

Englist.me



Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Tyler Cowen: Be suspicious of simple stories | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

IMPORTANT

This material is a commentary and does not contain any copyrighted material of the reference source. We strongly recommend accessing/buying the reference source at the same time.

Session 1: Word List

- rag** *n.* a piece of cloth, especially an old one, torn or cut into strips and used for cleaning
synonym: cloth, fragment
(1) a **rag** of cloud, (2) **rag** doll
He used an old **rag** to clean the grease off the car's engine.
- rebirth** *n.* the process of being reborn or starting anew, especially after a period of decline or stagnation
synonym: renewal, rejuvenation, resurrection
(1) undergo a **rebirth**, (2) **rebirth** of democracy
The phoenix is a symbol of **rebirth**, rising from the ashes to be reborn anew.
- liberate** *v.* to set free; to release or rescue from captivity or oppression
synonym: emancipate, release, set free
(1) **liberate** people from oppression, (2) **liberate** potential
The prisoners were **liberated** after the war ended.
- empower** *v.* to give someone the power or authority to do something
synonym: authorize, endow, entitle
(1) **empower** my life, (2) **empower** the secretary to do the same

The company **empowered** employees to buy low-price items without approval to achieve efficient purchasing.

revere

v. to feel deep and profound respect or admiration for someone or something; to hold in high esteem

synonym: worship, venerate, admire

(1) **revere** a hero, (2) **revere** a deity

Many people **revere** their religious leaders and look up to them for guidance.

storyline

n. the central narrative or plot of a story, often involving a series of events or conflicts that move the story forward; the overall structure or arc of a story

synonym: plot, narrative

(1) follow a **storyline**, (2) predictable **storyline**

The **storyline** of the movie was predictable but still entertaining.

dictator

n. a political leader who has complete power over a country, especially one who has obtained control by force

synonym: autocrat, tyrant, despot

(1) military **dictator**, (2) a **dictator** with enormous powers

A popular uprising led to the overthrow of the **dictator**.

deception

n. the act of misleading or tricking someone, often by creating a false impression or concealing the truth; a fraudulent or dishonest action

synonym: fraud, deceit, trickery

(1) **deception** tactics, (2) **deception** in advertising

The politician was accused of **deception** for making false promises during his campaign.

astray

adv. away from the right path or direction

synonym: off course, misdirected, wayward

(1) led **astray** by superstition, (2) gone **astray**

He wandered **astray** from the path and got lost in the forest.

nudge

v. to push someone or something gently, especially with your elbow, to attract the person's attention; (noun) a small push or prod to encourage a desired action or behavior

synonym: bump, elbow, (noun) prod

(1) **nudge** price levels up, (2) give a person a **nudge**

The teacher **nudged** the student to get his attention and asked him a question.

sway

v. to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something

synonym: swing, oscillate, influence

(1) **sway** back and forth, (2) **sway** to the rhythm

The politician tried to **sway** public opinion in his favor, but his arguments fell flat.

seduce

v. to entice someone to engage in sexual behavior or to enter into a romantic relationship

synonym: tempt, lure, entice

(1) **seduce** him into crime, (2) **seduce** her mind

He tried to **seduce** her with his charm and good looks.

talisman

n. an object believed to bring good luck or protection to its owner, often worn as jewelry or carried on one's person

synonym: charm, amulet, mascot

(1) protective **talisman**, (2) religious **talisman**

I always carry my grandmother's **talisman** for good luck.

irrational

adj. not based on, or not using reason or clear thinking; (mathematics) a real number that cannot be expressed as the ratio of two integers

synonym: illogical, ludicrous, senseless

(1) an **irrational** request, (2) **irrational** numbers

They continued to endure **irrational** treatment by the dictatorship.

pessimism

n. a tendency to see the worst in things and anticipate adverse outcomes; a belief that the world is generally bad or that something will go wrong more often than it will go right

synonym: negativity, defeatism, cynicism

(1) deep **pessimism**, (2) sense of **pessimism**

The CEO's constant **pessimism** about the company's future affected employee morale.

fallacy

n. a mistaken belief, idea, or argument that is not supported by facts or evidence; a deceptive or misleading statement or belief

synonym: falsity, misconception, delusion

(1) **fallacy** of logic, (2) belief in a **fallacy**

Many people cling to the **fallacy** that they can get rich quickly, despite all evidence.

outsider

n. a person who is not part of a particular group, community, or society; someone who is considered to be on the periphery or outside of established social circles

synonym: stranger, foreigner, alien

(1) **outsider** perspective, (2) **outsider** artist

Living in a foreign country can make you feel like an **outsider** at times.

heuristic

adj. relating to a trial-and-error method of problem-solving, often involving learning from one's mistakes and using feedback to improve one's approach; also used to describe a problem-solving method or approach that is practical, efficient, or intuitive

synonym: solving, problem-solving, exploratory

(1) **heuristic** reasoning, (2) **heuristic** algorithm

The teacher used a **heuristic** method to teach the complex topic in a simple way.

glamorous

adj. highly attractive and exciting, and different from ordinary things or people

synonym: alluring, bewitching, enchanting

(1) **glamorous** movie stars, (2) cast **glamorous** eyes

The south coast is less **glamorous** yet has many clean and appealing hotels.

seductive

adj. tempting or alluring attractively or persuasively; often used to describe a person, behavior, or idea that is intended to lure or entice someone into a specific action or belief

synonym: alluring, tempting, enticing

(1) a **seductive** smile, (2) **seductive** behavior

The actor's **seductive** gaze drew the audience's attention on stage.

memoir

n. a historical account or biography written from the writer's knowledge of famous people, places, or events

synonym: bio, biography

(1) family **memoir**, (2) publish a **memoir**

He wrote his **memoirs** while awaiting trial.

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.

unintended

adj. not planned or meant

synonym: accidental, unconsenting, involuntary

(1) **unintended** bias, (2) **unintended** misunderstanding

Excessive human interference in the global environment may bring **unintended** consequences.

oppressive

adj. treating people in a cruel and authoritarian way

synonym: stifling, overwhelming, depressing

(1) the atmosphere was **oppressive**, (2) **oppressive**

governments

The political situation has become increasingly **oppressive**.

agnostic

n. a person who believes that it is impossible to know whether there is a god

synonym: skeptic, doubter, unbeliever

(1) **agnostic** world-view, (2) **agnostic** position

Her scientific background led her to be **agnostic** about the existence of a higher power.

dogmatic

adj. characterized by strong and unwavering opinions or beliefs that are often expressed with force and without consideration for alternative viewpoints or evidence

synonym: authoritative, doctrinal, opinionated

(1) **dogmatic** beliefs, (2) **dogmatic** approach

The company's old **dogmatic** policies were the cause of its downfall.

intellect

n. the ability to think logically and comprehend information, especially at an advanced level

synonym: mind, brightness, cleverness

(1) enrich my **intellect**, (2) human **intellect**

Your **intellect** is capable of distinguishing among similar objects.

trustworthy

adj. reliable and dependable

synonym: reliable, dependable, honest

(1) **trustworthy** ally, (2) **trustworthy** source

People tend to believe **trustworthy** friends with their secrets.

soak

v. to allow liquid to be absorbed, typically by immersing in it; to leave as a guarantee in return for money

synonym: saturate, steep, douse

(1) **soak** in a hot spring, (2) **soak** away stress

I **soaked** the shirt in the sink before washing it.

stubbornness

n. the trait of being unyielding, obstinate, or inflexible; a refusal to change one's opinions or behavior despite pressure or persuasion

synonym: inflexibility, doggedness, obstinacy

(1) plain **stubbornness**, (2) show **stubbornness**

Her **stubbornness** in negotiations prevented a successful outcome for both parties.

hover

v. to stay in one place in the air

synonym: hang, float over, drift

(1) **hover** between life and death, (2) **hover** around the table

Two birds were **hovering** overhead.

epistemology

n. a branch of philosophy that deals with knowledge and belief, including the nature and limits of knowledge, the sources and criteria of knowledge, and the justification of belief

synonym: theory of knowledge, knowledge science

(1) a specialist in **epistemology**, (2) **epistemology** study

Evolutionary **epistemology** is a field of study that seeks to understand how knowledge has evolved.

incompleteness

n. the state of being lacking or not finished; the condition of being partial or unfinished

synonym: rawness, deficiency, insufficiency

(1) **incompleteness** theory, (2) feeling of **incompleteness**

The **incompleteness** of the instructions made it difficult to assemble the furniture correctly.

Session 2: Spelling

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. gone as ___y | <i>adv.</i> away from the right path or direction |
| 2. re___e a deity | <i>v.</i> to feel deep and profound respect or admiration for someone or something; to hold in high esteem |
| 3. undergo a re_____h | <i>n.</i> the process of being reborn or starting anew, especially after a period of decline or stagnation |
| 4. r_g doll | <i>n.</i> a piece of cloth, especially an old one, torn or cut into strips and used for cleaning |
| 5. ag_____ic position | <i>n.</i> a person who believes that it is impossible to know whether there is a god |
| 6. deep pe_____sm | <i>n.</i> a tendency to see the worst in things and anticipate adverse outcomes; a belief that the world is generally bad or that something will go wrong more often than it will go right |
| 7. ho__r between life and death | <i>v.</i> to stay in one place in the air |
| 8. s__y to the rhythm | <i>v.</i> to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something |
| 9. em_____r the secretary to do the same | <i>v.</i> to give someone the power or authority to do something |

ANSWERS: 1. astray, 2. revere, 3. rebirth, 4. rag, 5. agnostic, 6. pessimism, 7. hover, 8. sway, 9. empower

10. epi_____ogy study *n.* a branch of philosophy that deals with knowledge and belief, including the nature and limits of knowledge, the sources and criteria of knowledge, and the justification of belief
11. ou_____er perspective *n.* a person who is not part of a particular group, community, or society; someone who is considered to be on the periphery or outside of established social circles
12. do_____ic beliefs *adj.* characterized by strong and unwavering opinions or beliefs that are often expressed with force and without consideration for alternative viewpoints or evidence
13. em_____r my life *v.* to give someone the power or authority to do something
14. fa_____y of logic *n.* a mistaken belief, idea, or argument that is not supported by facts or evidence; a deceptive or misleading statement or belief
15. do_____ic approach *adj.* characterized by strong and unwavering opinions or beliefs that are often expressed with force and without consideration for alternative viewpoints or evidence
16. de_____on in advertising *n.* the act of misleading or tricking someone, often by creating a false impression or concealing the truth; a fraudulent or dishonest action

ANSWERS: 10. epistemology, 11. outsider, 12. dogmatic, 13. empower, 14. fallacy, 15. dogmatic, 16. deception

17. sense of pe_____sm *n.* a tendency to see the worst in things and anticipate adverse outcomes; a belief that the world is generally bad or that something will go wrong more often than it will go right
18. an op_____ne remark *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
19. family me____r *n.* a historical account or biography written from the writer's knowledge of famous people, places, or events
20. re____e a hero *v.* to feel deep and profound respect or admiration for someone or something; to hold in high esteem
21. irr_____al numbers *adj.* not based on, or not using reason or clear thinking; (mathematics) a real number that cannot be expressed as the ratio of two integers
22. s__y back and forth *v.* to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something
23. nu__e price levels up *v.* to push someone or something gently, especially with your elbow, to attract the person's attention; (noun) a small push or prod to encourage a desired action or behavior
24. se____e him into crime *v.* to entice someone to engage in sexual behavior or to enter into a romantic relationship

ANSWERS: 17. pessimism, 18. opportune, 19. memoir, 20. revere, 21. irrational, 22. sway, 23. nudge, 24. seduce

25. predictable st_____ne *n.* the central narrative or plot of a story, often involving a series of events or conflicts that move the story forward; the overall structure or arc of a story
26. ho__r around the table *v.* to stay in one place in the air
27. a se_____ve smile *adj.* tempting or alluring attractively or persuasively; often used to describe a person, behavior, or idea that is intended to lure or entice someone into a specific action or belief
28. follow a st_____ne *n.* the central narrative or plot of a story, often involving a series of events or conflicts that move the story forward; the overall structure or arc of a story
29. a di_____or with enormous powers *n.* a political leader who has complete power over a country, especially one who has obtained control by force
30. li_____te people from oppression *v.* to set free; to release or rescue from captivity or oppression
31. the atmosphere was opp_____ve *adj.* treating people in a cruel and authoritarian way
32. se_____ve behavior *adj.* tempting or alluring attractively or persuasively; often used to describe a person, behavior, or idea that is intended to lure or entice someone into a specific action or belief
33. uni_____ed bias *adj.* not planned or meant
34. cast gl_____us eyes *adj.* highly attractive and exciting, and different from ordinary things or people

ANSWERS: 25. storyline, 26. hover, 27. seductive, 28. storyline, 29. dictator, 30. liberate, 31. oppressive, 32. seductive, 33. unintended, 34. glamorous

35. led as ___y by superstition *adv.* away from the right path or direction
36. feeling of inc_____ess *n.* the state of being lacking or not finished; the condition of being partial or unfinished
37. a specialist in epi_____ogy *n.* a branch of philosophy that deals with knowledge and belief, including the nature and limits of knowledge, the sources and criteria of knowledge, and the justification of belief
38. human in _____ct *n.* the ability to think logically and comprehend information, especially at an advanced level
39. publish a me____r *n.* a historical account or biography written from the writer's knowledge of famous people, places, or events
40. give a person a nu___e *v.* to push someone or something gently, especially with your elbow, to attract the person's attention; (noun) a small push or prod to encourage a desired action or behavior
41. op_____ne occasion *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
42. protective ta____an *n.* an object believed to bring good luck or protection to its owner, often worn as jewelry or carried on one's person
43. ag____ic world-view *n.* a person who believes that it is impossible to know whether there is a god

ANSWERS: 35. astray, 36. incompleteness, 37. epistemology, 38. intellect, 39. memoir, 40. nudge, 41. opportune, 42. talisman, 43. agnostic

44. religious ta____an *n.* an object believed to bring good luck or protection to its owner, often worn as jewelry or carried on one's person
45. show stu_____ess *n.* the trait of being unyielding, obstinate, or inflexible; a refusal to change one's opinions or behavior despite pressure or persuasion
46. uni_____ed misunderstanding *adj.* not planned or meant
47. he_____ic reasoning *adj.* relating to a trial-and-error method of problem-solving, often involving learning from one's mistakes and using feedback to improve one's approach; also used to describe a problem-solving method or approach that is practical, efficient, or intuitive
48. opp_____ve governments *adj.* treating people in a cruel and authoritarian way
49. tru_____hy ally *adj.* reliable and dependable
50. a r_g of cloud *n.* a piece of cloth, especially an old one, torn or cut into strips and used for cleaning
51. li_____te potential *v.* to set free; to release or rescue from captivity or oppression
52. belief in a fa_____y *n.* a mistaken belief, idea, or argument that is not supported by facts or evidence; a deceptive or misleading statement or belief
53. military di_____or *n.* a political leader who has complete power over a country, especially one who has obtained control by force

ANSWERS: 44. talisman, 45. stubbornness, 46. unintended, 47. heuristic, 48. oppressive, 49. trustworthy, 50. rag, 51. liberate, 52. fallacy, 53. dictator

54. s__k in a hot spring *v.* to allow liquid to be absorbed, typically by immersing in it; to leave as a guarantee in return for money
55. plain stu_____ess *n.* the trait of being unyielding, obstinate, or inflexible; a refusal to change one's opinions or behavior despite pressure or persuasion
56. inc_____ess theory *n.* the state of being lacking or not finished; the condition of being partial or unfinished
57. ou_____er artist *n.* a person who is not part of a particular group, community, or society; someone who is considered to be on the periphery or outside of established social circles
58. enrich my in_____ct *n.* the ability to think logically and comprehend information, especially at an advanced level
59. gl_____us movie stars *adj.* highly attractive and exciting, and different from ordinary things or people
60. se___e her mind *v.* to entice someone to engage in sexual behavior or to enter into a romantic relationship
61. s__k away stress *v.* to allow liquid to be absorbed, typically by immersing in it; to leave as a guarantee in return for money
62. he_____ic algorithm *adj.* relating to a trial-and-error method of problem-solving, often involving learning from one's mistakes and using feedback to improve one's approach; also used to describe a problem-solving method or approach that is practical, efficient, or intuitive

ANSWERS: 54. soak, 55. stubbornness, 56. incompleteness, 57. outsider, 58. intellect, 59. glamorous, 60. seduce, 61. soak, 62. heuristic

63. re_____h of democracy *n.* the process of being reborn or starting anew, especially after a period of decline or stagnation
64. de_____on tactics *n.* the act of misleading or tricking someone, often by creating a false impression or concealing the truth; a fraudulent or dishonest action
65. an irr_____al request *adj.* not based on, or not using reason or clear thinking; (mathematics) a real number that cannot be expressed as the ratio of two integers
66. tru_____hy source *adj.* reliable and dependable

ANSWERS: 63. rebirth, 64. deception, 65. irrational, 66. trustworthy

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. He tried to _____ her with his charm and good looks.
 - v. to entice someone to engage in sexual behavior or to enter into a romantic relationship

2. Many people cling to the _____ that they can get rich quickly, despite all evidence.
 - n. a mistaken belief, idea, or argument that is not supported by facts or evidence; a deceptive or misleading statement or belief

3. He wandered _____ from the path and got lost in the forest.
 - adv. away from the right path or direction

4. A popular uprising led to the overthrow of the _____.
 - n. a political leader who has complete power over a country, especially one who has obtained control by force

5. He wrote his _____ while awaiting trial.
 - n. a historical account or biography written from the writer's knowledge of famous people, places, or events

6. The _____ of the movie was predictable but still entertaining.
 - n. the central narrative or plot of a story, often involving a series of events or conflicts that move the story forward; the overall structure or arc of a story

7. Excessive human interference in the global environment may bring _____ consequences.
 - adj. not planned or meant

ANSWERS: 1. seduce, 2. fallacy, 3. astray, 4. dictator, 5. memoirs, 6. storyline, 7. unintended

8. Living in a foreign country can make you feel like an _____ at times.
- n.* a person who is not part of a particular group, community, or society; someone who is considered to be on the periphery or outside of established social circles
9. Two birds were _____ overhead.
- v.* to stay in one place in the air
10. I _____ the shirt in the sink before washing it.
- v.* to allow liquid to be absorbed, typically by immersing in it; to leave as a guarantee in return for money
11. The company's old _____ policies were the cause of its downfall.
- adj.* characterized by strong and unwavering opinions or beliefs that are often expressed with force and without consideration for alternative viewpoints or evidence
12. The CEO's constant _____ about the company's future affected employee morale.
- n.* a tendency to see the worst in things and anticipate adverse outcomes; a belief that the world is generally bad or that something will go wrong more often than it will go right
13. I always carry my grandmother's _____ for good luck.
- n.* an object believed to bring good luck or protection to its owner, often worn as jewelry or carried on one's person
14. Your _____ is capable of distinguishing among similar objects.
- n.* the ability to think logically and comprehend information, especially at an advanced level

ANSWERS: 8. outsider, 9. hovering, 10. soaked, 11. dogmatic, 12. pessimism, 13. talisman, 14. intellect

15. The company _____ employees to buy low-price items without approval to achieve efficient purchasing.
- v.* to give someone the power or authority to do something
16. Her _____ in negotiations prevented a successful outcome for both parties.
- n.* the trait of being unyielding, obstinate, or inflexible; a refusal to change one's opinions or behavior despite pressure or persuasion
17. People tend to believe _____ friends with their secrets.
- adj.* reliable and dependable
18. The phone rang at the most _____ time.
- adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
19. They continued to endure _____ treatment by the dictatorship.
- adj.* not based on, or not using reason or clear thinking; (mathematics) a real number that cannot be expressed as the ratio of two integers
20. The teacher _____ the student to get his attention and asked him a question.
- v.* to push someone or something gently, especially with your elbow, to attract the person's attention; (noun) a small push or prod to encourage a desired action or behavior
21. The politician was accused of _____ for making false promises during his campaign.
- n.* the act of misleading or tricking someone, often by creating a false impression or concealing the truth; a fraudulent or dishonest action

ANSWERS: 15. empowered, 16. stubbornness, 17. trustworthy, 18. opportune, 19. irrational, 20. nudged, 21. deception

22. The political situation has become increasingly _____.
- adj.* treating people in a cruel and authoritarian way
23. The actor's _____ gaze drew the audience's attention on stage.
- adj.* tempting or alluring attractively or persuasively; often used to describe a person, behavior, or idea that is intended to lure or entice someone into a specific action or belief
24. He used an old ____ to clean the grease off the car's engine.
- n.* a piece of cloth, especially an old one, torn or cut into strips and used for cleaning
25. Many people _____ their religious leaders and look up to them for guidance.
- v.* to feel deep and profound respect or admiration for someone or something; to hold in high esteem
26. Evolutionary _____ is a field of study that seeks to understand how knowledge has evolved.
- n.* a branch of philosophy that deals with knowledge and belief, including the nature and limits of knowledge, the sources and criteria of knowledge, and the justification of belief
27. The teacher used a _____ method to teach the complex topic in a simple way.
- adj.* relating to a trial-and-error method of problem-solving, often involving learning from one's mistakes and using feedback to improve one's approach; also used to describe a problem-solving method or approach that is practical, efficient, or intuitive
28. The south coast is less _____ yet has many clean and appealing hotels.
- adj.* highly attractive and exciting, and different from ordinary things or people

ANSWERS: 22. oppressive, 23. seductive, 24. rag, 25. revere, 26. epistemology, 27. heuristic, 28. glamorous

29. The prisoners were _____ after the war ended.
- v.* to set free; to release or rescue from captivity or oppression
30. The _____ of the instructions made it difficult to assemble the furniture correctly.
- n.* the state of being lacking or not finished; the condition of being partial or unfinished
31. The phoenix is a symbol of _____ rising from the ashes to be reborn anew.
- n.* the process of being reborn or starting anew, especially after a period of decline or stagnation
32. The politician tried to _____ public opinion in his favor, but his arguments fell flat.
- v.* to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something
33. Her scientific background led her to be _____ about the existence of a higher power.
- n.* a person who believes that it is impossible to know whether there is a god

ANSWERS: 29. liberated, 30. incompleteness, 31. rebirth, 32. sway, 33. agnostic