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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Marcus Byrne: The dance of the dung beetle | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

dung

n. solid waste from animals, especially from large animals such as cattle and horses; (verb) to fertilize or dress with animals' excrement

synonym: excrement, droppings, manure

(1) ball of **dung**, (2) **dung** the land

You can see the horse **dung** on the country road.

beetle

n. an insect having a hard shell-like back covering its wings

(1) **beetle** brows, (2) a **beetle** larva

In ancient civilizations, the scarab **beetle** was worshiped as a sacred creature.

larva

n. the immature free-living form of insect or an animal, which at hatching from the egg, is fundamentally unlike its parent and must metamorphose

synonym: caterpillar, grub, maggot

(1) **larva** of a butterfly, (2) a moth **larva**

The butterfly emerged from its **larva** stage.

fingernail

n. the hard, slightly curved part that covers the outer tip of each finger

synonym: claw, paw

(1) **fingernail** biting, (2) fake **fingernail**

The car body scraped off with a **fingernail**.

bury

v. to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb
synonym : entomb, sink, forget

(1) **bury** in the earth, (2) **bury** emotion

There is plenty of space to **bury** everyone.

smashing

adj. very successful or impressive; causing something to be broken or destroyed

synonym : great, wonderful, breaking

(1) a **smashing** blow, (2) give **smashing** results

The band's new album was a **smashing** success, reaching the top of the charts.

flinch

v. to make a quick, nervous movement in response to pain, fear, or surprise; to draw back or wince involuntarily

synonym : shudder, recoil, wince

(1) **flinch** at the noise, (2) **flinch** from the truth

I couldn't help but **flinch** when the door slammed shut.

polarization

n. the division or separation of something into two opposing or contrasting groups or factions; the condition of being polarized or having poles

synonym : polarity, division, separation

(1) **polarization** effect, (2) dielectric **polarization**

The **polarization** of political views has created a deep divide in the country.

orient

v. to position or adjust someone or something for a particular purpose; (noun) the countries of Asia

synonym : position, align, adjust

(1) **orient** my thinking, (2) the exotic flavor of the **Orient**

She took a moment to **orient** herself in the unfamiliar city.

reorient

v. to change the focus, position, or direction of someone or something

synonym : reconstruct, reorganize

(1) **reorient** my thinking, (2) **reorient** the receiving antenna
Making a sharp noise will quickly **reorient** children's thoughts to the present.

celestial

adj. relating to the sky or the heavens; of or like the sky or the heavens

synonym: heavenly, divine, ethereal

(1) **celestial** bliss, (2) **celestial** navigation

The **celestial** bodies in the night sky were beautiful to behold.

displace

v. to force someone or something to leave their home or place of origin, especially as a result of conflict, natural disaster, or manipulation

synonym: evict, exile, remove

(1) **displace** workers, (2) **displace** the explosive power

The construction of the new dam will **displace** hundreds of families living downstream.

spit

v. to eject saliva or other liquid from the mouth

synonym: expectorate, saliva, spew

(1) **spit** a bullet, (2) **spit** a mouthful of saliva

She tried to **spit** out the gum that she had been chewing.

centigrade

n. a system of temperature measurement in which the freezing point of water is 0 degrees and the boiling point of water is 100 degrees; also known as the Celsius scale

(1) **centigrade** scale, (2) **centigrade** thermometer

The temperature reached a peak of 35 degrees **centigrade**.

roar

v. to make a loud, deep sound, like a lion or a car engine

synonym: bellow, yell, shout

(1) **roar** with laughter, (2) **roar** for more

The lion **roared** loudly, signaling its dominance over the other animals.

- stilt**
- n.* a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
- synonym* : pole, post, long-legs
- (1) **stilt** grass, (2) **stilt** walking
- The archeologists found ancient **stilt** houses that were preserved under the water.
- scuttle**
- v.* to run or move quickly with short, hurried steps; to deliberately sink a ship by creating holes or damage in its hull; to abandon or destroy a plan or project; (noun) a metal container with a handle and a lid, typically used for carrying coal or other materials; a small hatch or opening in a ship's deck or side
- synonym* : scamper, scurry, flee
- (1) **scuttle** out of a room, (2) **scuttle** the treaty
- The mice **scuttled** across the kitchen floor in search of food.
- genu**
- n.* the anatomical term for the convex part of a structure, such as a knee or elbow joint
- synonym* : knee, joint, articulation
- (1) **genu** valgum, (2) **genu** flexion
- The surgeon performed a **genu** replacement on the elderly patient.
- pellet**
- n.* a small, round piece of compressed material, such as wood or plastic
- synonym* : bead, ball, bullet
- (1) the form of a small **pellet**, (2) **pellet** stove
- The **pellet** gun was used to shoot small metal balls.
- forage**
- v.* to search or hunt for food, provisions, or other necessities; to scavenge or seek out resources in a determined or systematic manner
- synonym* : scavenge, hunt, search
- (1) **forage** for food, (2) **forage** for information

She would **forage** through her massive handbag every morning to find her keys.

westward

adj. directed or going towards the west; located in the west; moving or facing towards the west

synonym: western, westerly, westbound

(1) **westward** expansion, (2) **westward** migration

Lewis and Clark's **westward** journey was an important exploration of the newly acquired Louisiana Territory.

lookout

n. a person or group of people who are responsible for watching for danger or other potential threats and warning others of their presence

synonym: watchman, sentinel, guard

(1) **lookout** team, (2) on the **lookout** for danger

The **lookout** tower provided a clear view of the surrounding area.

blob

n. a small amount or drop of a thick liquid or sticky substance

synonym: chunk, lump, hunk

(1) a big **blob** of yellow, (2) a **blob** of jelly

A **blob** of ink fell on the floor.

convoluted

adj. extraordinarily complicated and hard to understand

synonym: intricate, complex, bending

(1) **convoluted** plot, (2) **convoluted** legal language

James Joyce's books are full of long, **convoluted** sentences.

cunning

adj. clever or skillful in achieving a goal, especially deceptively or secretly; shrewd or wily

synonym: sly, crafty, tricky

(1) **cunning** plan, (2) **cunning** thief

The **cunning** fox managed to elude the hunters and escape with his prey.

burrow

v. to excavate a hole or make a tunnel in the ground by digging, typically for use as a dwelling of an animal

synonym: tunnel, dig, excavate

(1) **burrow** through the forest, (2) **burrow** into a mystery

You can't **burrow** through solid metal.

sham

n. something that is not as good or true as it seems to be and is intended to deceive people; a person who pretends to be something they are not

synonym: bogus, counterfeit, fraudulent

(1) a **sham** battle, (2) turn out to be all **sham**

The data he prepared was completely **sham**.

callous

adj. insensitive and cruel to the suffering of others; having an emotionally hardened or unfeeling attitude; hardened or thickened, especially referring to skin or other tissue that has been subjected to repeated friction or irritation

synonym: cold, heartless, unfeeling

(1) **callous** person, (2) **callous** remark

The supervisor's **callous** behavior towards his employees resulted in high turnover rates.

odometer

n. an instrument in a vehicle that measures and displays the distance traveled, usually in miles or kilometers

synonym: mileage counter, mileometer, distance meter

(1) **odometer** reading, (2) reset the **odometer**

The mechanic checked the car's **odometer** to determine how many miles it had traveled.

revolting

adj. causing strong disgust or repugnance; obscene, offensive, or morally unappealing

synonym: disgusting, repulsive, nauseating

(1) **revolting** sight, (2) **revolting** behavior

The sight and smell of the rotting garbage were **revolting**.

Session 2: Spelling

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. the form of a small pe___t | <i>n.</i> a small, round piece of compressed material, such as wood or plastic |
| 2. a big b__b of yellow | <i>n.</i> a small amount or drop of a thick liquid or sticky substance |
| 3. pe___t stove | <i>n.</i> a small, round piece of compressed material, such as wood or plastic |
| 4. r__r for more | <i>v.</i> to make a loud, deep sound, like a lion or a car engine |
| 5. sc_____e the treaty | <i>v.</i> to run or move quickly with short, hurried steps; to deliberately sink a ship by creating holes or damage in its hull; to abandon or destroy a plan or project; (noun) a metal container with a handle and a lid, typically used for carrying coal or other materials; a small hatch or opening in a ship's deck or side |
| 6. s__t a mouthful of saliva | <i>v.</i> to eject saliva or other liquid from the mouth |
| 7. ce_____al navigation | <i>adj.</i> relating to the sky or the heavens; of or like the sky or the heavens |
| 8. b__y in the earth | <i>v.</i> to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb |
| 9. turn out to be all s__m | <i>n.</i> something that is not as good or true as it seems to be and is intended to deceive people; a person who pretends to be something they are not |

ANSWERS: 1. pellet, 2. blob, 3. pellet, 4. roar, 5. scuttle, 6. spit, 7. celestial, 8. bury, 9. sham

10. a sm____ng blow *adj.* very successful or impressive; causing something to be broken or destroyed
11. st__t walking *n.* a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
12. con_____ed legal language *adj.* extraordinarily complicated and hard to understand
13. a b__b of jelly *n.* a small amount or drop of a thick liquid or sticky substance
14. g__u valgum *n.* the anatomical term for the convex part of a structure, such as a knee or elbow joint
15. cu_____g thief *adj.* clever or skillful in achieving a goal, especially deceptively or secretly; shrewd or wily
16. b__y emotion *v.* to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb
17. di_____ce workers *v.* to force someone or something to leave their home or place of origin, especially as a result of conflict, natural disaster, or manipulation
18. di_____ce the explosive power *v.* to force someone or something to leave their home or place of origin, especially as a result of conflict, natural disaster, or manipulation
19. dielectric pol_____ion *n.* the division or separation of something into two opposing or contrasting groups or factions; the condition of being polarized or having poles

ANSWERS: 10. smashing, 11. stilt, 12. convoluted, 13. blob, 14. genu, 15. cunning, 16. bury, 17. displace, 18. displace, 19. polarization

20. st__t grass *n.* a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
21. s__t a bullet *v.* to eject saliva or other liquid from the mouth
22. be___e brows *n.* an insect having a hard shell-like back covering its wings
23. we____rd migration *adj.* directed or going towards the west; located in the west; moving or facing towards the west
24. a s__m battle *n.* something that is not as good or true as it seems to be and is intended to deceive people; a person who pretends to be something they are not
25. bu___w into a mystery *v.* to excavate a hole or make a tunnel in the ground by digging, typically for use as a dwelling of an animal
26. r__r with laughter *v.* to make a loud, deep sound, like a lion or a car engine
27. cu____g plan *adj.* clever or skillful in achieving a goal, especially deceptively or secretly; shrewd or wily
28. re_____ng behavior *adj.* causing strong disgust or repugnance; obscene, offensive, or morally unappealing
29. fl___h from the truth *v.* to make a quick, nervous movement in response to pain, fear, or surprise; to draw back or wince involuntarily

ANSWERS: 20. stilt, 21. spit, 22. beetle, 23. westward, 24. sham, 25. burrow, 26. roar, 27. cunning, 28. revolting, 29. flinch

30. fin_____il biting *n.* the hard, slightly curved part that covers the outer tip of each finger
31. ce_____al bliss *adj.* relating to the sky or the heavens; of or like the sky or the heavens
32. lo_____t team *n.* a person or group of people who are responsible for watching for danger or other potential threats and warning others of their presence
33. d__g the land *n.* solid waste from animals, especially from large animals such as cattle and horses; (verb) to fertilize or dress with animals' excrement
34. fo___e for food *v.* to search or hunt for food, provisions, or other necessities; to scavenge or seek out resources in a determined or systematic manner
35. fake fin_____il *n.* the hard, slightly curved part that covers the outer tip of each finger
36. ca_____s remark *adj.* insensitive and cruel to the suffering of others; having an emotionally hardened or unfeeling attitude; hardened or thickened, especially referring to skin or other tissue that has been subjected to repeated friction or irritation
37. od_____er reading *n.* an instrument in a vehicle that measures and displays the distance traveled, usually in miles or kilometers
38. bu___w through the forest *v.* to excavate a hole or make a tunnel in the ground by digging, typically for use as a dwelling of an animal

ANSWERS: 30. fingernail, 31. celestial, 32. lookout, 33. dung, 34. forage, 35. fingernail, 36. callous, 37. odometer, 38. burrow

39. re_____nt my thinking *v.* to change the focus, position, or direction of someone or something
40. fl___h at the noise *v.* to make a quick, nervous movement in response to pain, fear, or surprise; to draw back or wince involuntarily
41. give sm_____ng results *adj.* very successful or impressive; causing something to be broken or destroyed
42. ball of d__g *n.* solid waste from animals, especially from large animals such as cattle and horses; (verb) to fertilize or dress with animals' excrement
43. a moth la__a *n.* the immature free-living form of insect or an animal, which at hatching from the egg, is fundamentally unlike its parent and must metamorphose
44. la__a of a butterfly *n.* the immature free-living form of insect or an animal, which at hatching from the egg, is fundamentally unlike its parent and must metamorphose
45. we_____rd expansion *adj.* directed or going towards the west; located in the west; moving or facing towards the west
46. a be___e larva *n.* an insect having a hard shell-like back covering its wings
47. reset the od_____er *n.* an instrument in a vehicle that measures and displays the distance traveled, usually in miles or kilometers
48. cen_____de scale *n.* a system of temperature measurement in which the freezing point of water is 0 degrees and the boiling point of water is 100 degrees; also known as the Celsius scale

ANSWERS: 39. reorient, 40. flinch, 41. smashing, 42. dung, 43. larva, 44. larva, 45. westward, 46. beetle, 47. odometer, 48. centigrade

49. cen_____de thermometer *n.* a system of temperature measurement in which the freezing point of water is 0 degrees and the boiling point of water is 100 degrees; also known as the Celsius scale
50. pol_____ion effect *n.* the division or separation of something into two opposing or contrasting groups or factions; the condition of being polarized or having poles
51. con_____ed plot *adj.* extraordinarily complicated and hard to understand
52. re_____ng sight *adj.* causing strong disgust or repugnance; obscene, offensive, or morally unappealing
53. sc_____e out of a room *v.* to run or move quickly with short, hurried steps; to deliberately sink a ship by creating holes or damage in its hull; to abandon or destroy a plan or project; (noun) a metal container with a handle and a lid, typically used for carrying coal or other materials; a small hatch or opening in a ship's deck or side
54. fo___e for information *v.* to search or hunt for food, provisions, or other necessities; to scavenge or seek out resources in a determined or systematic manner
55. g__u flexion *n.* the anatomical term for the convex part of a structure, such as a knee or elbow joint
56. the exotic flavor of the Or___t *v.* to position or adjust someone or something for a particular purpose; (noun) the countries of Asia

ANSWERS: 49. centigrade, 50. polarization, 51. convoluted, 52. revolting, 53. scuttle, 54. forage, 55. genu, 56. orient

57. on the lo____t for danger *n.* a person or group of people who are responsible for watching for danger or other potential threats and warning others of their presence
58. ca____s person *adj.* insensitive and cruel to the suffering of others; having an emotionally hardened or unfeeling attitude; hardened or thickened, especially referring to skin or other tissue that has been subjected to repeated friction or irritation
59. re____nt the receiving antenna *v.* to change the focus, position, or direction of someone or something
60. or____t my thinking *v.* to position or adjust someone or something for a particular purpose;
(noun) the countries of Asia

ANSWERS: 57. lookout, 58. callous, 59. reorient, 60. orient

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The _____ gun was used to shoot small metal balls.
n. a small, round piece of compressed material, such as wood or plastic
2. The _____ of political views has created a deep divide in the country.
n. the division or separation of something into two opposing or contrasting groups or factions; the condition of being polarized or having poles
3. In ancient civilizations, the scarab _____ was worshiped as a sacred creature.
n. an insect having a hard shell-like back covering its wings
4. The _____ tower provided a clear view of the surrounding area.
n. a person or group of people who are responsible for watching for danger or other potential threats and warning others of their presence
5. She tried to _____ out the gum that she had been chewing.
v. to eject saliva or other liquid from the mouth
6. The butterfly emerged from its _____ stage.
n. the immature free-living form of insect or an animal, which at hatching from the egg, is fundamentally unlike its parent and must metamorphose
7. The lion _____ loudly, signaling its dominance over the other animals.
v. to make a loud, deep sound, like a lion or a car engine
8. The mice _____ across the kitchen floor in search of food.
v. to run or move quickly with short, hurried steps; to deliberately sink a ship by creating holes or damage in its hull; to abandon or destroy a plan or project;
(noun) a metal container with a handle and a lid, typically used for carrying coal or other materials; a small hatch or opening in a ship's deck or side

ANSWERS: 1. pellet, 2. polarization, 3. beetle, 4. lookout, 5. spit, 6. larva, 7. roared, 8. scuttled

9. The surgeon performed a _____ replacement on the elderly patient.
n. the anatomical term for the convex part of a structure, such as a knee or elbow joint
10. The car body scraped off with a _____.
n. the hard, slightly curved part that covers the outer tip of each finger
11. The _____ fox managed to elude the hunters and escape with his prey.
adj. clever or skillful in achieving a goal, especially deceptively or secretly; shrewd or wily
12. The construction of the new dam will _____ hundreds of families living downstream.
v. to force someone or something to leave their home or place of origin, especially as a result of conflict, natural disaster, or manipulation
13. Lewis and Clark's _____ journey was an important exploration of the newly acquired Louisiana Territory.
adj. directed or going towards the west; located in the west; moving or facing towards the west
14. You can't _____ through solid metal.
v. to excavate a hole or make a tunnel in the ground by digging, typically for use as a dwelling of an animal
15. The supervisor's _____ behavior towards his employees resulted in high turnover rates.
adj. insensitive and cruel to the suffering of others; having an emotionally hardened or unfeeling attitude; hardened or thickened, especially referring to skin or other tissue that has been subjected to repeated friction or irritation

ANSWERS: 9. genu, 10. fingernail, 11. cunning, 12. displace, 13. westward, 14. burrow, 15. callous

16. The mechanic checked the car's _____ to determine how many miles it had traveled.
- n.* an instrument in a vehicle that measures and displays the distance traveled, usually in miles or kilometers
17. The band's new album was a _____ success, reaching the top of the charts.
- adj.* very successful or impressive; causing something to be broken or destroyed
18. The archeologists found ancient _____ houses that were preserved under the water.
- n.* a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
19. Making a sharp noise will quickly _____ children's thoughts to the present.
- v.* to change the focus, position, or direction of someone or something
20. The _____ bodies in the night sky were beautiful to behold.
- adj.* relating to the sky or the heavens; of or like the sky or the heavens
21. The data he prepared was completely _____.
- n.* something that is not as good or true as it seems to be and is intended to deceive people; a person who pretends to be something they are not
22. You can see the horse _____ on the country road.
- n.* solid waste from animals, especially from large animals such as cattle and horses; (verb) to fertilize or dress with animals' excrement
23. The temperature reached a peak of 35 degrees _____.
- n.* a system of temperature measurement in which the freezing point of water is 0 degrees and the boiling point of water is 100 degrees; also known as the Celsius scale

ANSWERS: 16. odometer, 17. smashing, 18. stilt, 19. reorient, 20. celestial, 21. sham, 22. dung, 23. centigrade

24. There is plenty of space to _____ everyone.

v. to place a dead body in the ground, grave, or tomb

25. She took a moment to _____ herself in the unfamiliar city.

v. to position or adjust someone or something for a particular purpose; (noun) the countries of Asia

26. A _____ of ink fell on the floor.

n. a small amount or drop of a thick liquid or sticky substance

27. I couldn't help but _____ when the door slammed shut.

v. to make a quick, nervous movement in response to pain, fear, or surprise; to draw back or wince involuntarily

28. She would _____ through her massive handbag every morning to find her keys.

v. to search or hunt for food, provisions, or other necessities; to scavenge or seek out resources in a determined or systematic manner

29. James Joyce's books are full of long, _____ sentences.

adj. extraordinarily complicated and hard to understand

30. The sight and smell of the rotting garbage were _____.

adj. causing strong disgust or repugnance; obscene, offensive, or morally unappealing

ANSWERS: 24. bury, 25. orient, 26. blob, 27. flinch, 28. forage, 29. convoluted, 30. revolting