> a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure |
| 9. chi_____ee behavior | <i>n.</i> a small, very intelligent ape found in west and central Africa with black or brown fur |
| 10. avoid uni_____nal harm | <i>adj.</i> not done or made on purpose; accidental |
| 11. un_____ie the theory of the big bang | <i>v.</i> to be the support, basis, hidden cause of something; to be located under or below |

ANSWERS: 1. unintentional, 2. trifling, 3. chimpanzee, 4. dinosaur, 5. confound, 6. squeak, 7. caregiving, 8. veil, 9. chimpanzee, 10. unintentional, 11. underlie

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12. a theoretical concept in neu_____nce | <i>n.</i> the scientific study of the function, structure, and disorder of the brain and the nervous system |
| 13. in__r quality from price | <i>v.</i> to form an opinion or conclude that something is true based on existing facts |
| 14. rev_____ize the industry | <i>v.</i> to bring about a complete or radical change in something, often through the introduction of new methods or ideas |
| 15. a sp___e population | <i>adj.</i> only in small quantities or numbers and often spread over a wide area |
| 16. social co_____on | <i>n.</i> the psychological process of perception and learning and reasoning; the mental action or process by which knowledge and understanding are developed in the mind |
| 17. pro_____tic approach | <i>adj.</i> characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks |
| 18. con_____re theory | <i>n.</i> an opinion or conclusion formed based on incomplete information; a theory or speculation that is unsupported by firm evidence or proof |
| 19. im_____e painting styles | <i>v.</i> to copy the speech, behavior, appearance, etc. of someone or something |
| 20. in_____ed to creditors | <i>adj.</i> owing money or having financial obligations to another person or organization; feeling grateful or obligated to someone for their help, support, or kindness |

ANSWERS: 12. neuroscience, 13. infer, 14. revolutionize, 15. sparse, 16. cognition, 17. probabilistic, 18. conjecture, 19. imitate, 20. indebted

21. v__l her face *n.* a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure
22. wh__k him with a stick *v.* to hit someone or something hard or noisily
23. a qu__k of fate *n.* a peculiar behavior, habit, or characteristic that is distinctive to an individual or group
24. oc_____e the ureteral orifice *v.* to obstruct or block something, usually a passage or opening, in a way that prevents normal flow or access
25. sq___k out a few words *v.* to make a high-pitched, short, sharp noise; to speak or say something in a high-pitched, weak, or timid voice
26. sp___e snowfall *adj.* only in small quantities or numbers and often spread over a wide area
27. co_____on disorder *n.* the psychological process of perception and learning and reasoning; the mental action or process by which knowledge and understanding are developed in the mind
28. pro_____tic model *adj.* characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks
29. un_____ie the current economic deadlock *v.* to be the support, basis, hidden cause of something; to be located under or below
30. the branch of neu_____nce *n.* the scientific study of the function, structure, and disorder of the brain and the nervous system

ANSWERS: 21. veil, 22. whack, 23. quirk, 24. occlude, 25. squeak, 26. sparse, 27. cognition, 28. probabilistic, 29. underlie, 30. neuroscience

31. subtle wi_____sm *n.* a clever or amusing remark or comment; a humorous or witty saying or phrase
32. en_____on the project's success *v.* to imagine or expect what a situation will be like in the future
33. get into a f__s *n.* a state of agitation or excitement; an angry disturbance
34. gen_____ze sophisticatedly *v.* to make something, such as a theory, idea, etc., more widespread or widely applicable based on what is true in some cases
35. inn_____le stars *adj.* too many to be counted
36. eff_____ss beauty *adj.* requiring little or no effort; not difficult or strenuous; easy to accomplish
37. ne_____n cell body *n.* a cell that is specialized to carry information within the brain and between the brain and other parts of the body
38. oc_____e a blood vessel *v.* to obstruct or block something, usually a passage or opening, in a way that prevents normal flow or access
39. hulking di_____ur *n.* a large extinct reptile, often with an armored back, long neck, tail, and bony plates on the skin
40. imp_____le event *adj.* not likely to happen or be true; unlikely; having a low probability or chance of occurring
41. the Ar_____an cycle *adj.* relating to king Arthur and the tales and legends associated with him

ANSWERS: 31. witticism, 32. envision, 33. fuss, 34. generalize, 35. innumerable, 36. effortless, 37. neuron, 38. occlude, 39. dinosaur, 40. improbable, 41. Arthurian

42. in__r the possibility *v.* to form an opinion or conclude that something is true based on existing facts
43. bu__y update *n.* a small, lightweight car, usually with no roof, especially drawn by a single horse; (adjective) infested with bugs
44. rev_____ize the technology *v.* to bring about a complete or radical change in something, often through the introduction of new methods or ideas
45. a spiral ne___a *n.* a cloud of gas and dust in space, visible in the night sky, typically as a diffuse light source
46. gen_____ze Kepler's first law *v.* to make something, such as a theory, idea, etc., more widespread or widely applicable based on what is true in some cases
47. car_____ng process *n.* the act of providing care and support for someone who is ill, disabled, or elderly
48. imp_____le story *adj.* not likely to happen or be true; unlikely; having a low probability or chance of occurring
49. sarcastic wi_____sm *n.* a clever or amusing remark or comment; a humorous or witty saying or phrase
50. rec_____ct an image *v.* to build or form something again that has been damaged or destroyed
51. tr_____ng amount *adj.* of little importance or value; insignificant
52. personality qu__k *n.* a peculiar behavior, habit, or characteristic that is distinctive to an individual or group

ANSWERS: 42. infer, 43. buggy, 44. revolutionize, 45. nebula, 46. generalize, 47. caregiving, 48. improbable, 49. witticism, 50. reconstruct, 51. trifling, 52. quirk

53. im_____e animal sounds *v.* to copy the speech, behavior, appearance, etc. of someone or something
54. rec_____ct the original text *v.* to build or form something again that has been damaged or destroyed
55. en_____on the future *v.* to imagine or expect what a situation will be like in the future
56. financially in_____ed *adj.* owing money or having financial obligations to another person or organization; feeling grateful or obligated to someone for their help, support, or kindness
57. Ar_____an romances *adj.* relating to king Arthur and the tales and legends associated with him
58. co_____nd the problem *v.* to confuse or perplex; to mix up or throw into disorder; to prove to be false or illogical
59. give inn_____le interviews *adj.* too many to be counted
60. make a f__s *n.* a state of agitation or excitement; an angry disturbance
61. wh__k up the volume *v.* to hit someone or something hard or noisily
62. baby bu__y *n.* a small, lightweight car, usually with no roof, especially drawn by a single horse; (adjective) infested with bugs
63. emission ne____a *n.* a cloud of gas and dust in space, visible in the night sky, typically as a diffuse light source

ANSWERS: 53. imitate, 54. reconstruct, 55. envision, 56. indebted, 57. Arthurian, 58. confound, 59. innumerable, 60. fuss, 61. whack, 62. buggy, 63. nebula

64. excite the ne___ns *n.* a cell that is specialized to carry information within the brain and between the brain and other parts of the body
65. scientific con_____re *n.* an opinion or conclusion formed based on incomplete information; a theory or speculation that is unsupported by firm evidence or proof
66. eff_____ss victory *adj.* requiring little or no effort; not difficult or strenuous; easy to accomplish

ANSWERS: 64. neuron, 65. conjecture, 66. effortless

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. There was much _____ about the cause of the fire, but the investigation is still ongoing.
 - n.* an opinion or conclusion formed based on incomplete information; a theory or speculation that is unsupported by firm evidence or proof

2. The _____ legends of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table are popular literary motifs.
 - adj.* relating to king Arthur and the tales and legends associated with him

3. They've decided to _____ a ruined castle.
 - v.* to build or form something again that has been damaged or destroyed

4. The traffic jam _____ the road and caused a significant delay in the journey.
 - v.* to obstruct or block something, usually a passage or opening, in a way that prevents normal flow or access

5. His bitter experiences _____ his moral principles.
 - v.* to be the support, basis, hidden cause of something; to be located under or below

6. It is _____ that we will find a solution to this problem overnight.
 - adj.* not likely to happen or be true; unlikely; having a low probability or chance of occurring

7. Many zoos have _____ exhibits, allowing visitors to observe these intelligent primates up close.
 - n.* a small, very intelligent ape found in west and central Africa with black or brown fur

ANSWERS: 1. conjecture, 2. Arthurian, 3. reconstruct, 4. occluded, 5. underlie, 6. improbable, 7. chimpanzee

8. The invention of the smartphone _____ the way we communicate with each other.
- v. to bring about a complete or radical change in something, often through the introduction of new methods or ideas
9. The door _____ when I opened it.
- v. to make a high-pitched, short, sharp noise; to speak or say something in a high-pitched, weak, or timid voice
10. We cannot _____ her as President.
- v. to imagine or expect what a situation will be like in the future
11. He lifted her _____ with both hands.
- n. a piece of fine cloth worn by women to cover or conceal the face; (verb) to cover, conceal, or obscure
12. We have overcome _____ difficulties since our founding.
- adj. too many to be counted
13. The mistake was _____ and made in good faith.
- adj. not done or made on purpose; accidental
14. He _____ the modus operandi of the famous phantom thief.
- v. to copy the speech, behavior, appearance, etc. of someone or something
15. It's dangerous to _____ about people.
- v. to make something, such as a theory, idea, etc., more widespread or widely applicable based on what is true in some cases

ANSWERS: 8. revolutionized, 9. squeaked, 10. envision, 11. veil, 12. innumerable, 13. unintentional, 14. imitated, 15. generalize

16. 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
17. The galactic _____ was a beautiful sight through the telescope, with its vibrant colors and swirling clouds.
- n.* a cloud of gas and dust in space, visible in the night sky, typically as a diffuse light source
18. The dancer made her performance look _____ and graceful.
- adj.* requiring little or no effort; not difficult or strenuous; easy to accomplish
19. This Middle Eastern resort offers dune _____ tours through the desert.
- n.* a small, lightweight car, usually with no roof, especially drawn by a single horse; (adjective) infested with bugs
20. There is a _____ area between galaxies.
- adj.* only in small quantities or numbers and often spread over a wide area
21. Our body transfers information along each _____ using an electrical impulse.
- n.* a cell that is specialized to carry information within the brain and between the brain and other parts of the body
22. He _____ the ball out of the park with his home run.
- v.* to hit someone or something hard or noisily
23. The professor focused on the research of infant _____.
- n.* the psychological process of perception and learning and reasoning; the mental action or process by which knowledge and understanding are developed in the mind

ANSWERS: 16. neuroscience, 17. nebula, 18. effortless, 19. buggy, 20. sparse, 21. neuron, 22. whacked, 23. cognition

24. In a _____ system, the outcome is uncertain and can vary based on chance.
- adj.* characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks
25. The comedian entertained the audience with his witty _____.
- n.* a clever or amusing remark or comment; a humorous or witty saying or phrase
26. He felt _____ to his parents for all the sacrifices they had made for him.
- adj.* owing money or having financial obligations to another person or organization; feeling grateful or obligated to someone for their help, support, or kindness
27. The unexpected events _____ the scientists, who had to rethink their hypothesis.
- v.* to confuse or perplex; to mix up or throw into disorder; to prove to be false or illogical
28. One of her _____ is that she always wears mismatched socks.
- n.* a peculiar behavior, habit, or characteristic that is distinctive to an individual or group
29. She devoted her life to _____ looking after her aging parents.
- n.* the act of providing care and support for someone who is ill, disabled, or elderly
30. Animal desire and preference are always _____ from their behavior.
- v.* to form an opinion or conclude that something is true based on existing facts
31. There was a _____ about the broken vase, but it was quickly forgotten.
- n.* a state of agitation or excitement; an angry disturbance

ANSWERS: 24. probabilistic, 25. witticism, 26. indebted, 27. confounded, 28. quirks, 29. caregiving, 30. inferred, 31. fuss

32. The discovery of a new _____ species made headlines in the scientific community.

n. a large extinct reptile, often with an armored back, long neck, tail, and bony plates on the skin

33. The argument between the two coworkers was just a _____ matter that should have been easily resolved.

adj. of little importance or value; insignificant

ANSWERS: 32. dinosaur, 33. trifling