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Vocabulary Builder Reference from...

Laura Carstensen: Older people are happier | TED Talk

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

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

complacency

n. a feeling of self-satisfaction or contentment, often resulting in a lack of motivation to improve or address problems

synonym: self-satisfaction, smugness, satisfaction

(1) dangerous **complacency**, (2) avoid **complacency**

The team's **complacency** led to their defeat, as they didn't put in the effort needed to win the game.

peg

n. a small cylindrical or tapered pin used to fasten or secure something, such as clothing, on a line, or in carpentry and woodworking; (verb) to fasten or secure something using a peg or similar object; to mark or indicate a level or position using a peg or similar object

synonym: pin, dowel, spike

(1) **peg** in the ground, (2) **peg** an exchange rate

The sheep were tagged with numbered plastic **pegs** in their ears.

winnow

v. to separate or remove the undesirable or unnecessary parts of a group or collection; to narrow down or sift through something to find what is useful or valuable

synonym: sift, filter, separate

(1) **winnow** grain, (2) **winnow** out the impractical idea

I need to **winnow** through these job applications to find the most qualified candidates.

reshape

v. to change the form or structure of something

synonym: alter, adjust, modify

(1) **reshape** education policy, (2) **reshape** my thoughts

The advent of the Internet completely **reshaped** the manufacturing industry.

rectangle

n. a four-sided geometric shape with four right angles, where opposite sides are parallel and of equal length

synonym: oblong, square, quadrangle

(1) orthogonal **rectangle**, (2) **rectangle** box

The living room had a **rectangle-shaped** coffee table in the center of it.

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.

hardy

adj. able to withstand harsh conditions or difficult circumstances; robust, sturdy, or resilient

synonym: tough, sturdy, resilient

(1) **hardy** plants, (2) **hardy** breed

The **hardy** construction workers worked tirelessly in the scorching heat to complete the project.

ancestor

n. a person from whom one is descended; a forefather

synonym: forebear, forefather, progenitor

(1) **ancestor** language, (2) earliest human **ancestor**

My remote **ancestor** immigrated to the United States from Ireland in the 1800s.

crucible

n. a vessel made of ceramic, metal, or other materials used for melting or fusing substances at high temperatures; a difficult or trying experience that tests one's character or resilience

synonym : melting pot, cauldron, furnace

(1) electric **crucible** furnace, (2) fire **crucible**

The scientific experiment required the use of a high-temperature **crucible**.

well-being

n. the state of being happy and healthy and prosperous

synonym : health, welfare, happiness

(1) the **well-being** of a nation, (2) a sense of **well-being**

We are responsible for the care and **well-being** of all our employees.

laurel

n. an evergreen shrub or tree with dark green leaves that is often used symbolically to represent victory, honor, or accomplishment

synonym : wreath, crown, garland

(1) **laurel** wreath, (2) noble **laurel**

The athlete wore a **laurel** wreath to symbolize victory in the competition.

paradox

n. a statement, situation, or person that has two opposite facts or features and therefore seems impossible, is difficult to understand, or is strange;

synonym : incongruity, dichotomy, contradiction

(1) French **paradox**, (2) the **paradox** of the heap

There are many theories to explain this **paradox**.

depress

v. to make someone feel sad, low in spirits, or without hope; to make markets, businesses, etc., less active

synonym : sadden, discourage, deflate

(1) **depress** their spirits, (2) **depress** crop prices

The economic recession **depressed** the housing market.

disavow

v. to deny any responsibility, connection, or knowledge of something; to reject or repudiate something as being false, untrue, or unauthorized

synonym: deny, reject, disclaim

(1) **disavow** responsibility, (2) **disavow** any knowledge

The politician was quick to **disavow** any association with the controversial organization.

embark

v. to go on board a ship or plane; to set out on an enterprise or subject of study; to start something

synonym: enter, undertake, commence

(1) **embark** on a trip, (2) **embark** on a foolish adventure

We **embarked** on a new project.

pager

n. a small electronic device used for sending and receiving short text messages, often used in hospitals or other professional settings

synonym: beeper, pager device

(1) **pager** beep, (2) wireless **pager** service

The company provides all employees with a digital **pager** for emergency purposes.

downturn

n. a period of decline, typically in an economy, characterized by reduced trade and business activity and a fall in prices and employment

synonym: decline, fall, drop

(1) the **downturn** in auto sales, (2) **downturn** in health

The global economy experienced a sharp **downturn** in the wake of the pandemic.

simplistic

adj. oversimplified or lacking in complexity or depth; characterized by an attempt to explain something complex or multifaceted with overly vague or simple terms

synonym: basic, uncomplicated, elementary

(1) **simplistic** approach, (2) **simplistic** design

The politician's solution to the problem was too **simplistic** to

solve the underlying issue.

accepting

adj. willing to receive or to take something offered

synonym: tolerant, open-minded, receptive

(1) **accepting** attitude, (2) **accepting** of diversity

He was an **accepting** person who believed in diversity and inclusiveness.

frown

v. to make an angry or severe expression by bringing your eyebrows together to indicate disapproval, displeasure, or concentration

synonym: scowl, glare, disapprove

(1) people with **frown** faces, (2) a worried **frown**

Thinking always made him **frown**.

impair

v. to damage something or make it weaker or worse

synonym: degrade, mar, deface

(1) **impair** my health, (2) **impair** insulin sensitivity

The accident made his vision **impaired**.

degrade

v. to make something worse, especially in quality; to show or treat someone in a way that makes them seem no value and do not have the respect or reasonable opinion of others

synonym: demean, disgrace, impair

(1) **degrade** his public image, (2) **degrade** environmental quality

You should not **degrade** yourself by allowing them to use you.

posit

v. to suggest or accept something as fact or as a basis for argument or consideration

synonym: assert, declare, assume

(1) **posit** the existence of life after death, (2) **posit** the premise

We should **posit** several hypotheses to discuss the matter.

nebulous

adj. hazy, vague, or ill-defined; of or relating to or resembling a nebula (= an immense cloud of gas and dust in interstellar space)

synonym : vague, cloudy, hazy

(1) **nebulous** concept, (2) **nebulous** material

The plan was **nebulous** and needed more specific details.

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.

savor

v. to enjoy or appreciate something fully; to relish or delight in something delicious or enjoyable; to preserve or season with a savory flavor

synonym : enjoy, relish, appreciate

(1) **savor** the moment, (2) **savor** the taste

I always like to **savor** a good cup of coffee in the morning.

appreciative

adj. expressing or feeling gratitude or admiration; showing recognition or understanding of the value or significance of something; receptive or responsive to something with pleasure or enjoyment

synonym : grateful, thankful, pleased

(1) **appreciative** audience, (2) **appreciative** nod

The teacher was **appreciative** of the student's dedication and hard work.

numb

adj. unable to feel physical sensation and movement; not showing human feeling or sensitivity

synonym : dazed, insensitive, emotionless

(1) **numb** with cold, (2) a **numb** mind

My left arm became **numb**.

determinant

n. a factor, circumstance, or condition that contributes to the shaping, influencing, or determining of a particular

outcome or result

synonym : cause, factor, element

(1) environmental **determinant**, (2) a **determinant** of crop yields

One **determinant** of success is having a positive attitude and a strong work ethic.

capitalize

v. to write a whole letter or the first letter of the alphabet as a capital; to provide a company, etc. with the money; to take the chance to gain advantage from something

synonym : bankroll, finance, endow

(1) **capitalize** on an interest, (2) **capitalize** the 1st letter of a word

You must **capitalize** on your full of opportunities to become a professor.

motto

n. a phrase or slogan that expresses a guiding principle or goal

synonym : slogan, catchphrase, phrase

(1) the **motto** for safe traffic, (2) company **motto**

The company's **motto** is "Innovation and Service," which is reflected in its products and customer support.

Session 2: Spelling

1. n__b with cold *adj.* unable to feel physical sensation and movement; not showing human feeling or sensitivity
2. a sense of wel_____ng *n.* the state of being happy and healthy and prosperous
3. de_____s their spirits *v.* to make someone feel sad, low in spirits, or without hope; to make markets, businesses, etc., less active
4. wi____w grain *v.* to separate or remove the undesirable or unnecessary parts of a group or collection; to narrow down or sift through something to find what is useful or valuable
5. cap_____ze the 1st letter of a word *v.* to write a whole letter or the first letter of the alphabet as a capital; to provide a company, etc. with the money; to take the chance to gain advantage from something
6. wireless pa__r service *n.* a small electronic device used for sending and receiving short text messages, often used in hospitals or other professional settings
7. an op_____ne remark *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
8. di_____w responsibility *v.* to deny any responsibility, connection, or knowledge of something; to reject or repudiate something as being false, untrue, or unauthorized

ANSWERS: 1. numb, 2. well-being, 3. depress, 4. winnow, 5. capitalize, 6. pager, 7. opportune, 8. disavow

9. avoid com_____cy *n.* a feeling of self-satisfaction or contentment, often resulting in a lack of motivation to improve or address problems
10. ha__y plants *adj.* able to withstand harsh conditions or difficult circumstances; robust, sturdy, or resilient
11. app_____ive nod *adj.* expressing or feeling gratitude or admiration; showing recognition or understanding of the value or significance of something; receptive or responsive to something with pleasure or enjoyment
12. p_g in the ground *n.* a small cylindrical or tapered pin used to fasten or secure something, such as clothing, on a line, or in carpentry and woodworking; (verb) to fasten or secure something using a peg or similar object; to mark or indicate a level or position using a peg or similar object
13. electric cr_____le furnace *n.* a vessel made of ceramic, metal, or other materials used for melting or fusing substances at high temperatures; a difficult or trying experience that tests one's character or resilience
14. the wel_____ng of a nation *n.* the state of being happy and healthy and prosperous
15. im___r my health *v.* to damage something or make it weaker or worse
16. im___r insulin sensitivity *v.* to damage something or make it weaker or worse

ANSWERS: 9. complacency, 10. hardy, 11. appreciative, 12. peg, 13. crucible, 14. well-being, 15. impair, 16. impair

26. sim_____ic approach *adj.* oversimplified or lacking in complexity or depth; characterized by an attempt to explain something complex or multifaceted with overly vague or simple terms
27. di_____w any knowledge *v.* to deny any responsibility, connection, or knowledge of something; to reject or repudiate something as being false, untrue, or unauthorized
28. sa__r the taste *v.* to enjoy or appreciate something fully; to relish or delight in something delicious or enjoyable; to preserve or season with a savory flavor
29. op_____ne occasion *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
30. de_____s crop prices *v.* to make someone feel sad, low in spirits, or without hope; to make markets, businesses, etc., less active
31. p_g an exchange rate *n.* a small cylindrical or tapered pin used to fasten or secure something, such as clothing, on a line, or in carpentry and woodworking; (verb) to fasten or secure something using a peg or similar object; to mark or indicate a level or position using a peg or similar object
32. a n__b mind *adj.* unable to feel physical sensation and movement; not showing human feeling or sensitivity
33. fire cr_____le *n.* a vessel made of ceramic, metal, or other materials used for melting or fusing substances at high temperatures; a difficult or trying experience that tests one's character or resilience

ANSWERS: 26. simplistic, 27. disavow, 28. savor, 29. opportune, 30. depress, 31. peg, 32. numb, 33. crucible

34. the mo__o for safe traffic *n.* a phrase or slogan that expresses a guiding principle or goal
35. ac_____ng attitude *adj.* willing to receive or to take something offered
36. de_____e his public image *v.* to make something worse, especially in quality; to show or treat someone in a way that makes them seem no value and do not have the respect or reasonable opinion of others
37. pa__r beep *n.* a small electronic device used for sending and receiving short text messages, often used in hospitals or other professional settings
38. a det_____nt of crop yields *n.* a factor, circumstance, or condition that contributes to the shaping, influencing, or determining of a particular outcome or result
39. wi___w out the impractical idea *v.* to separate or remove the undesirable or unnecessary parts of a group or collection; to narrow down or sift through something to find what is useful or valuable
40. environmental det_____nt *n.* a factor, circumstance, or condition that contributes to the shaping, influencing, or determining of a particular outcome or result
41. re_____le box *n.* a four-sided geometric shape with four right angles, where opposite sides are parallel and of equal length
42. po__t the premise *v.* to suggest or accept something as fact or as a basis for argument or consideration

ANSWERS: 34. motto, 35. accepting, 36. degrade, 37. pager, 38. determinant, 39. winnow, 40. determinant, 41. rectangle, 42. posit

43. em___k on a foolish adventure *v.* to go on board a ship or plane; to set out on an enterprise or subject of study; to start something
44. people with fr__n faces *v.* to make an angry or severe expression by bringing your eyebrows together to indicate disapproval, displeasure, or concentration
45. sim_____ic design *adj.* oversimplified or lacking in complexity or depth; characterized by an attempt to explain something complex or multifaceted with overly vague or simple terms
46. 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
47. French pa_____x *n.* a statement, situation, or person that has two opposite facts or features and therefore seems impossible, is difficult to understand, or is strange;
48. ha__y breed *adj.* able to withstand harsh conditions or difficult circumstances; robust, sturdy, or resilient
49. an_____or language *n.* a person from whom one is descended; a forefather
50. a worried fr__n *v.* to make an angry or severe expression by bringing your eyebrows together to indicate disapproval, displeasure, or concentration
51. em___k on a trip *v.* to go on board a ship or plane; to set out on an enterprise or subject of study; to start something

ANSWERS: 43. embark, 44. frown, 45. simplistic, 46. soak, 47. paradox, 48. hardy, 49. ancestor, 50. frown, 51. embark

52. cap_____ze on an interest *v.* to write a whole letter or the first letter of the alphabet as a capital; to provide a company, etc. with the money; to take the chance to gain advantage from something
53. re_____e education policy *v.* to change the form or structure of something
54. la____l wreath *n.* an evergreen shrub or tree with dark green leaves that is often used symbolically to represent victory, honor, or accomplishment
55. de_____e environmental quality *v.* to make something worse, especially in quality; to show or treat someone in a way that makes them seem no value and do not have the respect or reasonable opinion of others
56. ne_____us material *adj.* hazy, vague, or ill-defined; of or relating to or resembling a nebula (= an immense cloud of gas and dust in interstellar space)
57. app_____ive audience *adj.* expressing or feeling gratitude or admiration; showing recognition or understanding of the value or significance of something; receptive or responsive to something with pleasure or enjoyment
58. company mo__o *n.* a phrase or slogan that expresses a guiding principle or goal
59. 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

ANSWERS: 52. capitalize, 53. reshape, 54. laurel, 55. degrade, 56. nebulous, 57. appreciative, 58. motto, 59. soak

60. dangerous com_____cy *n.* a feeling of self-satisfaction or contentment, often resulting in a lack of motivation to improve or address problems
61. the pa_____x of the heap *n.* a statement, situation, or person that has two opposite facts or features and therefore seems impossible, is difficult to understand, or is strange;
62. ac_____ng of diversity *adj.* willing to receive or to take something offered

ANSWERS: 60. complacency, 61. paradox, 62. accepting

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The politician was quick to _____ any association with the controversial organization.
 - v. to deny any responsibility, connection, or knowledge of something; to reject or repudiate something as being false, untrue, or unauthorized
2. Thinking always made him _____.
 - v. to make an angry or severe expression by bringing your eyebrows together to indicate disapproval, displeasure, or concentration
3. The team's _____ led to their defeat, as they didn't put in the effort needed to win the game.
 - n. a feeling of self-satisfaction or contentment, often resulting in a lack of motivation to improve or address problems
4. There are many theories to explain this _____.
 - n. a statement, situation, or person that has two opposite facts or features and therefore seems impossible, is difficult to understand, or is strange;
5. The accident made his vision _____.
 - v. to damage something or make it weaker or worse
6. The athlete wore a _____ wreath to symbolize victory in the competition.
 - n. an evergreen shrub or tree with dark green leaves that is often used symbolically to represent victory, honor, or accomplishment
7. My remote _____ immigrated to the United States from Ireland in the 1800s.
 - n. a person from whom one is descended; a forefather

ANSWERS: 1. disavow, 2. frown, 3. complacency, 4. paradox, 5. impaired, 6. laurel, 7. ancestor

8. The sheep were tagged with numbered plastic _____ in their ears.
- n.* a small cylindrical or tapered pin used to fasten or secure something, such as clothing, on a line, or in carpentry and woodworking; (verb) to fasten or secure something using a peg or similar object; to mark or indicate a level or position using a peg or similar object
9. The living room had a _____ coffee table in the center of it.
- n.* a four-sided geometric shape with four right angles, where opposite sides are parallel and of equal length
10. The politician's solution to the problem was too _____ to solve the underlying issue.
- adj.* oversimplified or lacking in complexity or depth; characterized by an attempt to explain something complex or multifaceted with overly vague or simple terms
11. The teacher was _____ of the student's dedication and hard work.
- adj.* expressing or feeling gratitude or admiration; showing recognition or understanding of the value or significance of something; receptive or responsive to something with pleasure or enjoyment
12. You must _____ on your full of opportunities to become a professor.
- v.* to write a whole letter or the first letter of the alphabet as a capital; to provide a company, etc. with the money; to take the chance to gain advantage from something
13. The global economy experienced a sharp _____ in the wake of the pandemic.
- n.* a period of decline, typically in an economy, characterized by reduced trade and business activity and a fall in prices and employment

ANSWERS: 8. pegs, 9. rectangle-shaped, 10. simplistic, 11. appreciative, 12. capitalize, 13. downturn

14. One _____ of success is having a positive attitude and a strong work ethic.
- n.* a factor, circumstance, or condition that contributes to the shaping, influencing, or determining of a particular outcome or result
15. My left arm became _____.
- adj.* unable to feel physical sensation and movement; not showing human feeling or sensitivity
16. The company's _____ is "Innovation and Service," which is reflected in its products and customer support.
- n.* a phrase or slogan that expresses a guiding principle or goal
17. The scientific experiment required the use of a high-temperature _____.
- n.* a vessel made of ceramic, metal, or other materials used for melting or fusing substances at high temperatures; a difficult or trying experience that tests one's character or resilience
18. The company provides all employees with a digital _____ for emergency purposes.
- n.* a small electronic device used for sending and receiving short text messages, often used in hospitals or other professional settings
19. The plan was _____ and needed more specific details.
- adj.* hazy, vague, or ill-defined; of or relating to or resembling a nebula (= an immense cloud of gas and dust in interstellar space)
20. I always like to _____ a good cup of coffee in the morning.
- v.* to enjoy or appreciate something fully; to relish or delight in something delicious or enjoyable; to preserve or season with a savory flavor

ANSWERS: 14. determinant, 15. numb, 16. motto, 17. crucible, 18. pager, 19. nebulous, 20. savor

21. We are responsible for the care and _____ of all our employees.
n. the state of being happy and healthy and prosperous
22. We should _____ several hypotheses to discuss the matter.
v. to suggest or accept something as fact or as a basis for argument or consideration
23. 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
24. I need to _____ through these job applications to find the most qualified candidates.
v. to separate or remove the undesirable or unnecessary parts of a group or collection; to narrow down or sift through something to find what is useful or valuable
25. The advent of the Internet completely _____ the manufacturing industry.
v. to change the form or structure of something
26. We _____ on a new project.
v. to go on board a ship or plane; to set out on an enterprise or subject of study; to start something
27. The _____ construction workers worked tirelessly in the scorching heat to complete the project.
adj. able to withstand harsh conditions or difficult circumstances; robust, sturdy, or resilient
28. The phone rang at the most _____ time.
adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

ANSWERS: 21. well-being, 22. posit, 23. soaked, 24. winnow, 25. reshaped, 26. embarked, 27. hardy, 28. opportune

29. He was an _____ person who believed in diversity and inclusiveness.

adj. willing to receive or to take something offered

30. You should not _____ yourself by allowing them to use you.

v. to make something worse, especially in quality; to show or treat someone in a way that makes them seem no value and do not have the respect or reasonable opinion of others

31. The economic recession _____ the housing market.

v. to make someone feel sad, low in spirits, or without hope; to make markets, businesses, etc., less active

ANSWERS: 29. accepting, 30. degrade, 31. depressed