C1 English vocabulary list

Every word with its meaning and an example sentence, topic by topic
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These are the 2,100 words our C1 vocabulary pages teach, in 35 topics. Each topic is a page on the site with pronunciation, audio and flashcards.

Do not learn the list from top to bottom. Take one topic, cover the meaning column, and say what each word means. Then read the example sentence out loud.

Mark the words you did not know and learn about ten a day. The free Word Trainer on the site brings each word back just before you would forget it.

Subtle Feelings & Moods

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
wistfulness	A feeling of gentle, longing sadness.	A note of wistfulness crept into her voice.
ambivalence	The state of having mixed feelings about something.	He felt deep ambivalence about leaving.
trepidation	A feeling of fear about something that may happen.	She opened the letter with trepidation.
foreboding	A strong feeling that something bad will happen.	A sense of foreboding filled the room.
disquiet	A feeling of worry or unease.	The news caused widespread disquiet.
unease	A feeling of worry or slight fear.	He felt a growing unease.
qualm	A feeling of doubt about whether something is right.	She had no qualm about saying no.
misgiving	A feeling of doubt or worry about a future event.	She voiced one small misgiving.
melancholia	A deep and lasting sadness.	He sank into a quiet melancholia.
despondency	A state of low spirits from loss of hope.	A mood of despondency settled over the team.
dejection	A feeling of sadness and low spirits.	His face showed utter dejection.
gloom	A feeling of deep sadness or hopelessness.	An air of gloom hung over the office.
sullenness	A bad-tempered, silent mood.	Her sullenness worried her parents.
petulance	Childish bad temper over small things.	He reacted with childish petulance.
indignation	Anger at something felt to be unfair.	She was full of righteous indignation.
exasperation	A feeling of great annoyance.	He sighed in exasperation.
vexation	The state of being annoyed or worried.	Much to her vexation, the train was late.
agitation	A state of worry or nervous excitement.	He paced the room in agitation.
wariness	The state of being careful and cautious.	She eyed the stranger with wariness.
reticence	The quality of being unwilling to speak freely.	His reticence made him hard to read.
diffidence	Shyness and a lack of confidence.	She spoke with surprising diffidence.
contrition	Deep sorrow for having done wrong.	He showed genuine contrition.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
penitence	Sorrow and regret for wrongdoing.	Her penitence seemed sincere.
compunction	A feeling of guilt that stops you doing something.	He felt no compunction at all.
rue	To feel sorrow or regret about something.	You will rue this decision.
hankering	A strong desire for something.	She had a hankering for adventure.
craving	A powerful desire for something.	He had a craving for chocolate.
reverie	A state of pleasant, dreamy thought.	She drifted into a reverie.
equanimity	Calmness, especially in a difficult situation.	He faced the crisis with equanimity.
composure	The state of being calm and in control.	She kept her composure under fire.
fortitude	Courage in facing pain or difficulty.	He bore the pain with fortitude.
rapture	A feeling of intense joy.	The crowd was in rapture.
jubilation	A feeling of great happiness and triumph.	There were scenes of jubilation.
exhilaration	A feeling of great excitement and energy.	She felt pure exhilaration.
contentment	A state of quiet happiness and satisfaction.	A deep contentment came over him.
solitude	The state of being alone, often by choice.	She craved a little solitude.
yearn	To have a strong, sad longing for something.	They yearn for the old days.
brood	To think anxiously about something for a long time.	He tends to brood over failures.
fret	To worry continuously about something.	Do not fret about the result.
wallow	To take unhealthy pleasure in a bad feeling.	He likes to wallow in self-pity.
relish	To enjoy something greatly.	I relish a good debate.
savour	To enjoy something slowly and fully.	He paused to savour the moment.
angst	A deep feeling of anxiety about life.	The novel captures teenage angst.
wretchedness	A state of great unhappiness or misery.	The poem conveys utter wretchedness.
euphoric	Feeling intense happiness.	She felt euphoric after winning.
forlorn	Sad and lonely because of being left alone.	He gave a forlorn sigh.
crestfallen	Sad and disappointed after a failure.	She looked crestfallen at the news.
disconsolate	Very unhappy and unable to be comforted.	He was disconsolate after the loss.
apprehensive	Worried that something bad may happen.	She felt apprehensive about the move.
wary	Careful and cautious about possible danger.	Be wary of strangers online.
perturbed	Worried or upset by something.	He seemed perturbed by the question.
flustered	Nervous, confused and unable to think clearly.	She got flustered during the interview.
rueful	Feeling or showing regret in a gentle way.	He gave a rueful smile.
placid	Calm and peaceful.	She has a placid temperament.
tranquil	Calm, quiet and peaceful.	The lake was utterly tranquil.
morose	Bad-tempered and gloomy.	He grew morose and silent.
despondent	In low spirits from a loss of hope.	She felt despondent about the future.
elated	Very happy and excited.	He was elated by the offer.
buoyant	Cheerful and full of hope.	She was in a buoyant mood.
doleful	Full of sorrow; mournful.	The dog gave a doleful look.

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Idioms & Sayings

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
break the ice	To make people feel more relaxed in a new situation.	A good host knows how to break the ice.
piece of cake	Something very easy to do.	For her, the test was a piece of cake.
once in a blue moon	Very rarely.	We see them once in a blue moon.
hit the nail on the head	To describe exactly what is causing a problem.	Your comment really hit the nail on the head.
cost an arm and a leg	To be very expensive.	Tickets these days cost an arm and a leg.
under the weather	Feeling slightly ill.	I am feeling under the weather today.
bite the bullet	To force yourself to do something difficult.	Sometimes you just have to bite the bullet.
the ball is in your court	It is your turn to take action.	I have done my part; the ball is in your court.
burn the midnight oil	To work late into the night.	Students often burn the midnight oil before exams.
cut corners	To do something cheaply or quickly, ignoring quality.	Never cut corners on safety.
on the same page	In agreement and understanding each other.	Let us make sure we are on the same page.
spill the beans	To reveal a secret.	Come on, spill the beans!
a blessing in disguise	Something bad that turns out to be good.	Losing that job was a blessing in disguise.
the last straw	The final problem that makes a situation unbearable.	That comment was the last straw.
back to the drawing board	To start again after a failed attempt.	The plan failed, so it is back to the drawing board.
beat around the bush	To avoid saying something directly.	Stop trying to beat around the bush.
call it a day	To stop working on something for now.	We worked hard, so let us call it a day.
get out of hand	To become impossible to control.	The party began to get out of hand.
a hot potato	A controversial issue people avoid dealing with.	Immigration is a hot potato right now.
miss the boat	To miss a chance by being too slow.	Buy now, or you will miss the boat.
on cloud nine	Extremely happy.	She was on cloud nine after the wedding.
the tip of the iceberg	A small sign of a much bigger problem.	These complaints are just the tip of the iceberg.
throw in the towel	To give up.	Do not throw in the towel just yet.
a piece of the pie	A share of something, such as profit.	Everyone wants a piece of the pie.
by the skin of your teeth	Only just; barely succeeding.	You only passed by the skin of your teeth.
once bitten, twice shy	Being cautious after a bad experience.	He won’t try again — once bitten, twice shy.
the best of both worlds	The benefits of two different things at once.	Working from home gives the best of both worlds.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
add fuel to the fire	To make a bad situation worse.	Do not add fuel to the fire.
a storm in a teacup	A lot of anger about an unimportant matter.	It was all a storm in a teacup.
the elephant in the room	An obvious problem no one wants to discuss.	Nobody mentioned the elephant in the room.
a wild goose chase	A hopeless search for something.	The clue sent us on a wild goose chase.
in the same boat	In the same difficult situation as others.	We are all in the same boat here.
steal someone's thunder	To take credit for another person's idea.	Try not to steal someone's thunder.
the whole nine yards	Everything; the full amount.	They gave us the whole nine yards.
a penny for your thoughts	A way of asking what someone is thinking.	You look quiet — a penny for your thoughts?
actions speak louder than words	What you do matters more than what you say.	Remember, actions speak louder than words.
the early bird catches the worm	Those who act first gain an advantage.	Get up early; the early bird catches the worm.
count your chickens	To assume success before it happens.	Do not count your chickens before they hatch.
every cloud has a silver lining	Every bad situation has a good side.	Cheer up — every cloud has a silver lining.
kill two birds with one stone	To solve two problems with one action.	I can kill two birds with one stone.
let sleeping dogs lie	To avoid stirring up an old problem.	It is best to let sleeping dogs lie.
the grass is always greener	Others' situations always seem better.	Remember, the grass is always greener.
when pigs fly	Something that will never happen.	He will apologise when pigs fly.
a chip on your shoulder	A lasting feeling of resentment.	Do not carry a chip on your shoulder.
burn bridges	To destroy relationships you may later need.	Never burn bridges with old employers.
the bigger picture	The most important overall view of a situation.	Try to see the bigger picture.
read between the lines	To understand a hidden meaning.	You have to read between the lines.
a double-edged sword	Something with both good and bad effects.	Fame is a double-edged sword.
jump on the bandwagon	To join something because it is popular.	Everyone wants to jump on the bandwagon.
the bottom line	The most important fact or final result.	The bottom line is that we need money.
face the music	To accept the unpleasant results of your actions.	It is time to face the music.
go the extra mile	To make more effort than is expected.	We must go the extra mile for clients.
a needle in a haystack	Something almost impossible to find.	Finding it was like a needle in a haystack.
the calm before the storm	A quiet period before trouble.	It felt like the calm before the storm.
put all your eggs in one basket	To risk everything on one thing.	Do not put all your eggs in one basket.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
a slap on the wrist	A very mild punishment.	He only got a slap on the wrist.
off the top of my head	From memory, without checking.	Off the top of my head, I cannot say.
sit on the fence	To avoid choosing between two sides.	You cannot sit on the fence forever.
the icing on the cake	An extra good thing that improves something.	The award was the icing on the cake.
a drop in the ocean	A very small amount compared to what is needed.	My donation is a drop in the ocean.

Formal & Academic Register

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
henceforth	From this time on.	Henceforth, all reports must be digital.
heretofore	Before now; until this time.	Heretofore, the rule was rarely enforced.
notwithstanding	In spite of something.	Notwithstanding the cost, they proceeded.
albeit	Although.	It was a success, albeit a modest one.
hereby	By this means; as a result of this document.	I hereby declare the meeting open.
aforementioned	Mentioned earlier.	The aforementioned points still stand.
pertaining	Relating to something.	Documents pertaining to the case were lost.
thereof	Of the thing just mentioned.	The contract and the terms thereof apply.
whereby	By which; through which.	It is a system whereby everyone benefits.
wherein	In which.	A situation wherein no one wins.
insofar	To the extent that.	Insofar as I know, it is true.
forthwith	Immediately.	Payment is due forthwith.
hitherto	Until now.	Hitherto unknown facts emerged.
ascertain	To find something out for certain.	We must ascertain the facts.
stipulate	To state a requirement in an agreement.	The rules stipulate a dress code.
delineate	To describe something exactly.	These notes delineate the plan.
expedite	To make a process happen more quickly.	We will expedite your request.
endeavour	To try hard to do something.	We endeavour to help all clients.
commence	To begin.	The ceremony will commence at noon.
cease	To stop.	All work must cease by five.
purport	To claim to be or do something.	The documents purport to be genuine.
construe	To understand something in a particular way.	His silence was hard to construe.
preclude	To prevent something from happening.	Illness may preclude his attendance.
necessitate	To make something necessary.	The change will necessitate training.
substantiate	To provide evidence to support a claim.	He could not substantiate the claim.
corroborate	To confirm something with evidence.	Two witnesses corroborate the story.
elucidate	To make something clear by explaining it.	Please elucidate your reasoning.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
expound	To explain something in detail.	She likes to expound her theory.
postulate	To suggest something as true for the sake of argument.	Some scientists postulate a new cause.
connote	To suggest a meaning in addition to the main one.	Such words connote great wealth.
presuppose	To assume something is true beforehand.	These plans presuppose good weather.
emanate	To come out from a source.	Light seems to emanate from the stone.
permeate	To spread through every part of something.	Fear and doubt permeate the novel.
epitomise	To be a perfect example of something.	Such people epitomise hard work.
exacerbate	To make a problem worse.	The delay will exacerbate the problem.
alleviate	To make pain or a problem less severe.	These drugs alleviate the pain.
respective	Belonging separately to each person mentioned.	They went to their respective homes.
nominal	In name only; very small in amount.	There is only a nominal fee.
ostensible	Appearing to be true but perhaps not.	The ostensible reason was money.
requisite	Required for a particular purpose.	She has the requisite skills.
pursuant	In agreement with a law or rule.	Pursuant to the law, he was fined.
concerning	About; relating to.	Questions concerning the budget arose.
thereafter	After that.	He left, and thereafter all went quiet.
irrespective	Without regard to something.	All are welcome, irrespective of age.
promulgate	To announce a law or idea officially.	Governments often promulgate new laws.
enumerate	To name things one by one.	Let me enumerate the main points.
espouse	To support a belief or cause.	They espouse traditional values.
supersede	To take the place of something older.	New models supersede the old ones.
preside	To be in charge of a meeting or event.	A judge will preside over the trial.
convene	To bring people together for a meeting.	The committee will convene tomorrow.
adjourn	To pause a meeting until a later time.	We will adjourn until Monday.
ratify	To make an agreement official by approving it.	Both sides must ratify the treaty.
rescind	To officially cancel something.	They decided to rescind the offer.
waive	To choose not to insist on a right or rule.	The bank agreed to waive the fee.
forgo	To give something up or do without it.	She chose to forgo her bonus.
thereupon	Immediately after that.	He signed, and thereupon left.
henceforward	From now on.	Henceforward the gates close at dusk.
aforesaid	Said or mentioned before.	The aforesaid clause is now void.
notwithstanding the above	In spite of what was said above.	Notwithstanding the above, we agree.
herein	In this document.	The terms set out herein are final.

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Argument & Persuasion

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
cogent	Clear, logical and convincing.	She made a cogent argument.
incisive	Showing clear and sharp thinking.	Her analysis was incisive.
rebut	To argue that a claim is false.	He tried to rebut the charge.
repudiate	To refuse to accept or be connected with something.	They repudiate the accusation.
tenet	A principle or belief held by a group.	It is a central tenet of his theory.
corollary	Something that follows naturally from another fact.	Higher pay is a corollary of growth.
caveat	A warning that limits what has been said.	I accept it, with one caveat.
nuance	A very slight difference in meaning or feeling.	He missed the nuance of her point.
equivocate	To speak vaguely to avoid committing yourself.	Do not equivocate; give a clear answer.
dogmatic	Insisting your beliefs are true without question.	He is dogmatic in his views.
polemic	A strong written or spoken attack on an opinion.	The book is a fierce polemic.
undermine	To gradually weaken something.	Such leaks undermine his case.
demagogue	A leader who gains support by stirring emotions.	The crowd cheered the demagogue.
fallacious	Based on a mistaken belief.	That is a fallacious argument.
specious	Seeming right but actually false.	His reasoning is specious.
tenable	Able to be defended or believed.	The position is no longer tenable.
untenable	Impossible to defend against argument.	Their claim became untenable.
vindication	Proof that someone was right after doubt.	The result was a vindication of his views.
concur	To agree with someone.	Most experts concur with her.
demur	To express polite disagreement or objection.	Nobody dared to demur.
reaffirm	To state your support for something again.	They reaffirm their stance.
syllogism	A form of reasoning with two premises and a conclusion.	He explained it with a syllogism.
sophistry	Clever but false reasoning meant to deceive.	His speech was mere sophistry.
galvanise	To shock or urge people into action.	Great speeches galvanise a crowd.
acquiesce	To accept something without protest.	They rarely acquiesce to demands.
remonstrate	To argue against something in protest.	Fans often remonstrate with the referee.
posit	To put forward an idea as a basis for argument.	Critics posit a bold theory.
rationalisation	An explanation that makes bad behaviour seem reasonable.	It was a clever rationalisation.
crux	The most important point of a problem.	That is the crux of the matter.
subtlety	A small but important detail or distinction.	He appreciates subtlety.
advocacy	Public support for a cause or policy.	Her advocacy changed the law.
wrangle	To argue noisily for a long time.	They wrangle over every detail.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
quibble	To argue about small, unimportant details.	Let us not quibble over pennies.
capitulate	To give in and stop resisting.	The board refused to capitulate.
eloquence	The skill of speaking clearly and powerfully.	Her eloquence won the debate.
diatribe	A long, angry attack in speech or writing.	He launched into a diatribe.
lambaste	To criticise someone harshly.	Critics lambaste the film.
stipulation	A condition that is required in an agreement.	There was one stipulation.
gist	The main point of something said or written.	I got the gist of his argument.
coax	To gently persuade someone.	Try to coax him into agreeing.
vehement	Showing strong, forceful feeling.	He gave a vehement denial.
contentious	Likely to cause disagreement.	It is a contentious topic.
unanimous	Agreed by everyone.	The vote was unanimous.
categorical	Stated clearly with no doubt allowed.	He gave a categorical denial.
adamant	Refusing firmly to change your mind.	She was adamant about leaving.
implore	To beg someone earnestly.	I implore you to reconsider.
belabour	To keep repeating a point too much.	Do not belabour the point.
pertinent	Directly relevant to the matter.	She raised a pertinent question.
moot	Open to debate; uncertain.	It is now a moot point.
fervour	Intense and passionate feeling.	He spoke with great fervour.
axiom	A statement accepted as obviously true.	It is treated as an axiom.
haggle	To argue over the price of something.	They haggle over the price.
relent	To finally agree after refusing.	In the end they relent.
cajole	To persuade someone by flattery or pleasing them.	They cajole him into helping.
retort	To reply quickly and sharply.	She gave a sharp retort.
salient	Most noticeable or important.	He noted the salient facts.
polarise	To divide people into two opposing groups.	Such issues polarise the country.
credence	Belief that something is true.	The report lends credence to the theory.
affirmation	A firm statement that something is true.	She gave a firm affirmation.
persuasively	In a way that convinces people.	He argued persuasively for change.

Character & Temperament

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
tenacious	Holding firmly to a purpose; not giving up.	She is a tenacious negotiator.
meticulous	Very careful about small details.	He is meticulous about detail.
affable	Friendly and easy to talk to.	He is an affable host.
amiable	Pleasant and good-natured.	She has an amiable manner.
genial	Cheerful, warm and friendly.	He gave a genial smile.
scrupulous	Careful to do what is right and correct.	She is scrupulous about honesty.
fastidious	Very attentive to detail and hard to please.	He is fastidious about cleanliness.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
perspicacious	Quick to notice and understand things.	She is a perspicacious judge of people.
resourceful	Good at finding ways to solve problems.	He is remarkably resourceful.
magnanimous	Generous and forgiving, especially to a rival.	She was magnanimous in victory.
benevolent	Kind and wishing to do good.	He is a benevolent leader.
altruistic	Caring for others without wanting reward.	Her motives were altruistic.
gracious	Kind, polite and pleasant.	She is a gracious host.
courteous	Polite and respectful.	He was unfailingly courteous.
tactless	Saying things that upset or offend people.	His tactless remark hurt her.
abrasive	Rude and unpleasant in manner.	He has an abrasive manner.
cantankerous	Bad-tempered and argumentative.	The old man was cantankerous.
obstinate	Refusing to change your mind.	She is obstinate about it.
headstrong	Determined to do what you want despite advice.	He is a headstrong young man.
impetuous	Acting quickly without thinking.	It was an impetuous decision.
impulsive	Acting suddenly without planning.	She is rather impulsive.
capricious	Changing your mind suddenly and often.	His moods are capricious.
fickle	Changing loyalties or feelings often.	Public taste is fickle.
aloof	Distant and not friendly.	He stayed aloof from the group.
standoffish	Cold and unfriendly towards others.	She seemed standoffish at first.
introverted	Quiet and preferring to be alone.	He is quite introverted.
vivacious	Lively and full of energy.	She is a vivacious speaker.
ebullient	Cheerful and full of energy.	He has an ebullient personality.
dour	Stern, gloomy and unfriendly.	The manager has a dour expression.
austere	Strict, plain and without comfort.	He led an austere life.
stoic	Not showing feelings, especially in pain.	She remained stoic throughout.
phlegmatic	Calm and not easily excited.	He has a phlegmatic nature.
pragmatic	Dealing with things in a practical way.	She takes a pragmatic approach.
idealistic	Believing in perfect standards, sometimes unrealistically.	He is young and idealistic.
cynical	Believing people act only from selfishness.	She has a cynical view of politics.
sceptical	Doubting that something is true.	He remained sceptical.
gullible	Too ready to believe things.	He is far too gullible.
naive	Lacking experience and too trusting.	It was a naive assumption.
devious	Using dishonest, hidden methods.	He used devious tactics.
cunning	Clever at deceiving people.	The fox is famously cunning.
wily	Clever and good at getting what you want by tricks.	She is a wily opponent.
unscrupulous	Willing to act dishonestly.	An unscrupulous dealer cheated them.
duplicitous	Behaving dishonestly by deceiving people.	His duplicitous behaviour shocked us.
candid	Honest and open in what you say.	She gave a candid answer.
forthright	Direct and honest in expressing opinions.	He is forthright in his opinions.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
demure	Quiet, modest and shy.	She gave a demure smile.
flamboyant	Confident and noticeable in a showy way.	He has a flamboyant style.
eccentric	Behaving in an unusual, odd way.	Our neighbour is a little eccentric.
unassuming	Modest and not wanting attention.	He is quiet and unassuming.
self-effacing	Not wanting to draw attention to yourself.	She is modest and self-effacing.
overbearing	Trying to control others in an unpleasant way.	His overbearing manner annoys people.
domineering	Trying to control other people.	She has a domineering boss.
tenacity	The quality of not giving up.	Her tenacity is admirable.
rectitude	Correct and honest behaviour.	He is a man of great rectitude.
composed	Calm and in control of your feelings.	She stayed composed under pressure.
temperamental	Having moods that change quickly.	He is rather temperamental.
mercurial	Changing mood quickly and unpredictably.	He has a mercurial temperament.
earnest	Serious and sincere.	She made an earnest effort.
zealous	Full of energy and enthusiasm for a cause.	He is a zealous supporter.
amicable	Friendly and without disagreement.	They reached an amicable agreement.

Humour, Wit & Irony

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
wit	The ability to say clever and amusing things.	She is famous for her wit.
humorous	Funny and amusing.	He wrote a humorous essay.
ironic	Meaning the opposite of what is said, often for effect.	It is deeply ironic.
sarcasm	Saying the opposite of what you mean to mock someone.	His sarcasm can be hurtful.
sarcastic	Using words to mock in a bitter way.	She gave a sarcastic reply.
satirical	Using humour to criticise faults.	It is a satirical cartoon.
parody	A funny imitation of a style or work.	The sketch is a parody of the news.
pun	A joke using words with two meanings.	He loves a good pun.
banter	Friendly, playful teasing.	There was friendly banter.
quip	A clever, witty remark.	She made a clever quip.
jest	A joke, or to speak in a joking way.	He said it in jest.
mockery	The act of making fun of someone.	His tone was full of mockery.
ridicule	Unkind laughter aimed at someone.	She faced public ridicule.
farce	A silly comedy, or a ridiculous situation.	The trial became a farce.
comical	Funny in an amusing way.	He made a comical face.
hilarious	Extremely funny.	The film was hilarious.
amusing	Making you smile or laugh.	It was an amusing story.
droll	Amusing in an odd or dry way.	He has a droll sense of humour.
facetious	Trying to be funny about a serious matter.	Stop being facetious.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
tongue-in-cheek	Said as a joke, not meant seriously.	The remark was tongue-in-cheek.
deadpan	Showing no emotion while saying something funny.	She has a deadpan delivery.
whimsical	Playfully odd or fanciful.	It is a whimsical tale.
lampoon	To publicly mock someone with humour.	Cartoonists love to lampoon the mayor.
caricature	An exaggerated drawing or description for comic effect.	The drawing is a caricature.
levity	Humour used in a serious situation.	A moment of levity broke the tension.
mirth	Happiness and laughter.	The joke caused great mirth.
jovial	Cheerful and friendly.	He is a jovial old man.
jocular	Fond of joking; humorous.	He made a jocular comment.
chuckle	To laugh quietly.	She gave a quiet chuckle.
giggle	To laugh in a silly, nervous way.	The children began to giggle.
snigger	To laugh quietly in a mean way.	He tried not to snigger.
guffaw	To laugh loudly.	He let out a loud guffaw.
hilarity	Great amusement and laughter.	The remark caused hilarity.
wisecrack	A quick, clever, joking remark.	He made a quick wisecrack.
repartee	Quick, witty conversation.	Their repartee was sharp.
ribbing	Gentle teasing.	He took the ribbing well.
teasing	Making fun of someone in a playful way.	It was only gentle teasing.
prank	A trick played on someone for fun.	They played a harmless prank.
antics	Silly or amusing behaviour.	His antics amused everyone.
buffoon	A person who behaves in a ridiculous way.	He acted like a buffoon.
absurd	Completely silly and unreasonable.	The whole idea is absurd.
ludicrous	So foolish it is laughable.	It was a ludicrous suggestion.
preposterous	Completely unreasonable and ridiculous.	What a preposterous claim!
farcical	Absurd and ridiculous.	The situation was farcical.
wry	Showing dry, clever humour.	He gave a wry grin.
impish	Playfully mischievous.	She has an impish grin.
playful	Full of fun and good humour.	His tone was playful.
lighthearted	Cheerful and not serious.	It was a lighthearted chat.
amuse	To make someone laugh or smile.	The story will amuse you.
scoff	To speak about something with mocking laughter.	They scoff at every new plan.
jeer	To shout mocking remarks.	The crowd began to jeer.
taunt	To try to make someone angry with insulting remarks.	He ignored the taunt.
gibe	An insulting, mocking remark.	She made a cruel gibe.
derision	Mocking laughter and contempt.	His plan met with derision.
flippant	Not showing proper seriousness.	He gave a flippant answer.
comedian	A person whose job is to make people laugh.	The comedian had us laughing.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
punchline	The final part of a joke that makes it funny.	He forgot the punchline.
anecdote	A short, amusing true story.	She told a funny anecdote.
witticism	A clever and amusing remark.	She added a clever witticism.
humour	The quality of being amusing.	He has a great sense of humour.

Reason & Abstraction

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
rationality	The quality of being based on clear reason.	He prizes rationality above all.
cognisance	Knowledge or awareness of something.	She took cognisance of the facts.
discernment	The ability to judge well.	He shows great discernment.
acumen	The ability to make good judgements quickly.	She has real business acumen.
sagacity	Wisdom and good judgement.	His sagacity impressed them.
perspicacity	The ability to understand things clearly.	Her perspicacity is rare.
conjecture	An opinion formed without complete evidence.	It is pure conjecture.
extrapolate	To estimate something from known facts.	We can extrapolate from the data.
surmise	To guess something from little evidence.	I surmise that he left early.
cogitate	To think carefully about something.	He sat down to cogitate.
mull	To think about something slowly and carefully.	Let me mull it over.
sagacious	Wise and showing good judgement.	He gave sagacious advice.
discerning	Able to judge quality well.	She is a discerning critic.
judicious	Showing careful, sensible judgement.	He made a judicious choice.
circumspect	Careful to consider all risks before acting.	Be circumspect with strangers.
prudence	Care and good sense in making decisions.	Financial prudence is wise.
foresight	The ability to predict future needs.	She showed great foresight.
hindsight	Understanding a situation only after it has happened.	In hindsight, it was a mistake.
epiphany	A sudden moment of deep understanding.	He had a sudden epiphany.
apprehend	To understand or grasp something.	It is hard to apprehend the scale.
abstruse	Difficult to understand.	The theory is abstruse.
esoteric	Understood by only a small, expert group.	It is an esoteric subject.
opaque	Hard to understand.	His writing is opaque.
lucidity	Clearness of thought or expression.	She explained with great lucidity.
cogency	The quality of being clear and convincing.	The cogency of his case won them over.
axiomatic	Obviously true and needing no proof.	It is treated as axiomatic.
connotation	An idea suggested by a word beyond its meaning.	The word has a negative connotation.
construct	An idea built from smaller ideas.	Race is a social construct.
schema	A mental pattern used to organise information.	He built a mental schema.
dissect	To examine something in great detail.	Critics dissect every line.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
appraise	To judge the value or quality of something.	Experts appraise the painting.
delve	To search deeply into something.	She likes to delve into history.
philosophise	To think or talk about deep ideas.	He likes to philosophise about life.
underpinning	The basic idea that supports something.	What is the underpinning of this claim?
soundness	The quality of being reliable and correct.	Nobody doubts the soundness of the plan.
rigour	Strict thoroughness and accuracy.	The proof lacks rigour.
cerebral	Relating to the intellect rather than emotions.	It is a very cerebral film.
erudite	Having or showing great knowledge.	She is an erudite scholar.
learned	Having much knowledge from study.	He is a learned professor.
knowledgeable	Knowing a lot about something.	She is very knowledgeable.
internalise	To make an idea part of your own thinking.	Try to internalise the rules.
inductive	Reasoning from particular facts to a general rule.	She used inductive reasoning.
presupposition	Something assumed to be true beforehand.	The plan rests on a presupposition.
tangential	Only slightly connected to the main subject.	His point was tangential.
pertinence	The quality of being relevant.	I question its pertinence.
elucidation	An explanation that makes something clear.	We need further elucidation.
rumination	The act of thinking deeply about something.	After much rumination, he agreed.
discernible	Able to be seen or understood.	There was no discernible change.
rationalism	The belief that reason is the basis of knowledge.	He is a champion of rationalism.
acuity	Sharpness of thought or perception.	Her mental acuity is sharp.
conjectural	Based on guessing rather than facts.	The link is conjectural.
intelligible	Able to be understood.	His notes are barely intelligible.
methodical	Done in an orderly, careful way.	She is methodical in her work.
meditative	Involving deep, quiet thought.	He was in a meditative mood.
circumspection	Careful attention to possible risks.	He acted with circumspection.
notional	Existing only as an idea, not in reality.	It is only a notional figure.
revelation	A surprising fact that is made known.	The book was a revelation.
objectively	In a way based on facts, not feelings.	Try to look at it objectively.
decipher	To work out the meaning of something unclear.	I cannot decipher his handwriting.
contemplation	Deep, quiet thinking.	She sat in quiet contemplation.

Politics & Power

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
statecraft	The skill of governing a country.	He was a master of statecraft.
hegemony	The dominance of one state or group over others.	They challenged American hegemony.
despot	A ruler with total power, often cruel.	The despot ruled by fear.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
autocrat	A ruler with absolute power.	The autocrat silenced all critics.
oligarchy	Government by a small group of powerful people.	Power lay with a small oligarchy.
demagoguery	Winning support by appealing to emotions and fears.	His speech was pure demagoguery.
partisanship	Strong support for one party or cause.	Bitter partisanship stalled the bill.
incumbent	The person currently holding an official position.	The incumbent won re-election.
constituent	A voter in a particular area.	Each constituent can write to the MP.
enfranchise	To give someone the right to vote.	The reform will enfranchise millions.
disenfranchise	To take away someone's right to vote.	The law could disenfranchise the poor.
plebiscite	A direct vote by the people on an issue.	A plebiscite settled the question.
statesmanship	Skill and wisdom in managing public affairs.	The crisis called for statesmanship.
realpolitik	Politics based on practical aims rather than ideals.	It was a decision of cold realpolitik.
coup	A sudden, often violent seizure of power.	The army staged a coup.
junta	A military group that rules a country after seizing power.	A military junta seized power.
self-determination	The right of people to choose their own government.	They demanded self-determination.
annexation	The taking of territory by one state.	The annexation sparked outrage.
secede	To formally leave a state or organisation.	The region voted to secede.
insurgency	An armed rebellion against a government.	The insurgency lasted a decade.
dissident	A person who openly opposes the government.	The dissident was jailed.
propagandist	A person who spreads biased information.	He worked as a propagandist.
authoritarian	Demanding strict obedience to authority.	It is an authoritarian regime.
totalitarian	Relating to a government that controls all of life.	They feared a totalitarian state.
autonomous	Self-governing and independent.	The province is now autonomous.
sovereign	Having supreme power; a supreme ruler.	Each sovereign state has a vote.
electorate	All the people entitled to vote.	The electorate rejected the plan.
incarcerate	To put someone in prison.	They incarcerate political enemies.
subjugate	To bring a people under complete control.	Empires sought to subjugate weaker nations.
oppress	To rule people in a cruel, unfair way.	The regime continued to oppress dissent.
tyrant	A cruel ruler with total power.	The tyrant crushed all opposition.
nepotism	Giving jobs unfairly to your own relatives.	The firm is riddled with nepotism.
clout	Power and influence.	She has real political clout.
lobbyist	A person paid to influence politicians.	A lobbyist met the minister.
demagogic	Appealing to emotions to gain power.	He used demagogic tactics.
faction	A small group within a larger one, often in conflict.	A rival faction split the party.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
bloc	A group of countries or people acting together.	The trade bloc met in Geneva.
annex	To take control of territory and add it to your own.	They threatened to annex the islands.
usurp	To take power or a position by force.	He tried to usurp the throne.
abdicate	To give up a throne or high office.	The king chose to abdicate.
reign	To rule as a king or queen.	Her reign lasted forty years.
centrist	Holding moderate political views.	He is a moderate centrist.
ideologue	A person who strictly follows a set of political ideas.	He is a rigid ideologue.
demobilise	To release troops from active service.	The army began to demobilise.
repression	The use of force to control people.	Years of repression followed.
puppet	A leader controlled secretly by others.	He was a mere puppet ruler.
patronage	The power to give jobs or favours.	He owed his job to patronage.
gerrymander	To change voting areas to gain unfair advantage.	They tried to gerrymander the districts.
bipartisan	Supported by two political parties.	It was a rare bipartisan effort.
statutory	Required or controlled by law.	There is a statutory right to leave.
dominion	Control or rule over an area.	The empire held dominion over the seas.
ascendancy	A position of rising power or influence.	The party is in the ascendancy.
machination	A secret plot to gain power.	He feared a secret machination.
demarcate	To set the limits or boundaries of something.	Treaties demarcate the border.
enact	To make a proposal into law.	Parliament will enact the law.
repeal	To officially cancel a law.	They voted to repeal the tax.
depose	To remove a ruler from power.	Rebels moved to depose the king.
incite	To stir people up to violent action.	He was charged with trying to incite a riot.
quell	To put an end to opposition by force.	Troops were sent to quell the unrest.
suppress	To stop something by force or authority.	The state tried to suppress the report.

Economics & Finance

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
solvency	The ability to pay all your debts.	The bank’s solvency was in doubt.
insolvency	The state of being unable to pay debts.	The firm faced insolvency.
liquidate	To sell a business's assets to pay its debts.	They had to liquidate their assets.
leverage	The use of borrowed money to invest.	The deal used a lot of leverage.
arbitrage	Buying and selling to profit from price differences.	He made money through arbitrage.
derivative	A financial contract based on the value of an asset.	A derivative is a risky product.
collateral	Property promised to a lender to secure a loan.	The house was used as collateral.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
amortise	To pay off a debt gradually over time.	They amortise the loan over ten years.
depreciation	A fall in the value of an asset over time.	The car loses value through depreciation.
appreciation	A rise in the value of an asset over time.	Currency appreciation hurt exports.
monetarist	Relating to control of the money supply.	He is a strict monetarist.
macroeconomic	Relating to the economy as a whole.	They study macroeconomic trends.
remittance	Money sent, especially to another country.	A remittance arrived from abroad.
subprime	Relating to loans given to high-risk borrowers.	Subprime loans caused the crash.
windfall	A large amount of money received unexpectedly.	He spent his windfall wisely.
nest egg	Money saved for the future.	She has a small nest egg.
frugal	Careful with money; not wasteful.	He leads a frugal life.
thrift	The careful use of money.	Her thrift impressed everyone.
extravagance	The spending of too much money.	His extravagance ruined him.
opulence	Great wealth and luxury.	They lived in great opulence.
destitution	The state of extreme poverty.	War drove them to destitution.
penury	Extreme poverty.	He died in penury.
solvent	Able to pay all your debts.	The company is barely solvent.
arrears	Money owed that should have been paid earlier.	He fell into rent arrears.
default	The failure to repay a loan.	They may default on the loan.
underwrite	To accept financial responsibility for something.	A bank agreed to underwrite the bond.
hedge fund	A fund that invests in risky ways for high returns.	She works for a hedge fund.
annuity	A fixed sum of money paid each year.	He bought an annuity for retirement.
compound interest	Interest paid on both the sum and past interest.	Compound interest builds wealth.
inflationary	Tending to cause prices to rise.	Wages add inflationary pressure.
recessionary	Relating to a period of economic decline.	We are in a recessionary period.
expansionary	Tending to increase economic activity.	They chose an expansionary policy.
belt-tightening	The reducing of spending in hard times.	A round of belt-tightening began.
levy	A tax or charge collected by a government.	The state imposed a new levy.
excise	A tax on certain goods made or sold in a country.	Excise on fuel was raised.
capital gain	Profit from selling an asset for more than its cost.	She paid tax on the capital gain.
per capita	For each person.	Per capita income rose.
valuation	An estimate of how much something is worth.	The firm’s valuation soared.
overvalued	Priced higher than the real worth.	The shares are overvalued.
undervalued	Priced lower than the real worth.	Analysts call it undervalued.
profiteer	A person who makes unfair profits.	A profiteer exploited the shortage.
usury	The lending of money at very high interest.	The lender was accused of usury.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
brokerage	A business that buys and sells for others.	She opened a brokerage account.
bullion	Gold or silver in bulk before it is made into coins.	They store gold bullion.
hyperinflation	Extremely fast and severe rise in prices.	Hyperinflation wiped out savings.
indebted	Owing money to someone.	The nation is deeply indebted.
creditworthy	Considered safe to lend money to.	He is no longer creditworthy.
fiduciary	Relating to trust over someone's money or assets.	They have a fiduciary duty.
pecuniary	Relating to money.	He had no pecuniary interest.
remunerative	Bringing in a good amount of money.	It is highly remunerative work.
economise	To spend less money.	We must economise this winter.
squander	To waste money or resources.	Do not squander your money.
accrue	To build up over time, as interest does.	Interest will accrue over time.
shortfall	An amount by which something is less than needed.	There was a budget shortfall.
overdraft	Money taken from a bank account beyond its balance.	She has a large overdraft.
insolvent	Unable to pay debts.	The company is now insolvent.
recoup	To get back money that was lost or spent.	They hope to recoup the losses.
divest	To sell off investments or parts of a business.	They will divest their oil assets.
remit	To send money as payment.	It is outside the bank’s remit.
liquid	Easily changed into cash, said of assets.	Cash is the most liquid asset.

Science & Research

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
empiricism	The idea that knowledge comes from observation.	Empiricism relies on observation.
peer-reviewed	Checked by other experts before publication.	It is a peer-reviewed journal.
replicable	Able to be repeated with the same result.	The result must be replicable.
falsifiable	Able to be proved false by testing.	A good theory is falsifiable.
anomaly	Something that differs from what is normal.	The data showed an anomaly.
parameter	A limit or factor that defines a study.	We set each parameter carefully.
quantifiable	Able to be measured as an amount.	The benefit is not easily quantifiable.
extrapolation	The estimating of unknown values from known ones.	It is based on extrapolation.
induction	Reasoning from particular cases to a general rule.	Science often relies on induction.
paradigmatic	Serving as a typical example or model.	It was a paradigmatic shift.
heuristic	A practical method for solving problems by trial.	They used a simple heuristic.
algorithmic	Following a fixed set of steps.	It is an algorithmic process.
nanotechnology	The science of building things at a tiny scale.	Nanotechnology is advancing fast.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
biochemistry	The study of the chemistry of living things.	She studies biochemistry.
astrophysics	The study of the physics of stars and space.	He teaches astrophysics.
neuroscience	The scientific study of the brain and nerves.	Neuroscience explores the brain.
taxonomy	The scientific classification of living things.	Biologists use a strict taxonomy.
photosynthesis	How plants make food from sunlight.	Plants live by photosynthesis.
metabolism	The chemical processes that keep a body alive.	Exercise speeds up metabolism.
catalysis	The speeding up of a reaction by a catalyst.	Catalysis lowers the energy needed.
radioactive	Giving off harmful energy as particles decay.	The waste is radioactive.
subatomic	Smaller than an atom.	They study subatomic particles.
thermonuclear	Relating to reactions caused by great heat in atoms.	A thermonuclear reaction powers the sun.
centrifuge	A machine that spins fast to separate substances.	The sample spun in a centrifuge.
reagent	A substance used to cause a chemical reaction.	They added a chemical reagent.
petri dish	A shallow dish used to grow cells or bacteria.	The bacteria grew in a petri dish.
theorem	A statement proved to be true by reasoning.	He proved a famous theorem.
empirically	Based on observation and experiment.	It is empirically proven.
observational	Based on watching rather than experimenting.	It was an observational study.
longitudinal	Studying the same subjects over a long time.	They ran a longitudinal study.
placebo	A harmless substance given instead of real medicine.	Half the group got a placebo.
statistical	Relating to the analysis of numerical data.	The link is statistical.
probabilistic	Based on the likelihood of events.	The model is probabilistic.
deterministic	Believing every event has a definite cause.	Physics once seemed deterministic.
quantum mechanics	The physics of very small particles.	Quantum mechanics is baffling.
relativity	Einstein's theory of space, time and gravity.	Einstein’s relativity changed physics.
cosmology	The study of the origin and nature of the universe.	Cosmology studies the universe.
genome	The complete set of genes in a living thing.	They mapped the human genome.
mutation	A change in the genes of a living thing.	A single mutation caused it.
pathogen	A tiny organism that causes disease.	The pathogen spreads in water.
antibody	A substance the body makes to fight disease.	The body makes an antibody.
stem cell	A basic cell that can develop into many types.	Stem cell research is promising.
assay	A test to find the make-up of a substance.	They ran a blood assay.
fission	The splitting of an atom to release energy.	Nuclear fission releases energy.
plasma	A very hot, charged gas, or the liquid part of blood.	The sun is made of plasma.
spectroscopy	The study of how substances absorb and emit light.	Spectroscopy reveals the elements.
calibration	The setting of an instrument for accuracy.	The device needs calibration.
methodological	Relating to the methods used in research.	There was a methodological flaw.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
interdisciplinary	Involving two or more fields of study.	It is interdisciplinary research.
modelling	The making of a simplified version to study something.	Climate modelling is complex.
datum	A single piece of information.	Each datum was checked twice.
null hypothesis	The assumption that there is no real effect.	They rejected the null hypothesis.
treatise	A long, formal piece of writing on a subject.	He wrote a long treatise.
serendipity	The finding of good things by chance.	The find was pure serendipity.
quantitatively	In terms of amounts and numbers.	They measured it quantitatively.
proof	Evidence that shows something is true.	He offered a rigorous proof.
enzymatic	Relating to or caused by enzymes.	It is an enzymatic reaction.
distillation	The purifying of a liquid by heating and cooling.	Distillation purifies the liquid.
inoculate	To give a vaccine to protect against disease.	Doctors inoculate against the disease.
fieldwork	Research done outside a laboratory.	She did fieldwork in the Amazon.

Law & Justice

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
jurisprudence	The theory and study of law.	She studies jurisprudence.
litigant	A person involved in a lawsuit.	Each litigant hired a lawyer.
claimant	A person who makes a legal claim.	The claimant won damages.
arbitration	The settling of a dispute by an outside judge.	The dispute went to arbitration.
adjudicate	To make a formal judgement on a dispute.	A panel will adjudicate the claim.
indictment	A formal charge of a serious crime.	He faces a serious indictment.
indict	To formally charge someone with a crime.	They may indict the official.
exonerate	To officially clear someone of blame.	New facts exonerate the accused.
incriminate	To make someone appear guilty of a crime.	The letter could incriminate him.
culpable	Deserving blame for something wrong.	The driver was culpable.
culpability	Responsibility for a fault or crime.	The court weighed his culpability.
mitigating	Making a fault seem less serious.	There were mitigating circumstances.
precedent	An earlier case used as a guide for later ones.	The ruling set a precedent.
tort	a wrongful act that leads to a civil legal claim.	It is a matter of tort law.
subpoena	An order to attend court to give evidence.	He received a subpoena.
affidavit	A written statement sworn to be true.	She signed an affidavit.
deposition	A witness's sworn statement made out of court.	The lawyer took a deposition.
plea bargain	A deal to plead guilty for a lighter sentence.	He accepted a plea bargain.
acquittal	A court decision that someone is not guilty.	The acquittal surprised everyone.
mistrial	A trial made invalid because of an error.	The judge declared a mistrial.
appellate	Relating to appeals against court decisions.	It went to the appellate court.
reprieve	A delay in carrying out a punishment.	The prisoner won a reprieve.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
clemency	Mercy shown in punishing an offender.	He pleaded for clemency.
amnesty	An official pardon for offences.	The government offered an amnesty.
extradite	To hand over an accused person to another country.	They will extradite the suspect.
extradition	The handing over of a suspect to another country.	An extradition request was filed.
venue	The place where a court case is held.	The trial venue was changed.
impeachment	The formal charging of an official with wrongdoing.	The impeachment failed.
defamatory	Damaging someone's reputation with false claims.	The article was defamatory.
slander	The crime of spoken false statements harming someone.	She sued for slander.
libel	The crime of written false statements harming someone.	The paper was guilty of libel.
negligence	A failure to take proper care, causing harm.	The case turned on negligence.
indemnity	Protection or payment against loss or harm.	The contract includes an indemnity.
restitution	The returning of something or payment for loss.	The court ordered restitution.
damages	Money paid to make up for harm or loss.	He was awarded heavy damages.
judiciary	The judges and courts of a country.	The judiciary must stay independent.
legislator	A person who makes laws.	Each legislator gets one vote.
constitutional	Allowed by a country's constitution.	It raises a constitutional question.
unconstitutional	Against the rules of a constitution.	The law was ruled unconstitutional.
mandatory	Required by law or rule.	There is a mandatory sentence.
binding	Legally forcing you to obey.	The contract is legally binding.
nullify	To make something legally invalid.	The court may nullify the deal.
arbitrary	Based on personal choice rather than rules.	It was an arbitrary decision.
due process	Fair legal treatment as required by law.	Everyone is entitled to due process.
habeas corpus	The right not to be held in prison unlawfully.	They invoked habeas corpus.
malpractice	Careless or illegal behaviour by a professional.	The doctor was sued for malpractice.
perpetrate	To carry out a crime or wrong act.	Who could perpetrate such a crime?
abscond	To leave secretly to escape the law.	They may abscond with the funds.
embezzle	To steal money placed in your care.	She tried to embezzle the cash.
extort	To get money by force or threats.	They attempted to extort money.
coerce	To force someone to do something by threats.	They tried to coerce him into signing.
coercion	The use of force or threats to make someone act.	The confession was made under coercion.
duress	Threats or force used to make someone act.	He acted under duress.
recidivism	The tendency of criminals to reoffend.	The programme cut recidivism.
custodial	Involving being kept in prison.	He got a custodial sentence.
exemption	Freedom from a rule or duty others must follow.	They claimed a tax exemption.
waiver	The giving up of a right or claim.	She signed a liability waiver.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
covenant	A formal, binding agreement.	The deal included a covenant.
mediator	A person who helps two sides reach agreement.	A mediator helped them agree.
ruling	An official decision made by a court.	The ruling pleased nobody.

Business & Leadership

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
visionary	A person with clear ideas about the future.	She is a true visionary.
mentorship	The guiding of a less experienced person.	He values mentorship.
charisma	A personal quality that attracts and inspires people.	The leader has natural charisma.
charismatic	Having a powerful ability to attract people.	He is a charismatic speaker.
stewardship	The careful management of something entrusted to you.	Good stewardship protects the firm.
strategic	Relating to long-term plans and goals.	It was a strategic decision.
tactical	Relating to methods used to reach a short-term goal.	They made a tactical retreat.
entrepreneurial	Skilled at starting and running businesses.	She has an entrepreneurial spirit.
scalable	Able to grow larger easily.	The model is highly scalable.
synergy	Extra benefit gained when things work together.	The merger created synergy.
consolidation	The joining or strengthening of parts.	The sector saw consolidation.
diversification	The spreading of business into new areas.	Diversification reduces risk.
restructure	To organise a company in a new way.	They had to restructure the firm.
streamline	To make a process simpler and more efficient.	We must streamline the process.
benchmark	A standard used to judge performance.	Set a clear benchmark.
metric	A standard for measuring performance.	Choose the right metric.
deliverable	A specific result that must be produced.	Each deliverable has a deadline.
incentivise	To encourage action by offering a reward.	Bonuses incentivise staff.
decentralise	To spread control away from a central point.	They aim to decentralise power.
matrix	A structure organising a company in a grid.	The firm uses a matrix structure.
oversight	The watching over of a process to ensure it is done right.	The board provides oversight.
compliance	Obeying rules and regulations.	Compliance with the rules is vital.
due diligence	Careful research before a business decision.	They did due diligence first.
divestment	The selling of business assets or interests.	The divestment raised cash.
flagship	The best or most important product of a company.	It is their flagship product.
proprietary	Owned privately by a company under a name.	It uses proprietary software.
monopolise	To gain complete control of a market.	One firm tried to monopolise the market.
oligopoly	A market controlled by a few companies.	The industry is an oligopoly.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
scalability	The ability of a business to grow.	Investors love its scalability.
agile	Able to change and adapt quickly.	They use an agile method.
pivot	To change a business strategy quickly.	The startup had to pivot.
disruptor	A company that greatly changes an industry.	The app is a market disruptor.
monetisation	The earning of money from something.	Monetisation is the next step.
lean	Efficient, with little waste.	They run a lean operation.
succession	The passing of leadership to the next person.	They planned for succession.
spearhead	To lead an effort or project.	She will spearhead the project.
trailblazing	Being the first to do something new.	It was trailblazing work.
profitability	The ability to make a profit.	Profitability improved sharply.
turnaround	A change from failure to success.	The new boss led a turnaround.
facilitator	A person who helps a group work effectively.	She is a skilled facilitator.
broker	A person who arranges deals between others.	He helped broker the deal.
consortium	A group of companies working together.	A consortium bought the firm.
venture capital	Money invested in new, risky businesses.	They raised venture capital.
buyout	The buying of a controlling share of a company.	Managers led a buyout.
underperform	To do less well than expected.	The fund continues to underperform.
outperform	To do better than others.	They outperform their rivals.
directive	An official instruction.	The CEO issued a directive.
revitalise	To give new strength and energy to something.	They want to revitalise the brand.
multinational	A company operating in many countries.	It is a large multinational.
roadmap	A plan showing steps towards a goal.	She set out a clear roadmap.
onboard	To bring a new employee or customer into a system.	We onboard new staff each month.
liaise	To work together and exchange information.	She will liaise with the client.
liaison	Communication and cooperation between groups.	He acts as a liaison.
proactively	By acting in advance rather than reacting.	They manage risk proactively.
workflow	The sequence of steps in doing work.	The new workflow saved hours.
optimisation	The making of something as effective as possible.	Cost optimisation was the goal.
innovator	A person who introduces new ideas.	She is a fearless innovator.
overarching	Covering or including everything.	Profit is the overarching aim.
ambit	The range or scope of something.	It falls within our ambit.
helm	The position of leadership or control.	She took the helm of the firm.

Literary Style & Genre

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
allusion	An indirect reference to something.	The poem is full of allusion.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
alliteration	The repeating of the same first sound in words.	He loves alliteration.
assonance	The repeating of vowel sounds in nearby words.	The line uses gentle assonance.
onomatopoeia	Words that imitate the sound they describe.	‘Buzz’ is onomatopoeia.
hyperbole	Deliberate exaggeration for effect.	It is obvious hyperbole.
understatement	Describing something as less than it really is.	‘Quite good’ was an understatement.
euphemism	A mild word used in place of a harsh one.	‘Passed away’ is a euphemism.
oxymoron	A phrase joining two opposite ideas.	‘Bittersweet’ is an oxymoron.
personification	Giving human qualities to non-human things.	The weeping wind is personification.
metaphorical	Using a word or image to stand for another idea.	He spoke in metaphorical terms.
literal	Meaning exactly what is said, without imagery.	Take the word in its literal sense.
connotative	Suggesting ideas beyond the direct meaning.	The word is highly connotative.
prosaic	Plain and ordinary; lacking imagination.	His style is rather prosaic.
lyrical	Expressing emotion in a beautiful, song-like way.	She writes lyrical prose.
elegiac	Expressing sorrow, especially for the dead.	The tone is elegiac.
terse	Using few words; brief and to the point.	His style is terse and clipped.
verbose	Using more words than needed.	The report is too verbose.
florid	Very elaborate and decorated in style.	She uses florid language.
succinct	Expressed clearly in few words.	Keep your answer succinct.
pithy	Short but full of meaning.	He gave a pithy reply.
epic	A long poem or story about heroic deeds.	It is an epic poem.
sonnet	A poem of fourteen lines.	She wrote a sonnet.
ode	A poem addressed to a person or thing.	He composed an ode to autumn.
elegy	A sad poem, often for someone who has died.	The poem is an elegy.
epitaph	Words written on a gravestone.	His epitaph was very simple.
anecdotal	Based on personal stories rather than facts.	The evidence is only anecdotal.
allegorical	Using a story to represent a deeper meaning.	The tale is allegorical.
dystopian	Describing an imagined bad future society.	It is a dystopian novel.
utopian	Describing an imagined perfect society.	His vision was utopian.
gothic	A dark, mysterious style of fiction.	She loves gothic fiction.
surreal	Strange and dreamlike.	The scene felt surreal.
modernist	Relating to a bold, experimental style of art.	It is a modernist classic.
narration	The telling of a story.	The narration is in the first person.
omniscient	A narrator who knows everything in a story.	It uses an omniscient narrator.
subtext	A meaning hidden beneath the surface.	There is a clear subtext.
motif	A repeated idea or image in a work.	Water is a recurring motif.
juxtaposition	The placing of things side by side for contrast.	The juxtaposition is striking.
pathos	A quality that stirs feelings of pity or sadness.	The scene is full of pathos.
catharsis	The release of strong emotion through art.	Tragedy offers catharsis.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
denouement	The final part where a story is resolved.	The denouement was satisfying.
cliffhanger	An exciting ending that leaves you in suspense.	The chapter ends on a cliffhanger.
antihero	A main character lacking heroic qualities.	The novel has a complex antihero.
pastiche	A work imitating the style of another.	The film is a clever pastiche.
homage	A work made to honour another artist.	The film pays homage to old westerns.
vignette	A short, descriptive scene or piece of writing.	Each chapter is a short vignette.
preamble	An introduction to a piece of writing.	She skipped the long preamble.
epigraph	A short quotation at the start of a book.	An epigraph opens the book.
compendium	A collection of information in one work.	It is a compendium of essays.
couplet	Two lines of verse, usually rhyming.	He ended with a rhyming couplet.
metre	The rhythm of syllables in a line of poetry.	The poem has a steady metre.
iambic	A poetic rhythm of unstressed then stressed beats.	It is written in iambic verse.
cadence	The rhythmic rise and fall of sound.	Her sentences have a lovely cadence.
tone	The mood or attitude of a piece of writing.	The tone is gently mocking.
voice	The distinct style of a writer.	She has a distinctive narrative voice.
stylistic	Relating to the style of a work.	It is a stylistic choice.
embellish	To add detail to make something more interesting.	He tends to embellish stories.
paraphrase	To express something in different words.	Let me paraphrase the passage.
verbatim	In exactly the same words.	She quoted him verbatim.
interlude	A short section between the main parts.	The poem is a quiet interlude.
exposition	The part of a story that gives background.	The opening exposition sets the scene.

Art & Beauty

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
sublime	So beautiful or grand it inspires awe.	The view was utterly sublime.
picturesque	Pretty in a charming, old-fashioned way.	It is a picturesque village.
resplendent	Bright and beautiful in appearance.	She looked resplendent in gold.
ornamental	Made to be decorative rather than useful.	The gate is purely ornamental.
minimalism	A style using very simple, plain forms.	He loves minimalism.
symmetry	Balanced, matching form on both sides.	The design has perfect symmetry.
asymmetry	A lack of matching balance.	There is a pleasing asymmetry.
proportion	The correct relation in size between parts.	The columns are in proportion.
grandeur	Impressive greatness and beauty.	The hall has real grandeur.
opulent	Rich, luxurious and expensive-looking.	The room was opulent.
rustic	Simple and typical of the countryside.	The cottage has a rustic charm.
ethereal	Delicate and light, seeming not of this world.	The music was ethereal.
luminous	Giving off or reflecting light.	Her skin had a luminous glow.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
iridescent	Showing many shining, changing colours.	The wings are iridescent.
lustrous	Shining softly.	She has lustrous hair.
monochrome	Using only one colour or shades of one.	He photographs in monochrome.
hue	A colour or shade.	The sky turned a deep hue.
tint	A pale shade of a colour.	There was a green tint to the glass.
patina	A soft surface produced by age on metal or wood.	The bronze has a green patina.
tactile	Relating to the sense of touch.	The fabric is wonderfully tactile.
baroque	A highly decorated, dramatic old style.	The church is baroque.
gilded	Covered with a thin layer of gold.	The frame is gilded.
velvety	Soft and smooth like velvet.	The wine has a velvety taste.
sumptuous	Rich, splendid and expensive-looking.	They served a sumptuous meal.
lavish	Rich, generous and plentiful.	It was a lavish ceremony.
dainty	Small, delicate and pretty.	She wore dainty shoes.
filigree	Delicate, lace-like decoration in metal.	The ring has fine filigree.
intricacy	The quality of having many fine details.	The intricacy amazed us.
craftsmanship	The skill shown in making things by hand.	The craftsmanship is superb.
connoisseur	An expert judge of art or good taste.	He is a wine connoisseur.
aficionado	A person very keen on a subject.	She is a jazz aficionado.
virtuosity	Great skill in performing art.	His virtuosity is dazzling.
finesse	Delicate skill and elegance.	She plays with great finesse.
flair	A natural talent, or stylish quality.	He has a flair for design.
panache	A confident and stylish manner.	She dresses with panache.
tasteful	Showing good judgement of what is attractive.	The decor is tasteful.
tacky	Cheap and of poor taste.	The ornament looked tacky.
garish	Too bright and colourful in a way that offends.	The colours are too garish.
gaudy	Brightly coloured in a showy, tasteless way.	She wore gaudy jewellery.
drab	Dull and lacking colour or interest.	The walls were a drab grey.
dreary	Dull and depressing.	It was a dreary afternoon.
pristine	Fresh, clean and like new.	The beach is pristine.
flawless	Perfect, with no faults.	Her performance was flawless.
radiant	Bright and shining, especially with beauty.	The bride looked radiant.
scenic	Having beautiful natural views.	We took the scenic route.
idyllic	Peaceful and perfect in a charming way.	It was an idyllic setting.
quaint	Attractively old-fashioned.	The town is rather quaint.
statuesque	Tall and gracefully dignified.	She is tall and statuesque.
graceful	Moving in a smooth, attractive way.	The dancer was graceful.
elegant	Graceful and stylish.	She wore an elegant dress.
refinement	Elegance and good taste.	His taste shows refinement.
ostentatious	Showy in a way meant to impress.	The car was ostentatious.
understated	Attractive in a quiet, simple way.	Her style is understated.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
evocation	The bringing of a feeling or memory to mind.	The painting is an evocation of grief.
ornamentation	Decoration added to something.	The ceiling is rich in ornamentation.
luminosity	The quality of giving off light.	The screen’s luminosity is high.
sheen	A soft, smooth shine.	The silk has a soft sheen.
exuberance	The quality of being lively and energetic.	The design has wild exuberance.
starkness	The quality of being plain and bare.	The photo’s starkness is moving.
beauty	The quality of being very pleasing to the senses.	The valley has breathtaking beauty.

Language & Words

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
etymology	The study of the origin and history of words.	The etymology of the word is Greek.
semantics	The study of meaning in language.	It is a question of semantics.
syntax	The rules for arranging words into sentences.	English syntax can be tricky.
morphology	The study of the forms of words.	Morphology studies word forms.
phonetics	The study of the sounds of speech.	Phonetics describes speech sounds.
phoneme	The smallest unit of sound in a language.	A phoneme is a unit of sound.
lexicon	The complete vocabulary of a language.	The word entered the lexicon.
vernacular	The everyday language spoken by ordinary people.	He wrote in the local vernacular.
colloquial	Used in ordinary, informal conversation.	It is a colloquial phrase.
idiomatic	Using expressions natural to a language.	Her English is very idiomatic.
dialectal	Relating to a regional form of a language.	There are dialectal differences.
linguistic	Relating to language.	It is a linguistic puzzle.
bilingualism	The ability to speak two languages.	Bilingualism is common here.
cognate	A word related in origin to one in another language.	‘Mother’ has many a cognate.
loanword	A word taken from another language.	‘Café’ is a French loanword.
neologism	A newly created word.	‘Selfie’ is a recent neologism.
archaic	Very old and no longer in normal use.	‘Thou’ is an archaic word.
antiquated	Old-fashioned and no longer used.	The term is rather antiquated.
denotation	The exact, direct meaning of a word.	The denotation is neutral.
homonym	A word spelt or sounding like another but different.	‘Bat’ is a homonym.
synonym	A word with the same meaning as another.	Find a synonym for ‘happy’.
antonym	A word with the opposite meaning to another.	‘Hot’ is an antonym of ‘cold’.
prefix	Letters added to the start of a word.	Add the prefix ‘un’.
suffix	Letters added to the end of a word.	The suffix ‘ness’ makes a noun.
inflection	A change in a word to show its grammar.	English has little inflection.
conjugation	The different forms a verb takes.	Verb conjugation is hard.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
transliteration	Writing words in the letters of another alphabet.	The name needs transliteration.
orthography	The correct system of spelling.	English orthography is irregular.
articulation	The clear pronouncing of sounds.	Clear articulation aids understanding.
intonation	The rise and fall of the voice when speaking.	Her intonation rose at the end.
enunciate	To pronounce words clearly.	Please enunciate each word.
mispronounce	To say a word incorrectly.	Tourists often mispronounce it.
lexical	Relating to the words of a language.	It is a lexical error.
grammatical	Relating to the rules of grammar.	The sentence is grammatical.
syntactic	Relating to sentence structure.	There is a syntactic ambiguity.
register	The level of formality of language used.	Choose the right register.
parlance	A particular way of using words by a group.	In legal parlance, it means this.
jargon	Special words used by a particular group.	Avoid technical jargon.
slang	Very informal words used by a group.	Teenagers use a lot of slang.
accent	A way of pronouncing a language.	She has a soft accent.
articulacy	The ability to express ideas clearly.	His articulacy impressed the panel.
monolingual	Speaking or using only one language.	Many countries are monolingual.
linguist	A person who studies languages.	She is a gifted linguist.
polyglot	A person who speaks many languages.	He is a true polyglot.
wordplay	The clever, witty use of words.	The poem is full of wordplay.
acronym	A word made from the first letters of others.	‘NASA’ is an acronym.
abbreviation	A shortened form of a word or phrase.	‘Dr’ is an abbreviation.
punctuation	The marks used to separate parts of writing.	Punctuation aids meaning.
syllable	A single unit of sound in a word.	Stress the first syllable.
derivation	The forming of a word from another.	The word’s derivation is unclear.
usage	The way words are actually used.	Modern usage allows it.
coinage	A newly invented word or phrase.	It is a recent coinage.
phrasing	The way words are chosen and arranged.	The phrasing is awkward.
semantic	Relating to meaning in language.	It is a semantic distinction.
decode	To work out the meaning of a message.	Babies learn to decode speech.
diction	The choice and clearness of words used.	Her diction is very precise.
elliptical	Leaving out words but still understandable.	His reply was elliptical.
garbled	Confused and unclear.	The message was garbled.
rendering	A translation or version of something.	It is a fine rendering of the poem.
tongue	A language, or the organ used in speaking.	English is her native tongue.

History & Heritage

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
antiquity	The distant past, especially before the Middle Ages.	The custom dates from antiquity.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
medieval	Relating to the Middle Ages.	We toured a medieval castle.
feudal	Relating to the system of lords and peasants.	It was a feudal society.
dynasty	A series of rulers from the same family.	The dynasty ruled for centuries.
monarch	A king or queen.	The monarch opened parliament.
empire	A group of countries ruled by one power.	The empire spanned three continents.
colonial	Relating to control of other lands by a country.	It was the colonial era.
colonisation	The taking control of another land and its people.	Colonisation changed the region.
conquest	The taking of control by force.	The conquest took ten years.
crusade	A medieval religious war, or a strong campaign.	He joined the crusade.
industrialisation	The growth of industry in a society.	Industrialisation transformed cities.
archaeology	The study of the past through remains and objects.	She studies archaeology.
excavation	The careful digging up of buried remains.	The excavation revealed a temple.
chronicle	A record of events in the order they happened.	The monk kept a chronicle.
archive	A collection of historical records.	The letter is in the national archive.
dynastic	Relating to a ruling family.	It was a dynastic marriage.
abolition	The official ending of a system or practice.	The abolition of slavery came late.
emancipation	The freeing of people from control or slavery.	Emancipation followed the war.
decolonisation	The ending of colonial rule.	Decolonisation swept Africa.
imperial	Relating to an empire or its ruler.	It was the imperial capital.
imperialism	The policy of extending power over other lands.	They opposed imperialism.
nobility	The people of the highest social class.	The nobility owned the land.
peasantry	Poor farmers of low social rank.	The peasantry revolted.
serfdom	A system where workers were tied to the land.	Serfdom was finally abolished.
aristocracy	The highest class of people, often with titles.	The aristocracy held power.
coronation	The ceremony of crowning a monarch.	The coronation drew huge crowds.
regent	A person who rules while a monarch is unable to.	A regent ruled for the child king.
epoch	A long period of history with certain features.	It marked a new epoch.
era	A long and distinct period of history.	It was the start of a new era.
millennium	A period of one thousand years.	The site is over a millennium old.
prehistoric	Belonging to the time before written records.	They found prehistoric tools.
primeval	Belonging to the earliest ages.	It is a primeval forest.
vestige	A small remaining trace of something gone.	Only a vestige of the wall remains.
mausoleum	A grand building holding a tomb.	The mausoleum honours the king.
tomb	A place where a dead body is buried.	They opened the ancient tomb.
overthrow	To remove a ruler or government by force.	Rebels plotted to overthrow the king.
vassal	A person who served a lord in return for land.	Each vassal swore loyalty.
colony	A land controlled by a distant country.	The island was once a colony.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
settler	A person who moves to live in a new land.	The first settler arrived by ship.
pioneer	One of the first people to settle a new area.	She was a medical pioneer.
seafaring	Travelling by sea.	They were a seafaring people.
plague	A deadly disease that spreads widely.	The plague killed thousands.
exodus	The departure of many people at once.	War caused a mass exodus.
heir	A person who inherits a title or property.	He was the rightful heir.
bygone	Belonging to an earlier time.	It recalls a bygone age.
antiquarian	Relating to the study of old things.	He is an antiquarian bookseller.
insurrection	A violent uprising against authority.	The insurrection was crushed.
restoration	The return of a former ruler or system.	The Restoration brought back the king.
timeline	A record of events in the order they happened.	Historians built a timeline.
chronology	The arrangement of events in time order.	The chronology is disputed.
annals	A record of events year by year.	It is recorded in the annals.
heraldry	The system of family symbols and coats of arms.	He studies medieval heraldry.
parchment	Animal skin prepared for writing on.	The deed was on parchment.
scribe	A person who copied documents by hand.	A scribe copied the text.
feudalism	The medieval system of land held for service.	Feudalism shaped the land.
colonist	A person who settles in a colony.	Each colonist farmed a plot.
conqueror	A person who takes control of a land by force.	The conqueror seized the throne.
usurper	A person who takes power without the right.	The usurper claimed the crown.
forebear	An ancestor.	My forebear was a poor farmer.
history	The study of past events.	He teaches ancient history.

Society & Class

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
bourgeoisie	The middle class, especially in business.	The bourgeoisie grew rich.
proletariat	The class of workers who own little.	The proletariat had no land.
gentry	People of high social class below the nobility.	The local gentry owned estates.
stratification	The division of society into layers.	Social stratification is sharp.
meritocracy	A system where people rise by ability.	They believe in meritocracy.
egalitarian	Believing that everyone is equal.	It is an egalitarian society.
social mobility	The ability to move between social classes.	Social mobility has stalled.
upward	Moving to a higher position or class.	She made an upward move.
downtrodden	Treated badly by those with power.	The downtrodden had no voice.
affluent	Having plenty of money.	They live in an affluent suburb.
deprived	Lacking the things needed for a good life.	It is a deprived area.
disparity	A great difference between things.	Income disparity is widening.
polarisation	The dividing of people into opposing groups.	Political polarisation grew.
marginalised	Treated as unimportant and pushed aside.	Marginalised groups need support.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
ostracise	To shut someone out of a group.	They tried to ostracise him.
conformity	Behaving in the way others expect.	Society demands conformity.
nonconformist	A person who does not follow common ways.	She is a proud nonconformist.
subjugation	The bringing of people under control.	Years of subjugation followed.
emancipate	To set people free from control.	Reforms aim to emancipate workers.
elitism	The belief that a select few should have power.	He was accused of elitism.
privilege	A special advantage held by some people.	It was a sign of privilege.
status quo	The existing state of affairs.	They defend the status quo.
mores	The customs and moral rules of a group.	Social mores change slowly.
zeitgeist	The spirit or mood of a particular time.	The film captured the zeitgeist.
demographics	Statistics about a population.	The demographics are shifting.
gentrification	The change of a poor area by wealthier people.	Gentrification pushed out locals.
metropolitan	Relating to a large city.	It is a metropolitan area.
parochial	Narrow in outlook; concerned with local matters.	His outlook is parochial.
insular	Not open to new or different ideas.	The village is insular.
collective	Shared by or done by all members of a group.	They made a collective decision.
individualism	The belief in the importance of the individual.	American individualism is famous.
fraternity	A group of people with shared interests.	There is a sense of fraternity.
clan	A group of families with a common ancestor.	Loyalty to the clan is strong.
tribe	A social group sharing customs and a leader.	The tribe has ancient customs.
caste	A fixed social class you are born into.	The caste system shaped society.
patriarch	The male head of a family or group.	The old patriarch ruled the family.
matriarch	The female head of a family or group.	The matriarch made all decisions.
patriarchy	A society controlled mainly by men.	Critics attack the patriarchy.
feminist	A person who supports equal rights for women.	She is a noted feminist.
suffragette	A woman who campaigned for the right to vote.	The suffragette demanded the vote.
emancipated	Freed from social or political limits.	Women became more emancipated.
underrepresented	Not present in fair numbers.	They are underrepresented in law.
cohesive	United and working well together.	It is a cohesive community.
fragmentation	The breaking of something into separate parts.	Social fragmentation worries leaders.
alienation	The feeling of not belonging.	He felt deep alienation.
civic	Relating to a city or its citizens.	She has a strong civic sense.
populace	The ordinary people of a place.	The populace demanded change.
citizenry	All the citizens of a place.	The citizenry turned out to vote.
underdog	A person expected to lose or with less power.	Everyone roots for the underdog.
nouveau riche	People who have recently become rich.	He is dismissed as nouveau riche.
aristocrat	A member of the highest social class.	She married an aristocrat.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
plutocracy	Government or control by the wealthy.	Critics call it a plutocracy.
social fabric	The bonds that hold a society together.	Trust holds the social fabric together.
cohort	A group of people sharing a feature or time.	A new cohort enrolled.
peer pressure	Influence from people of your own age.	Teenagers face peer pressure.
ostracism	The excluding of a person from a group.	He feared social ostracism.
milieu	The social setting in which a person lives.	She thrived in that milieu.
social contract	The agreement of citizens to follow society's rules.	It breaks the social contract.
philanthropist	A rich person who gives to good causes.	A philanthropist funded the school.
societal	Relating to society.	It is a societal problem.

Mind & Behaviour

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
psychosis	A serious mental illness losing touch with reality.	He suffered a brief psychosis.
neurosis	A mental condition causing anxiety or obsession.	Her neurosis stemmed from childhood.
narcissism	Excessive interest in yourself.	His narcissism is striking.
egotism	The practice of talking about yourself too much.	His egotism alienates people.
self-awareness	Knowledge of your own character and feelings.	Therapy builds self-awareness.
subjectivity	The basing of views on personal feelings.	There is too much subjectivity here.
drive	A strong inner force that pushes you to act.	She has real drive.
inhibition	A feeling that stops you acting freely.	Alcohol lowers inhibition.
suppression	The holding back of thoughts or feelings.	Emotional suppression is harmful.
transference	The moving of feelings onto another person.	Therapists watch for transference.
cathartic	Bringing relief through the release of emotion.	Crying can be cathartic.
post-traumatic	Following a deeply shocking experience.	He has post-traumatic stress.
agoraphobia	A fear of open or public places.	Agoraphobia keeps her indoors.
obsessive	Thinking about one thing too much.	He is obsessive about order.
delusion	A false belief held despite the evidence.	He suffers from a delusion.
hallucination	Seeing or hearing something that is not there.	The fever caused a hallucination.
paranoid	Wrongly believing others want to harm you.	She became paranoid.
dissociation	A disconnection from your thoughts or identity.	Trauma can cause dissociation.
perceptual	Relating to the way you perceive things.	It is a perceptual illusion.
behaviourism	The study of behaviour as learned responses.	Behaviourism studies responses.
instinctive	Done naturally without thinking.	Her reaction was instinctive.
innate	Present from birth; natural.	He has an innate sense of rhythm.
predisposition	A tendency to behave or think in a certain way.	He has a predisposition to worry.
subliminal	Affecting the mind without your awareness.	Adverts use subliminal cues.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
stimuli	Things that cause a reaction.	The brain processes many stimuli.
self-deception	The act of fooling yourself.	It is pure self-deception.
esteem	Respect and admiration for someone.	She is held in high esteem.
validation	Recognition that your feelings are worthwhile.	He craves validation.
reassurance	Words or actions that remove worry.	She needs constant reassurance.
apathy	A lack of interest or concern.	Voter apathy is a problem.
lethargy	A lack of energy and enthusiasm.	A wave of lethargy hit him.
inertia	A tendency to stay still and not change.	Inertia kept him in the job.
complacency	A feeling of smug satisfaction that stops effort.	Success bred complacency.
indecision	The inability to make a decision.	His indecision cost him.
volition	The power to make your own choices.	She left of her own volition.
compulsive	Caused by an urge that is hard to control.	He is a compulsive liar.
impulsivity	The tendency to act without thinking.	Impulsivity got him in trouble.
equilibrium	A state of mental balance and calm.	She regained her equilibrium.
disorientation	The loss of a sense of direction or awareness.	Jet lag causes disorientation.
preoccupation	A thought that fills the mind constantly.	Money is his main preoccupation.
fixation	An obsessive interest in one thing.	She has a fixation on tidiness.
extroversion	The quality of being outgoing and sociable.	Sales rewards extroversion.
neurotic	Overly anxious and worried.	He is rather neurotic.
melancholic	Feeling or showing deep sadness.	She has a melancholic streak.
demeanour	The way a person looks and behaves.	She has a calm demeanour.
countenance	A person's face or expression.	A smile lit up his countenance.
gut feeling	An instinctive feeling not based on reason.	Trust your gut feeling.
subconsciously	Without being fully aware.	She subconsciously mirrored him.
ingrained	Firmly fixed and hard to change.	The habit is deeply ingrained.
conditioned	Trained to react in a particular way.	We are conditioned to obey.
self-conscious	Nervously aware of how others see you.	He felt self-conscious on stage.
psychosomatic	Caused by the mind rather than the body.	The pain may be psychosomatic.
vent	To express strong feelings freely.	He needs to vent his anger.
soothe	To make someone feel calm.	Music can soothe the nerves.
unnerve	To make someone lose confidence.	The silence began to unnerve her.
disconcert	To make someone feel uneasy.	His stare can disconcert people.
embolden	To give someone courage.	Such wins can embolden him.
demoralise	To make someone lose confidence and hope.	Defeats can demoralise a team.
exhilarate	To make someone feel very happy and excited.	Speed seems to exhilarate him.
steel	To prepare yourself mentally for something hard.	She had to steel herself for the news.

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Medicine & Body

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
ailing	Ill or in poor health.	He has been ailing for years.
malady	An illness or disease.	It is a mysterious malady.
affliction	Something that causes suffering or pain.	Arthritis is a common affliction.
debilitating	Making someone very weak.	It is a debilitating disease.
incurable	Not able to be cured.	The illness is incurable.
benign	Not harmful, said of a growth.	The tumour was benign.
malignant	Harmful and likely to spread, said of a tumour.	The growth turned malignant.
dormant	Inactive for a time but able to return.	The virus stays dormant for years.
contagion	The spreading of disease by contact.	They feared contagion.
communicable	Able to be passed from person to person.	It is a communicable disease.
prognosis	A doctor's opinion on how an illness will develop.	The prognosis is good.
relapse	A return of illness after improvement.	She had a sudden relapse.
convalescence	The period of recovery after illness.	Convalescence took months.
symptomatic	Showing the signs of a disease.	Treatment is purely symptomatic.
respiratory	Relating to breathing.	He has a respiratory illness.
cardiovascular	Relating to the heart and blood vessels.	Exercise aids cardiovascular health.
neurological	Relating to the nerves and brain.	It is a neurological disorder.
degenerative	Getting worse over time, said of illness.	It is a degenerative condition.
congenital	Present from birth.	It is a congenital defect.
immunisation	Protection against disease using a vaccine.	Immunisation saves lives.
inoculation	The giving of a vaccine.	He had an inoculation before travelling.
antidote	A medicine that acts against a poison.	There is no known antidote.
analgesic	A medicine that relieves pain.	She took an analgesic.
sedative	A drug that makes you calm or sleepy.	The doctor gave him a sedative.
amputate	To cut off part of the body by surgery.	Surgeons had to amputate the leg.
anaemia	A condition of having too few red blood cells.	She suffers from anaemia.
arthritis	A painful swelling of the joints.	Arthritis stiffened his joints.
dementia	A disease causing loss of memory and thinking.	Her mother has dementia.
epilepsy	A condition causing fits or seizures.	He was diagnosed with epilepsy.
paralysis	The loss of the ability to move.	The stroke caused paralysis.
concussion	A brain injury from a blow to the head.	He suffered a concussion.
haemorrhage	A serious loss of blood.	She had a brain haemorrhage.
cardiac	Relating to the heart.	He went into cardiac arrest.
anatomy	The study of the body's structure.	Students learn human anatomy.
physiology	The study of how the body works.	He studies physiology.
metabolic	Relating to the body's chemical processes.	It is a metabolic disorder.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
hormone	A chemical made by the body that controls functions.	The hormone controls growth.
ligament	A band of tissue joining bones together.	He tore a ligament.
tendon	A cord joining muscle to bone.	She strained a tendon.
cartilage	The firm, flexible tissue in joints.	The cartilage was damaged.
abdomen	The part of the body containing the stomach.	He felt pain in his abdomen.
spine	The row of bones down the back.	The injury damaged her spine.
cranium	The bone that forms the skull.	The cranium protects the brain.
circulatory	Relating to the flow of blood in the body.	It is a circulatory problem.
infectious	Able to be passed on, said of disease.	It is a highly infectious disease.
virulent	Extremely harmful, said of a disease.	A virulent strain emerged.
intravenous	Given into a vein.	She was given intravenous fluids.
biopsy	The taking of tissue to test for disease.	The biopsy was clear.
screening	Testing people to find disease early.	Early screening saves lives.
epidemiology	The study of how diseases spread.	She specialises in epidemiology.
quarantine	A period of isolation to stop disease spreading.	Travellers face quarantine.
sterile	Completely free from germs.	Keep the instruments sterile.
dehydration	A harmful lack of water in the body.	Dehydration is dangerous.
nausea	A feeling of wanting to vomit.	She felt sudden nausea.
fatigue	Extreme tiredness.	Chronic fatigue wore him down.
palliative	Easing pain without curing the illness.	He moved to palliative care.
resuscitate	To bring an unconscious person back to life.	Medics tried to resuscitate him.
defibrillator	A device that restarts a stopped heart.	A defibrillator restarted his heart.
prosthetic	An artificial part replacing a body part.	He was fitted with a prosthetic leg.
ointment	A soft cream rubbed on the skin to heal it.	Rub the ointment on the rash.

Technology & Progress

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
self-driving	Able to drive without a human, said of a vehicle.	Self-driving cars are coming.
machine learning	Computers learning from data without being told each step.	Machine learning powers the app.
neural network	A computer system modelled on the human brain.	A neural network spots fraud.
quantum computing	Computing using the strange rules of tiny particles.	Quantum computing is years away.
cryptocurrency	Digital money secured by codes.	He invested in cryptocurrency.
blockchain	A secure digital record shared across many computers.	Blockchain records every deal.
fibre-optic	Using thin glass threads to send data as light.	They laid fibre-optic cable.
holographic	Using three-dimensional images made with light.	It uses a holographic display.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
augmented reality	Adding computer images to the real world view.	Augmented reality overlays data.
bioengineering	The use of engineering in biology and medicine.	Bioengineering creates new crops.
genetic engineering	The changing of the genes of living things.	Genetic engineering raises ethical issues.
cloning	The making of an exact genetic copy of a living thing.	Animal cloning is controversial.
automaton	A machine that works by itself.	The factory uses an automaton.
cybernetics	The study of control systems in machines and life.	He researches cybernetics.
exoskeleton	A wearable frame that supports or strengthens the body.	An exoskeleton helps her walk.
bionic	Using electronic parts to improve the body.	He has a bionic hand.
cyborg	A being that is part human and part machine.	The film features a cyborg.
terraforming	Changing a planet to make it like Earth.	Terraforming Mars is a dream.
spacecraft	A vehicle designed to travel in space.	The spacecraft left orbit.
rover	A vehicle that explores the surface of a planet.	The rover explored the crater.
propulsion	The force that pushes a vehicle forward.	They tested a new propulsion system.
biofuel	Fuel made from plants or animal waste.	Biofuel powers the bus.
desalination	The removing of salt from seawater.	Desalination provides fresh water.
obsolescence	The state of becoming out of date.	Planned obsolescence wastes goods.
interoperable	Able to work together with other systems.	The devices are interoperable.
modular	Made of separate parts that fit together.	The design is modular.
iteration	One version in a repeated process of improvement.	Each iteration improves the app.
transformative	Causing a great and lasting change.	It is a transformative technology.
seamless	Working smoothly without gaps or problems.	The update was seamless.
next-generation	Belonging to a newer, more advanced stage.	It is next-generation hardware.
dystopia	An imagined society that is frightening and bad.	The novel imagines a dystopia.
singularity	A future point when machines surpass human intelligence.	Some fear the singularity.
enhancement	An improvement that adds to something.	They study human enhancement.
biotechnology	The use of living things in industry and medicine.	Biotechnology is booming.
teleconferencing	Holding meetings between distant places by technology.	Teleconferencing replaced travel.
implant	A device placed inside the body.	She has a hearing implant.
mechanised	Done by machines instead of people.	Farming became mechanised.
digitisation	The changing of information into digital form.	Digitisation transformed banking.
decryption	The turning of coded data back into readable form.	Decryption took the team days.
firmware	Permanent software built into a device.	The firmware needs an update.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
latency	The delay before data begins to transfer.	Low latency is vital for gaming.
server farm	A large group of computers storing data.	A vast server farm runs the cloud.
swarm	A large group of machines acting together.	A swarm of drones filmed the show.
supercomputer	An extremely powerful and fast computer.	A supercomputer ran the model.
leapfrog	To jump ahead by skipping usual stages.	Phones let villages leapfrog old tech.
redundant	No longer needed, or kept as a spare backup.	The old system is now redundant.
automated	Made to work automatically by machine.	The checkout is fully automated.
gamification	Adding game features to make tasks more engaging.	Gamification keeps users hooked.
futurist	A person who studies and predicts the future.	A futurist predicted flying taxis.
utopia	An imagined perfect society.	He dreams of a tech utopia.
cybernetic	Relating to control systems in machines and life.	It is a cybernetic limb.
retrofit	To add new technology to an older machine.	They retrofit old homes with solar.
throughput	The amount of work a system handles in a time.	The new chip boosts throughput.
streamlined	Made simpler and more efficient.	The process is now streamlined.
incubator	A place that helps new businesses grow.	The startup joined an incubator.
frontier	The furthest limit of knowledge or activity.	Space is the next frontier.
telemetry	The sending of measurements from a distance.	Sensors send telemetry to base.
self-sufficient	Able to work without outside help.	The home is self-sufficient.
moonshot	An ambitious, difficult project.	It is a real moonshot project.
obsolescent	Becoming out of date.	The format is already obsolescent.

Environment & Nature

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
biome	A large natural area with its own plants and animals.	The desert is a harsh biome.
biosphere	The part of Earth where living things exist.	Life fills the biosphere.
food chain	The order in which living things feed on each other.	Sharks sit atop the food chain.
apex predator	A predator at the top of the food chain.	The lion is an apex predator.
herbivore	An animal that eats only plants.	A cow is a herbivore.
carnivore	An animal that eats only meat.	A wolf is a carnivore.
omnivore	An animal that eats both plants and meat.	A bear is an omnivore.
predator	An animal that hunts others for food.	The predator stalked its prey.
prey	An animal hunted by others for food.	The eagle spotted its prey.
ecology	The study of living things and their environment.	She studies marine ecology.
regenerative	Able to renew or restore itself.	They practise regenerative farming.
carbon sink	A natural store that absorbs carbon dioxide.	Forests act as a carbon sink.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
sequestration	The capturing and storing of carbon dioxide.	Carbon sequestration buries CO2.
permafrost	Ground that stays frozen all year round.	The permafrost is thawing.
tundra	A cold, treeless region with frozen ground.	Few plants grow on the tundra.
savannah	A wide grassy plain with few trees.	Elephants roam the savannah.
coral reef	A structure of coral in warm, shallow seas.	The coral reef is dying.
mangrove	A tree that grows in salty coastal water.	Mangrove swamps protect the coast.
estuary	The mouth of a river where it meets the sea.	Birds feed in the estuary.
catchment	An area from which rain drains into a river.	The river's catchment is huge.
tributary	A stream that flows into a larger river.	The stream is a tributary of the Nile.
silt	Fine sand and soil carried by water.	The river deposited rich silt.
fertile	Able to produce many plants or crops.	The valley soil is fertile.
arid	Very dry, with little rain.	It is an arid region.
temperate	Having a mild climate without extremes.	Britain has a temperate climate.
tropical	Relating to hot, wet regions near the equator.	Tropical storms hit the coast.
monsoon	A season of heavy rain in southern Asia.	The monsoon flooded the fields.
stratosphere	A high layer of the atmosphere.	Ozone sits in the stratosphere.
greenhouse gas	A gas that traps heat in the atmosphere.	Methane is a greenhouse gas.
rewilding	The returning of land to a natural, wild state.	Rewilding brought back the beavers.
reforestation	The replanting of trees where forest was lost.	Reforestation restores the land.
afforestation	The planting of trees where there was none.	Afforestation greens the desert.
overfishing	Catching so many fish that stocks fall too low.	Overfishing emptied the seas.
poaching	The illegal hunting of protected animals.	Poaching threatens the rhino.
imperilled	Put in serious danger.	The species is imperilled.
invasive	Spreading harmfully into a new area, said of species.	The plant is an invasive species.
endemic	Found naturally only in one particular area.	The lizard is endemic to the island.
flora	The plants of a particular area.	The island has unique flora.
fauna	The animals of a particular area.	The reserve protects local fauna.
pollinate	To carry pollen so plants can make seeds.	Bees pollinate the crops.
germinate	To begin to grow from a seed.	The seeds will germinate in spring.
decompose	To break down and rot.	Leaves decompose into soil.
biodegrade	To break down naturally without harm.	These cups biodegrade quickly.
particulate	Made of tiny particles in the air.	Particulate pollution harms lungs.
microclimate	The climate of a very small area.	The garden has its own microclimate.
desertification	The turning of land into desert.	Desertification spreads south.
fertiliser	A substance added to soil to help plants grow.	Too much fertiliser pollutes rivers.
pesticide	A chemical used to kill harmful insects.	Pesticide killed the bees.
runoff	Water that flows off land into rivers.	Farm runoff entered the lake.
acidification	The process of becoming more acid, as the seas do.	Ocean acidification harms shellfish.
decarbonise	To reduce the carbon released into the air.	Nations pledge to decarbonise.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
biomass	The total amount of living matter in an area.	They burn biomass for heat.
conservationist	A person who works to protect nature.	A conservationist led the project.
migratory	Moving from one region to another with the seasons.	Migratory birds pass through.
burrow	A hole in the ground made by an animal.	The rabbit dug a burrow.
symbiosis	A close relationship between two different species.	The two species live in symbiosis.
resilient	Able to recover quickly from harm.	The forest is remarkably resilient.
smokestack	A tall chimney that releases smoke and gas.	The smokestack belched fumes.
wilderness	A wild natural area untouched by people.	They hiked deep into the wilderness.
conservancy	An area or body that protects nature.	The land is run by a conservancy.

Conflict & Diplomacy

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
détente	The easing of tension between countries.	The talks led to a brief détente.
rapprochement	The renewing of friendly relations between states.	The visit signalled a rapprochement.
accord	A formal agreement between parties.	They signed a peace accord.
ultimatum	A final demand with a threat if refused.	They issued an ultimatum.
overture	An approach made to open discussions.	He made a peace overture.
envoy	An official messenger sent between governments.	A special envoy was sent.
emissary	A person sent on a special mission for a government.	The king sent an emissary.
attaché	An official who assists an ambassador.	He is a military attaché.
consulate	The office of a country's official in a foreign city.	She works at the consulate.
communiqué	An official announcement or statement.	They issued a joint communiqué.
brinkmanship	Pushing a dangerous situation to its limit.	It was reckless brinkmanship.
appeasement	The giving in to demands to avoid conflict.	Appeasement failed to stop the war.
nonaggression	An agreement not to attack one another.	They signed a nonaggression pact.
demilitarise	To remove armed forces from an area.	They agreed to demilitarise the zone.
disarmament	The reduction of a country's weapons.	Nuclear disarmament is the goal.
proliferation	The rapid spread of weapons.	They fear weapons proliferation.
belligerent	Aggressive and eager to fight.	He grew belligerent.
hostilities	Acts of war or fighting.	Hostilities resumed at dawn.
insurgent	A rebel fighting against the government.	An insurgent group claimed it.
guerrilla	A fighter using small surprise attacks.	They fought a guerrilla war.
mercenary	A soldier who fights for money for any country.	A mercenary led the raid.
annihilate	To destroy completely.	They threatened to annihilate the enemy.
atrocity	An extremely cruel and violent act.	The atrocity shocked the world.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
genocide	The deliberate killing of a whole people.	The court called it genocide.
reparations	Payments made for war damage.	They demanded reparations.
capitulation	The act of surrendering.	His capitulation ended the siege.
blockade	The sealing off of a place to stop supplies.	The blockade cut off supplies.
retaliation	The returning of an attack or injury.	They feared retaliation.
antagonise	To make someone hostile towards you.	Do not antagonise the rebels.
concordat	A formal agreement, especially with a church.	They reached a concordat.
nonpartisan	Not supporting any political party.	She gave a nonpartisan view.
bilateral	Involving two countries or groups.	They held bilateral talks.
multilateral	Involving many countries or groups.	It is a multilateral treaty.
intermediary	A person who helps two sides communicate.	She acted as an intermediary.
interlocutor	A person taking part in a discussion.	He is a trusted interlocutor.
impasse	A situation in which no progress is possible.	The talks reached an impasse.
deadlock	A situation where neither side will give way.	Negotiations ended in deadlock.
olive branch	An offer of peace or reconciliation.	He offered an olive branch.
partition	The dividing of a country into separate parts.	The partition split the country.
displacement	The forcing of people from their homes.	The war caused mass displacement.
deterrence	The prevention of war by the threat of force.	Nuclear deterrence kept the peace.
de-escalation	The reducing of the intensity of a conflict.	They called for de-escalation.
aggression	Hostile behaviour or an attack.	The world condemned the aggression.
incursion	A sudden invasion into another's territory.	An incursion crossed the border.
peacemaker	A person who tries to bring about peace.	She is a respected peacemaker.
accordance	Agreement with a rule or wish.	It was done in accordance with the law.
conciliation	The act of making peace between sides.	Conciliation ended the strike.
coalesce	To come together to form one group.	The factions began to coalesce.
flashpoint	A place or moment where conflict may break out.	The border is a flashpoint.
warmonger	A person who tries to start wars.	Critics branded him a warmonger.
pacify	To bring peace or calm to a place.	Troops tried to pacify the region.
pacifist	A person who believes war is always wrong.	She is a lifelong pacifist.
dovish	Preferring peace and negotiation.	He took a dovish stance.
hawkish	Favouring force and war over peace.	Her tone was distinctly hawkish.
ratification	The official approval of an agreement.	The treaty awaits ratification.
entente	A friendly understanding between countries.	The two states formed an entente.
subversion	The secret undermining of a government.	They were charged with subversion.
concord	A state of agreement and peace.	The treaty restored concord.
onslaught	A fierce and sudden attack.	They withstood the onslaught.
amity	Friendly relations between people or nations.	The visit fostered amity.

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Ethics & Virtue

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
amoral	Not concerned with right or wrong.	Markets are essentially amoral.
unethical	Not morally correct.	It was an unethical practice.
iniquity	Great injustice or wickedness.	He railed against iniquity.
probity	Complete honesty and integrity.	His probity is beyond doubt.
scruple	A feeling that stops you doing something wrong.	He has no scruple about it.
high-minded	Having strong moral principles.	She is high-minded and fair.
righteousness	The quality of being morally right.	He spoke with righteousness.
sanctimonious	Pretending to be morally better than others.	His tone was sanctimonious.
hypocrisy	Pretending to have morals you do not have.	They exposed his hypocrisy.
duplicity	Deceitful behaviour meant to trick people.	Her duplicity was shocking.
deceitful	Dishonest and misleading.	He gave a deceitful answer.
candour	The quality of being open and honest.	She spoke with refreshing candour.
incorruptible	Impossible to bribe or make dishonest.	The judge is incorruptible.
impeccable	Perfect, with no faults.	Her conduct was impeccable.
exemplary	So good it serves as a model.	He set an exemplary standard.
reprehensible	Deserving strong criticism.	The act was reprehensible.
deplorable	Very bad and deserving disapproval.	The conditions are deplorable.
condone	To accept behaviour that is wrong.	We cannot condone violence.
censure	To criticise someone strongly and formally.	The board issued a censure.
absolve	To free someone from blame or guilt.	New facts may absolve her of blame.
blameworthy	Deserving blame.	He is the most blameworthy.
remorseful	Feeling deep regret for wrongdoing.	She felt remorseful afterwards.
penance	An act done to show sorrow for wrongdoing.	He did penance for the sin.
atone	To make up for a wrong you have done.	He tried to atone for the lie.
redemption	The act of being saved from sin or fault.	The film is about redemption.
salvation	The saving of someone from harm or sin.	They sought spiritual salvation.
piety	Strong religious devotion.	Her piety was well known.
devout	Deeply religious.	He is a devout believer.
benevolence	Kindness and a wish to do good.	His benevolence helped many.
malevolence	The wish to do harm to others.	There was malevolence in his eyes.
malice	The desire to harm someone.	She bore him no malice.
spite	The wish to hurt or annoy someone.	He did it out of spite.
vindictive	Wanting revenge; unforgiving.	Her response was vindictive.
vengeful	Wanting to harm someone in return.	He felt vengeful.
forgiving	Ready to stop blaming someone.	She has a forgiving nature.
merciful	Showing kindness towards those you could punish.	The judge was merciful.
mercy	Kindness shown to an offender or enemy.	They begged for mercy.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
barbarity	Extremely cruel behaviour.	The barbarity appalled them.
brutality	Savage physical violence.	Witnesses described the brutality.
magnanimity	Generosity, especially towards a rival.	He showed great magnanimity.
moralistic	Judging others by strict moral rules.	The tone was moralistic.
ethos	The typical beliefs and values of a group.	The firm has a strong ethos.
creed	A set of beliefs that guide actions.	Honesty is his creed.
exculpate	To show that someone is not guilty.	The facts exculpate the accused.
answerable	Responsible and having to explain actions.	Leaders are answerable to voters.
above board	Honest and open.	The deal was completely above board.
venal	Willing to act dishonestly for money.	The official was venal.
bribe	Money given to persuade someone to act dishonestly.	He tried to bribe the guard.
graft	The use of dishonest means to gain money in power.	The city was plagued by graft.
ethically	In a morally correct way.	They always act ethically.
honourable	Deserving respect for honesty and morals.	It was the honourable thing to do.
dishonourable	Bringing shame through wrong behaviour.	His conduct was dishonourable.
saintly	Extremely good and holy.	She led a saintly life.
wickedness	The quality of being morally bad.	The tale warns against wickedness.
depravity	Extreme moral corruption.	The novel depicts moral depravity.
decadence	A decline in moral standards.	The court sank into decadence.
upright	Honest and morally correct.	He is an upright citizen.
scrupulously	In a very careful and honest way.	She was scrupulously honest.
moralise	To comment on right and wrong, often preachily.	He likes to moralise to others.
goodness	The quality of being morally good.	She believes in human goodness.

Power, Status & Influence

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
eminence	The state of being famous and respected.	He rose to great eminence.
renown	The state of being widely known and admired.	She won international renown.
stature	Importance gained by ability or achievement.	He has the stature of a statesman.
preeminence	The state of being the most important.	The firm’s preeminence is clear.
influential	Having great effect on people or events.	She is hugely influential.
authoritative	Respected and trusted as accurate.	It is the authoritative text.
commanding	Having a powerful, controlling presence.	He has a commanding presence.
formidable	Impressive and inspiring respect or fear.	She is a formidable rival.
dominant	Most powerful or important.	They hold a dominant position.
preponderance	The state of being greater in number or power.	There is a preponderance of evidence.
hegemonic	Having dominant power over others.	The power held a hegemonic role.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
prevalence	The state of being common or widespread.	The prevalence of phones is striking.
pervasive	Spreading widely through every part.	The influence is pervasive.
reputable	Having a good reputation.	It is a reputable firm.
disreputable	Not respectable or trusted.	He kept disreputable company.
notoriety	The state of being famous for something bad.	The case brought him notoriety.
infamous	Well known for something bad.	He is an infamous outlaw.
illustrious	Famous and highly respected.	She had an illustrious career.
esteemed	Greatly respected.	He is an esteemed colleague.
revered	Deeply respected and admired.	She is a revered teacher.
venerable	Respected because of age or achievement.	It is a venerable institution.
acclaim	Enthusiastic public praise.	The film won critical acclaim.
accolade	An award or great praise.	The prize is a great accolade.
laudable	Deserving praise.	It is a laudable aim.
commendable	Deserving praise and approval.	Her honesty is commendable.
exalt	To praise someone highly.	The people exalt their leader.
extol	To praise something enthusiastically.	Critics extol the novel.
revere	To feel deep respect for someone.	Students revere the old professor.
idolise	To admire someone greatly.	Fans idolise the singer.
lionise	To treat someone as a celebrity.	The press lionise the winner.
denigrate	To criticise unfairly.	Rivals denigrate her work.
belittle	To make someone seem unimportant.	Do not belittle his effort.
disparage	To speak of someone as worthless.	He tends to disparage others.
status	A person's rank or position in society.	Wealth confers status.
echelon	A level or rank in an organisation.	She reached the top echelon.
magnate	A rich and powerful person in business.	He is a media magnate.
tycoon	A wealthy, powerful business person.	An oil tycoon owns it.
mogul	An important, powerful person in an industry.	A film mogul backed it.
luminary	A person who inspires others in a field.	She is a luminary in physics.
doyen	The most respected senior member of a group.	He is the doyen of critics.
figurehead	A leader with a title but little real power.	The king is only a figurehead.
kingpin	The most important person in a group.	He was the kingpin of the gang.
patronise	To treat someone as if they are inferior.	Do not patronise me.
gravitas	Seriousness and dignity in manner.	She has real gravitas.
magnetism	A powerful attraction in a person's character.	His personal magnetism drew crowds.
trailblazer	A person who is first to do something.	She was a trailblazer for women.
kudos	Praise and honour for an achievement.	The win earned her kudos.
cachet	The respect that comes from being admired.	The brand has real cachet.
pecking order	The order of importance among people.	He knows the office pecking order.
predominate	To be the strongest or most common.	Big firms predominate here.
ingratiate	To gain favour by pleasing someone.	He tried to ingratiate himself.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
upstart	A person who has risen quickly and acts arrogantly.	The upstart challenged the giants.
eminent	Famous and respected in a field.	He is an eminent scholar.
paramount	More important than anything else.	Safety is of paramount importance.
consequential	Important because of its effects.	It was a consequential meeting.
weighty	Very important and serious.	These are weighty matters.
behind-the-scenes	Happening privately, away from public view.	He works behind-the-scenes.
ennoble	To give dignity or high rank to someone.	The honour will ennoble her name.
prestigious	Respected and admired as important.	It is a prestigious award.
omnipresent	Present everywhere at once.	Advertising is omnipresent.

Hardship & Decline

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
adversity	A very difficult or unlucky situation.	She overcame great adversity.
tribulation	Great trouble or suffering.	They faced years of tribulation.
ordeal	A very painful or difficult experience.	The journey was an ordeal.
plight	A difficult and unfortunate situation.	The refugees' plight moved her.
predicament	A difficult situation hard to get out of.	He is in a difficult predicament.
quandary	A state of uncertainty over what to do.	She is in a real quandary.
reversal	A change to a worse situation.	It was a sudden reversal.
demise	The end or failure of something; death.	The scandal led to his demise.
deterioration	The process of becoming worse.	Her health showed deterioration.
degeneration	A decline to a worse condition.	Moral degeneration set in.
collapse	A sudden complete failure.	The talks ended in collapse.
ruin	The complete loss of money or success.	The gamble brought him to ruin.
devastation	Great destruction or damage.	The flood caused devastation.
calamity	An event causing great harm and misery.	The harvest failure was a calamity.
cataclysm	A violent, sudden event causing great change.	It was an economic cataclysm.
woe	Great sorrow or distress.	He recounted his tale of woe.
suffering	The state of enduring pain or hardship.	The war brought great suffering.
torment	Severe physical or mental suffering.	He lived in torment.
wretched	In a very unhappy or unfortunate state.	They lived in wretched poverty.
impoverished	Made very poor.	The war left them impoverished.
beleaguered	Facing many difficulties or attacks.	The beleaguered firm laid off staff.
embattled	Surrounded by problems or enemies.	The embattled leader resigned.
tenuous	Weak and easily broken.	His grip on power is tenuous.
dire	Extremely serious or urgent.	The situation is dire.
grim	Depressing and worrying.	The outlook is grim.
bleak	Offering little hope or comfort.	The future looked bleak.
dismal	Depressing and gloomy.	Sales were dismal.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
harrowing	Extremely distressing.	It was a harrowing experience.
gruelling	Very tiring and demanding.	It was a gruelling march.
arduous	Difficult and needing great effort.	The climb was arduous.
relentless	Never stopping or growing weaker.	The pressure was relentless.
unrelenting	Not becoming less severe.	She faced unrelenting criticism.
insurmountable	Too great to be overcome.	The odds seemed insurmountable.
crippling	Causing serious harm or difficulty.	They have crippling debts.
debilitate	To make someone very weak.	Illness can debilitate the body.
flounder	To struggle helplessly.	The business began to flounder.
languish	To become weak from a long, hard situation.	Prisoners can languish for years.
wither	To become weaker and fade away.	Support began to wither.
crumble	To break apart and fall into ruin.	The empire began to crumble.
disintegrate	To break into small pieces.	Such coalitions often disintegrate.
capsize	To turn over in the water, said of a boat.	The boat began to capsize.
founder	To fail completely, or to sink.	Such talks can founder on cost.
stumbling block	An obstacle that stops progress.	Cost is the main stumbling block.
want	A lack of something needed.	Many families live in want.
travail	Painful effort or hard work.	After much travail, they succeeded.
endurance	The ability to keep going through hardship.	The race tests your endurance.
withstand	To survive or resist something difficult.	They withstand great hardship.
endure	To suffer something patiently.	She had to endure the pain.
weather	To come safely through a difficult time.	Strong firms weather the storm.
nosedive	A sudden sharp fall or decline.	Profits took a nosedive.
slump	A sudden severe fall in activity or mood.	The market is in a slump.
malaise	A general feeling of unease or trouble.	A deep malaise gripped the firm.
atrophy	To waste away from lack of use.	Unused muscles atrophy.
downcast	Feeling sad and without hope.	He looked downcast.
lamentable	Very bad and to be regretted.	It was a lamentable failure.
privation	A lack of the basic things needed to live.	They endured great privation.
comeuppance	A deserved punishment for bad behaviour.	He finally got his comeuppance.
downward spiral	A situation getting steadily worse.	Debt sent him into a downward spiral.
uphill	Difficult and needing much effort.	It was an uphill struggle.
stoicism	The calm acceptance of hardship without complaint.	He bore it with stoicism.

Time, Fate & Memory

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
fleeting	Lasting for a very short time.	It was a fleeting moment.
transient	Lasting only a short time; temporary.	Fame is transient.
ephemeral	Lasting for a very short time.	Beauty can be ephemeral.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
perpetual	Never ending or changing.	He lives in perpetual motion.
interminable	Seeming to last for ever.	The meeting was interminable.
momentary	Lasting for only a moment.	There was a momentary pause.
concurrent	Happening at the same time.	They ran concurrent trials.
retrospect	A looking back at past events.	In retrospect, he was right.
premonition	A feeling that something is about to happen.	She had a premonition of danger.
impending	About to happen.	An impending storm threatened.
belated	Coming later than it should.	He sent belated thanks.
premature	Happening before the proper time.	It was a premature decision.
timely	Happening at a good or suitable time.	It was a timely warning.
untimely	Happening too soon or at a bad time.	His untimely death shocked all.
chronological	Arranged in the order events happened.	List the events in chronological order.
perennial	Lasting or happening again and again.	It is a perennial problem.
erstwhile	Former; in the past.	His erstwhile allies turned away.
antecedent	A thing that came before another.	It had a clear antecedent.
forerunner	A sign or person that comes before another.	It was a forerunner of the modern car.
precursor	Something that comes before and leads to another.	The deal was a precursor to peace.
interim	A period of time between two events.	An interim leader was chosen.
duration	The length of time something lasts.	For the duration of the trip, it rained.
interval	A period of time between two events.	There was a short interval.
juncture	A particular point in time.	At this juncture, we must decide.
providence	The care or fate believed to guide events.	He trusted in providence.
predestined	Decided in advance by fate.	He felt predestined to lead.
inevitability	The state of being certain to happen.	Death is an inevitability.
preordained	Decided beforehand by fate.	The outcome seemed preordained.
fortuitous	Happening by lucky chance.	It was a fortuitous meeting.
serendipitous	Happening in a happy, unexpected way.	It was a serendipitous discovery.
happenstance	Chance; a coincidence.	They met by happenstance.
karma	The idea that your actions shape your future.	He believes in karma.
omen	A sign of what will happen in the future.	A black cat is a bad omen.
portent	A sign that something important will happen.	The comet was seen as a portent.
prophecy	A statement about what will happen in the future.	The prophecy came true.
foretell	To say what will happen in the future.	No one can foretell the future.
augur	To be a sign of a future event.	The signs augur well.
reminiscence	A memory of a past event.	She shared a reminiscence.
nostalgic	Feeling fondness for the past.	He felt nostalgic about school.
reminisce	To think and talk about the past fondly.	They love to reminisce.
commemorate	To remember and honour a past event.	We commemorate the fallen.
memorialise	To create something to keep a memory alive.	They want to memorialise her.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
evoke	To bring a memory or feeling to mind.	Old songs evoke the past.
hark back	To recall or return to an earlier time.	These designs hark back to the fifties.
obliterate	To destroy something completely.	Time can obliterate memory.
forgetful	Tending to forget things.	He grew forgetful with age.
ageless	Never seeming to grow old.	Her style is ageless.
primordial	Existing from the very beginning of time.	It taps a primordial fear.
hereafter	From now on; the future.	What happens hereafter is unknown.
thenceforth	From that time on.	Thenceforth they were enemies.
hiatus	A pause or break in something.	After a long hiatus, she returned.
recur	To happen again.	The dream tends to recur.
perpetuate	To make something continue for a long time.	Such tales perpetuate a harmful myth.
transitory	Not lasting; temporary.	Joy can be transitory.
eternal	Lasting for ever.	They swore eternal friendship.
everlasting	Continuing for ever.	He sought everlasting fame.
instantaneous	Happening immediately.	The reaction was instantaneous.
protracted	Lasting longer than usual.	It was a protracted dispute.
presage	To be a sign or warning of a future event.	Dark clouds presage rain.
yesteryear	The years of the past.	It recalls the stars of yesteryear.

Senses & Perception

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
behold	To see or look at something.	They stopped to behold the view.
glimpse	To see something for a very short moment.	She caught a glimpse of him.
glance	To look quickly at something.	He gave a quick glance.
gaze	To look steadily at something for a long time.	She fixed her gaze on the door.
peer	To look closely and with difficulty.	They peer into the darkness.
squint	To look with partly closed eyes.	She had to squint in the sun.
imperceptible	Too small or slight to be noticed.	The change was imperceptible.
dazzling	So bright it is hard to look at.	The lights were dazzling.
murky	Dark and hard to see through.	The water was murky.
hazy	Not clear; slightly cloudy.	The hills were hazy.
blurred	Unclear in shape or outline.	The photo was blurred.
audible	Able to be heard.	Her whisper was barely audible.
inaudible	Not able to be heard.	The note was inaudible.
resonant	Deep, clear and continuing to sound.	He has a resonant voice.
muffled	Made quieter and less clear.	A muffled cry came from upstairs.
piercing	Very sharp and easy to hear or feel.	She gave a piercing scream.
fragrant	Having a pleasant smell.	The garden was fragrant.
pungent	Having a strong, sharp smell or taste.	A pungent smell filled the room.
acrid	Having a bitter, unpleasant smell.	Acrid smoke stung his eyes.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
scent	A pleasant smell.	The scent of roses lingered.
odour	A smell, especially an unpleasant one.	A faint odour of paint remained.
stench	A very strong, unpleasant smell.	The stench was unbearable.
palpable	So obvious it can almost be felt.	The tension was palpable.
clammy	Unpleasantly damp and sticky.	His hands felt clammy.
coarse	Rough in texture.	The cloth felt coarse.
supple	Soft and bending easily.	The leather is soft and supple.
brittle	Hard but easily broken.	The old paper was brittle.
palatable	Pleasant to taste.	The soup was barely palatable.
insipid	Lacking flavour or interest.	The wine tasted insipid.
tangy	Having a strong, sharp taste.	The sauce was pleasantly tangy.
sensory	Relating to the senses.	It is a sensory experience.
noticeable	Easy to see or notice.	There was a noticeable change.
glare	A strong, harsh light.	The glare of the sun blinded him.
shimmer	To shine with a soft, wavering light.	The sea began to shimmer.
glisten	To shine because of being wet.	Dew made the grass glisten.
gleam	To shine brightly.	A gleam of hope appeared.
flicker	To shine unsteadily.	The candle began to flicker.
dim	Not bright; giving little light.	The room grew dim.
translucent	Letting light through but not fully clear.	The glass is translucent.
transparent	Clear enough to see through.	The water is transparent.
silhouette	A dark outline seen against light.	A silhouette appeared at the window.
apparition	A ghost or ghostly figure.	He claims he saw an apparition.
mirage	An illusion, especially of water in a desert.	The lake was just a mirage.
scan	To look carefully over an area or text.	Let your eyes scan the crowd.
notice	To become aware of something.	Did you notice anything odd?
espy	To catch sight of something.	You may espy a figure in the mist.
vantage point	A position giving a good view.	From this vantage point you see it all.
panorama	A wide, unbroken view of an area.	A panorama of the bay opened up.
observant	Quick to notice things.	She is very observant.
intuit	To know something by instinct.	She seemed to intuit his mood.
echo	A sound that is repeated as it bounces back.	An echo rang through the cave.
reverberate	To sound loudly and repeatedly.	Voices reverberate in the hall.
grope	To search for something using the hands.	He had to grope for the switch.
fondle	To touch gently and lovingly.	Children love to fondle the kitten.
sniff	To smell something by drawing in air.	The dog began to sniff the bag.
inhale	To breathe in.	She paused to inhale the sea air.
morsel	A small piece of food.	He ate every last morsel.
luminescent	Giving off a soft, glowing light.	The dial is luminescent.
sensation	A physical feeling from the senses.	A tingling sensation spread.
detect	To notice or discover something.	Dogs can detect the scent.

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Movement & Manner

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
stride	To walk with long, confident steps.	She likes to stride along the beach.
saunter	To walk in a slow, relaxed way.	They saunter through the park.
amble	To walk at a slow, easy pace.	We amble along the river.
stroll	To walk in a slow, relaxed way for pleasure.	Let us stroll in the garden.
meander	To move slowly with no direct course.	Rivers meander through the hills.
trudge	To walk slowly with heavy steps.	They trudge through the snow.
plod	To walk slowly and with effort.	Tired horses plod up the hill.
trek	To make a long, difficult journey on foot.	We trek across the desert.
roam	To move about without a fixed purpose.	Wild horses roam the plains.
wade	To walk through water.	Children wade in the stream.
scurry	To move quickly with short steps.	Mice scurry across the floor.
scamper	To run quickly with light steps.	Squirrels scamper up trees.
scuttle	To run with short, quick steps.	Crabs scuttle along the sand.
dart	To move suddenly and quickly.	Fish dart among the rocks.
dash	To run somewhere quickly.	They dash for the bus.
sprint	To run very fast for a short distance.	He can sprint very fast.
lunge	To make a sudden forward movement.	She made a lunge for the ball.
leap	To jump a long way or high.	Deer leap over the fence.
bound	To move forward with large jumps.	Dogs bound across the field.
hurtle	To move very fast in an uncontrolled way.	Cars hurtle down the motorway.
careen	To move fast in a wild, uncontrolled way.	Trucks can careen off the road.
swerve	To change direction suddenly.	He had to swerve to avoid a dog.
veer	To change direction sharply.	The car began to veer left.
lurch	To make a sudden unsteady movement.	The ship gave a sudden lurch.
stagger	To walk unsteadily as if about to fall.	He began to stagger home.
stumble	To trip or lose your balance while walking.	She tends to stumble in the dark.
totter	To move unsteadily as if about to fall.	The toddler began to totter.
waddle	To walk with short steps, swaying side to side.	Ducks waddle to the pond.
hobble	To walk with difficulty because of pain.	He had to hobble on crutches.
limp	To walk unevenly because of an injured leg.	She began to limp badly.
crouch	To lower the body by bending the knees.	They crouch behind the wall.
slouch	To stand or sit with a lazy, drooping posture.	Do not slouch at the table.
sprawl	To sit or lie with limbs spread out.	He likes to sprawl on the sofa.
recline	To lean or lie back in a relaxed way.	She likes to recline in the chair.
perch	To sit or rest on the edge of something.	Birds perch on the wire.
glide	To move smoothly and quietly.	Swans glide across the lake.
slither	to move by sliding along the ground.	Snakes slither through the grass.
swoop	To move down suddenly through the air.	Hawks swoop on their prey.
flutter	To move with quick, light movements.	Butterflies flutter in the garden.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
drift	To move slowly, carried by air or water.	Boats drift on the tide.
sway	To move slowly from side to side.	Trees sway in the wind.
teeter	To move unsteadily as if about to fall.	Dancers teeter on high heels.
clamber	To climb using both hands and feet with effort.	Children clamber over rocks.
scale	To climb up something steep.	Climbers scale the cliff.
descend	To go down.	They descend into the valley.
ascend	To go up.	We ascend the steep path.
traverse	To travel across an area.	They traverse the glacier.
propel	To push or drive something forward.	Oars propel the boat.
recoil	To move back suddenly in fear or shock.	People recoil in horror.
flinch	To make a small quick movement from fear or pain.	He did not flinch at the noise.
writhe	To twist the body, especially in pain.	He began to writhe in pain.
squirm	To wriggle the body, especially in discomfort.	The child began to squirm.
wriggle	To twist and turn with small movements.	The fish wriggle in the net.
sidle	To move sideways in a shy or sneaky way.	He tried to sidle out of the room.
tiptoe	To walk quietly on the tips of your toes.	They tiptoe past the door.
creep	To move slowly and quietly.	Shadows creep across the wall.
prowl	To move about quietly as if hunting.	Cats prowl at night.
lumber	To move slowly and heavily.	The bear began to lumber off.
shuffle	To walk without lifting the feet fully.	Old men shuffle along the path.
canter	To move at a gentle gallop, said of a horse.	The horses canter across the field.

Ways of Speaking

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
murmur	To speak very quietly.	They murmur in the back row.
mutter	To speak quietly and unclearly, often in complaint.	He began to mutter to himself.
stammer	To speak with pauses and repeated sounds.	She started to stammer nervously.
stutter	To repeat sounds when speaking, unable to get words out.	He tends to stutter when nervous.
babble	To talk quickly in a way that is hard to understand.	The toddlers babble happily.
ramble	To talk for a long time in a confused way.	He tends to ramble for hours.
drawl	To speak slowly with long vowel sounds.	She spoke in a slow drawl.
lisp	To pronounce s and z like th.	The child has a slight lisp.
vocalise	To express something with the voice.	Babies vocalise before they speak.
exclaim	To cry out suddenly in surprise or emotion.	‘Wonderful!’ they exclaim.
proclaim	To announce something publicly and firmly.	Heralds proclaim the news.
declare	To say something clearly and officially.	Judges declare the verdict.
interject	To say something suddenly, interrupting.	May I interject for a moment?

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
rejoinder	A quick, sharp reply.	She gave a witty rejoinder.
blurt	To say something suddenly without thinking.	Try not to blurt out the answer.
intone	To say something in a slow, even voice.	The priest began to intone the words.
recite	To say a poem or list aloud from memory.	Children recite the poem.
recount	To tell someone about events.	Veterans recount their stories.
divulge	To reveal secret information.	He refused to divulge the secret.
disclose	To make secret information known.	They will not disclose the figures.
allege	To claim something without proof.	Critics allege corruption.
insinuate	To suggest something bad in an indirect way.	Are you trying to insinuate something?
intimate	To hint at something.	He tried to intimate his plans.
profess	To claim something, often falsely.	They profess great loyalty.
avow	To declare something openly.	They openly avow their beliefs.
attest	To state that something is true.	Witnesses attest to his honesty.
testify	To give evidence in court.	She will testify in court.
pontificate	To speak in a pompous, self-important way.	He loves to pontificate.
harangue	To speak forcefully and at length at someone.	He began to harangue the crowd.
preach	To give a moral or religious talk.	She likes to preach to others.
soliloquy	A speech spoken aloud to oneself in a play.	The hero delivers a soliloquy.
converse	To have a conversation.	They converse in French.
natter	To chat casually for a long time.	They natter over tea.
prattle	To talk on and on about unimportant things.	The children prattle all day.
hiss	To make a sharp s sound, often in anger.	‘Quiet!’ they hiss.
bellow	To shout in a deep, loud voice.	The sergeant began to bellow.
holler	To shout loudly.	He started to holler across the yard.
shriek	To make a loud, high cry.	She let out a shriek.
wail	To cry out in a long, high, sad voice.	Mourners began to wail.
groan	To make a low sound of pain or displeasure.	He let out a groan.
grumble	To complain in a low voice.	They grumble about the weather.
whine	To complain in an annoying, high voice.	Children whine when tired.
coo	To speak in a soft, gentle voice.	She began to coo at the baby.
croon	To sing or speak in a soft, low voice.	He likes to croon old songs.
chant	To repeat words or sounds in a rhythm.	Fans chant the team’s name.
mouth	To form words with the lips without sound.	Try not to mouth the words.
enthuse	To speak with great excitement.	Fans enthuse about the film.
gush	To speak with excessive enthusiasm.	Critics gush over her work.
rave	To speak with wild enthusiasm or anger.	Reviewers rave about the play.
boast	To talk with too much pride about yourself.	He likes to boast about his car.
brag	To speak too proudly about what you have done.	She tends to brag about money.
snap	To speak in a sudden, sharp, angry way.	‘No!’ she would snap.
bark	To give an order in a loud, sharp voice.	Officers bark orders.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
squeal	To make a long, high sound.	Children squeal with delight.
utterance	Something that is said.	His every utterance was noted.
verbalise	To express something in words.	Try to verbalise your feelings.
butt in	To interrupt a conversation rudely.	Do not butt in while I speak.
herald	To announce or signal that something is coming.	Trumpets herald the king.
reproach	To express disappointment at someone's behaviour.	She gave him a look of reproach.
reprimand	To criticise someone formally for a fault.	The boss will reprimand him.

Light, Look & Texture

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
gaunt	Very thin, especially from illness or hunger.	His face looked gaunt.
haggard	Looking tired and ill.	She looked haggard after the trip.
emaciated	Extremely thin and weak from hunger or illness.	The prisoners were emaciated.
portly	Rather fat, said of a person.	A portly gentleman entered.
burly	Large and strongly built.	A burly guard blocked the door.
lanky	Tall and thin, moving awkwardly.	He is tall and lanky.
petite	Small and slim, said of a woman.	She is small and petite.
stocky	Short and solidly built.	He has a stocky build.
dishevelled	Untidy in appearance.	His hair was dishevelled.
well-groomed	Neat and carefully looked after.	He is always well-groomed.
scruffy	Untidy and dirty.	He wore scruffy old jeans.
dapper	Neat and stylish in dress.	He looked dapper in a suit.
swarthy	Having a dark skin colour.	He had a swarthy complexion.
pallid	Pale, especially from illness.	Her face was pallid.
ruddy	Having a healthy red colour, said of a face.	He has a ruddy complexion.
wrinkled	Having lines from age or creasing.	Her face was wrinkled with age.
weathered	Marked by long exposure to the weather.	His skin was weathered by the sun.
complexion	The natural colour and look of the skin.	She has a clear complexion.
physique	The form and shape of a person's body.	He has an athletic physique.
poise	A graceful and controlled way of moving.	She has natural poise.
radiance	A bright, glowing quality.	Her face had a soft radiance.
glow	A soft, steady light or warm colour.	Her cheeks had a healthy glow.
pallor	Unusual paleness of the face.	His sudden pallor alarmed us.
flush	A red colour that spreads over the face.	A flush spread over her face.
blush	To become red in the face from embarrassment.	A blush rose to her cheeks.
grimace	A twisted expression showing pain or dislike.	He gave a grimace of pain.
scowl	An angry, frowning look.	She gave him a dark scowl.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
frown	To wrinkle the brow in worry or disapproval.	A frown crossed his face.
smirk	A smug, silly or unpleasant smile.	He wore a smug smirk.
sneer	A mocking, scornful expression.	She gave a cruel sneer.
beam	To smile broadly with happiness.	She gave a wide beam.
iridescence	A shining display of changing colours.	The oil showed iridescence.
translucence	The quality of letting some light through.	The petals have a delicate translucence.
opacity	The quality of not letting light through.	The glass has a milky opacity.
glossy	Smooth and shiny.	The magazine is glossy.
matte	Not shiny; dull in finish.	The walls have a matte finish.
sleek	Smooth and glossy in appearance.	The car has a sleek design.
grainy	Having a rough, grain-like texture.	The old film looks grainy.
mottled	Marked with patches of different colours.	The leaf was mottled brown.
dappled	Marked with spots of light and shade.	Dappled light fell on the path.
speckled	Covered with small spots.	The egg was speckled.
burnished	Polished until it shines.	The shield was burnished bright.
tarnished	Having lost its shine, said of metal.	The old spoon was tarnished.
faded	Having lost brightness or colour.	The curtains were faded.
fluorescent	Very bright, seeming to give off light.	She wore a fluorescent jacket.
pale	Light in colour; lacking strong colour.	He turned pale with fear.
dingy	Dirty and dull-looking.	They lived in a dingy flat.
grubby	Slightly dirty.	His hands were grubby.
spotless	Perfectly clean.	The kitchen was spotless.
smudged	Marked with a dirty streak.	Her makeup was smudged.
glistening	Shining because of being wet.	His brow was glistening with sweat.
frayed	Worn at the edges so threads come loose.	His collar was frayed.
tattered	Old and torn.	He wore a tattered coat.
threadbare	Worn thin so the threads show.	The rug was threadbare.
unblemished	Perfect, with no marks or faults.	Her record is unblemished.
crinkled	Having many small folds or lines.	The paper was crinkled.
crumpled	Crushed into folds and creases.	He wore a crumpled shirt.
taut	Stretched tight.	The rope was pulled taut.
slack	Loose and not tight.	The line went slack.
silky	Soft and smooth like silk.	The dog has a silky coat.

Size, Degree & Extent

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
magnitude	The great size or importance of something.	The magnitude of the loss was clear.
enormity	The very great size or seriousness of something.	The enormity of the task daunted us.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
immensity	Extremely large size.	The immensity of space is humbling.
vastness	The quality of being very great in size.	The vastness of the ocean amazed her.
infinitesimal	Extremely small.	The amount is infinitesimal.
minuscule	Extremely small.	The print is minuscule.
colossal	Extremely large.	It was a colossal building.
gargantuan	Enormous.	He ate a gargantuan meal.
titanic	Very great in size or power.	It was a titanic struggle.
monumental	Very large or very important.	It was a monumental error.
paltry	Very small and not worth much.	He earns a paltry sum.
meagre	Small in amount and not enough.	They live on a meagre income.
scant	Barely enough.	There is scant evidence.
copious	Present in large amounts.	She took copious notes.
profuse	Produced in great quantity.	He offered profuse thanks.
plentiful	Existing in large amounts.	Fruit is plentiful here.
bountiful	Present in large, generous amounts.	It was a bountiful harvest.
teeming	Full of a large number of moving things.	The market was teeming with people.
myriad	A very great number.	There are a myriad of options.
multitude	A very large number of people or things.	A multitude gathered in the square.
plethora	An amount that is more than needed.	There is a plethora of choices.
surfeit	An excessive amount of something.	There was a surfeit of food.
dearth	A lack or scarcity of something.	There is a dearth of talent.
paucity	A very small amount; a shortage.	A paucity of data hampered them.
modicum	A small amount of something.	Show a modicum of respect.
smidgen	A very small amount.	Add just a smidgen of salt.
iota	An extremely small amount.	There is not an iota of truth.
fraction	A small part of something.	It cost a fraction of the price.
quotient	A degree or amount of a quality.	The quotient is two.
scope	The range of things a subject deals with.	The scope of the plan is huge.
extent	The size or range of something.	The extent of the damage is unknown.
breadth	The distance across, or wide range of something.	The breadth of her knowledge is vast.
rampant	Spreading in an uncontrolled way.	Corruption is rampant here.
rife	Very common, especially of something bad.	Rumour is rife in the office.
boundless	Having no limits.	Her energy is boundless.
finite	Having limits or an end.	Oil is a finite resource.
infinite	Without any limit or end.	Space seems infinite.
exponential	Growing more and more quickly.	There was exponential growth.
incremental	Increasing in small, regular amounts.	Progress was incremental.
fractional	Very small.	There was a fractional rise.
disproportionate	Too large or too small in comparison.	The fine seems disproportionate.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
commensurate	Matching in size or degree.	Pay is commensurate with skill.
predominant	Most common or most important.	Cars are the predominant transport.
overwhelming	Very great in amount or effect.	There was overwhelming support.
inordinate	Much more than is reasonable.	It took an inordinate amount of time.
excess	An amount more than is needed.	There is an excess of supply.
saturation	The state of being completely full.	The market reached saturation.
threshold	The level at which something begins to happen.	She has a high pain threshold.
ceiling	An upper limit on something.	There is a ceiling on the budget.
cap	An upper limit set on an amount.	They put a cap on spending.
tier	One level in a system of ranks.	Prices rise at the next tier.
gradation	A small step in a series of changes.	There is a gradation of colour.
continuum	A range that changes gradually.	Opinions lie on a continuum.
parity	The state of being equal.	They reached pay parity.
equivalence	The state of being equal in value.	There is rough equivalence.
disparate	Very different from each other.	They have disparate aims.
uniform	The same throughout; not varying.	The quality is uniform.
discrepancy	A difference between things that should match.	There is a discrepancy in the figures.
quantum leap	A sudden very large increase or advance.	It was a quantum leap in speed.
sizeable	Fairly large.	A sizeable crowd gathered.

Connectors & Cohesion

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
moreover	In addition to what has been said.	It is cheap; moreover, it is reliable.
additionally	As an extra point.	Additionally, the cost is low.
likewise	In the same way.	She agreed, and he did likewise.
similarly	In a similar way.	Similarly, prices fell in Asia.
conversely	In an opposite way.	Conversely, demand may rise.
regardless	Without paying attention to something.	Regardless of cost, they went ahead.
notably	In particular; especially.	Notably, sales rose in March.
specifically	In an exact and detailed way.	Specifically, I mean the second clause.
namely	That is to say; used to give details.	One thing matters, namely trust.
incidentally	Used to add a less important remark.	Incidentally, he arrived late.
ultimately	In the end; finally.	Ultimately, it is your choice.
correspondingly	In a matching or related way.	Demand rose and prices rose correspondingly.
alternatively	As another possibility.	Alternatively, you could walk.
by contrast	Showing a clear difference.	By contrast, the south stayed dry.
presently	Soon, or at the present time.	Presently, the door opened.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
meanwhile	At the same time.	Meanwhile, the others waited.
simultaneously	At the same time.	Both events happened simultaneously.
arguably	As can be reasonably argued.	She is arguably the best.
ostensibly	As it appears, but perhaps not really.	He came ostensibly to help.
presumably	As can reasonably be supposed.	Presumably, they forgot.
supposedly	As is claimed, but perhaps not truly.	He is supposedly an expert.
essentially	In the most basic and important way.	It is essentially a tax.
fundamentally	In a basic and important way.	We fundamentally disagree.
predominantly	Mostly; mainly.	The crowd was predominantly young.
invariably	Always; without change.	He is invariably late.
purportedly	As is claimed but not proven.	He purportedly resigned.
allegedly	As claimed without proof.	He allegedly took the money.
conceivably	Possibly; as can be imagined.	It could conceivably fail.
undeniably	In a way that cannot be denied.	She is undeniably talented.
markedly	In a clearly noticeable way.	Standards have markedly improved.
inasmuch	To the extent that; because.	Inasmuch as he tried, he failed.
even so	In spite of that.	It is risky; even so, we agree.
granted	Used to admit a point before arguing.	Granted, it is expensive.
admittedly	As must be admitted.	Admittedly, I was wrong.
demonstrably	In a way that can be clearly proved.	It is demonstrably false.
in conclusion	Used to introduce a final summary.	In conclusion, the plan works.
summarily	In a quick way without detail.	He was summarily dismissed.
broadly	In a general way.	Broadly, the trend is upward.
by and large	On the whole; generally.	By and large, the plan succeeded.
crucially	In a way that is extremely important.	Crucially, the cost stayed low.
importantly	In a way that matters.	More importantly, it is safe.
paradoxically	In a way that seems to contradict itself.	Paradoxically, less is more.
ironically	In a way that is the opposite of what is expected.	Ironically, the cure caused harm.
coincidentally	By chance at the same time.	Coincidentally, we met again.
despite	In spite of.	Despite the rain, they marched.
lest	In case; to prevent something from happening.	He whispered, lest he wake the baby.
providing	On the condition that.	You may stay, providing you are quiet.
insofar as	To the extent that.	It is true insofar as it goes.
in turn	One after the other; as a result.	Costs rose and, in turn, prices rose.
all the same	In spite of what has been said.	It is risky; all the same, we agree.
above all	Most importantly.	Above all, be honest.
in essence	Basically; in the most important way.	In essence, it is a loan.
in general	Usually; on the whole.	In general, the results are good.
what is more	In addition; furthermore.	What is more, it is free.
to that end	For that purpose.	To that end, we hired staff.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
for this reason	Because of this.	For this reason, we declined.
in particular	Especially.	One area, in particular, needs work.
on the contrary	The opposite is true.	On the contrary, it helped.
in the end	Finally; after everything.	In the end, they agreed.
for instance	As an example.	Take fruit, for instance.

Advanced Phrasal Verbs

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
account for	To explain the reason for something.	Costs account for half the price.
back down	To withdraw a claim or demand.	Neither side will back down.
bank on	To rely on something happening.	Do not bank on good weather.
brush up on	To improve a skill you learned before.	I must brush up on my French.
carry out	To perform or complete a task.	They carry out repairs daily.
come across	To find something by chance.	You often come across bargains here.
come up with	To think of an idea or plan.	We must come up with a plan.
crack down on	To take strong action against something.	Police crack down on speeding.
cut back on	To reduce the amount of something.	We must cut back on sugar.
do away with	To get rid of something.	They want to do away with the rule.
draw up	To prepare a written document.	Lawyers draw up the contract.
drum up	To try to gain support or interest.	They drum up support online.
fall back on	To use something as a backup when needed.	She can fall back on savings.
fall through	To fail to happen as planned.	The deal may fall through.
figure out	To work out or understand something.	I cannot figure out the code.
get around to	To finally do something after delay.	I never get around to it.
give in to	To stop resisting something.	Do not give in to pressure.
go through with	To do something difficult as planned.	He could not go through with it.
iron out	To solve small problems or difficulties.	We need to iron out the details.
keep up with	To move or progress at the same rate.	I cannot keep up with the news.
live up to	To be as good as expected.	The film did not live up to the hype.
look down on	To think you are better than someone.	Do not look down on others.
look forward to	To feel happy about a future event.	We look forward to your visit.
look into	To investigate something.	Police will look into the matter.
make up for	To do something to correct a fault.	Nothing can make up for the loss.
opt for	To choose one thing over another.	Many opt for the cheaper plan.
pin down	To force someone to give exact details.	It is hard to pin down the cause.
point out	To draw attention to a fact.	Critics point out the flaws.
put up with	To tolerate something unpleasant.	I will not put up with this.
rule out	To decide that something is not possible.	We cannot rule out a strike.
run into	To meet someone by chance, or hit trouble.	I often run into old friends.
set out	To begin a task with a clear aim.	They set out to break the record.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
sort out	To organise or solve something.	We must sort out the mess.
stand for	To represent or mean something.	What does the sign stand for?
stand out	To be clearly noticeable.	Her work tends to stand out.
take on	To accept a task or responsibility.	They take on new staff each year.
take up	To start a new hobby or activity.	He wants to take up painting.
turn down	To refuse an offer or request.	She had to turn down the offer.
weigh up	To consider something carefully.	Let us weigh up the options.
work out	To solve, or to exercise.	Things will work out fine.
branch out	To start doing something new.	The firm wants to branch out.
bring about	To cause something to happen.	Reforms can bring about change.
clamp down on	To act strictly to stop something.	They clamp down on fraud.
dwell on	To think or speak about something too much.	Do not dwell on the past.
embark on	To begin an important new project.	They embark on a new project.
fend off	To defend yourself against something.	She had to fend off questions.
gloss over	To avoid dealing with something properly.	He tends to gloss over details.
hammer out	To reach an agreement after much effort.	They hammer out a deal.
hinge on	To depend entirely on something.	Success may hinge on timing.
mull over	To think about something carefully.	Let me mull over the idea.
phase out	To stop using something gradually.	They will phase out the model.
play down	To make something seem less important.	Officials play down the risk.
ramp up	To increase something.	Factories ramp up production.
shrug off	To treat something as unimportant.	He tends to shrug off criticism.
single out	To choose one person or thing from a group.	Do not single out one person.
stem from	To be caused by something.	Problems stem from poor planning.
tide over	To help someone through a hard time.	A small loan can tide over a business.
usher in	To mark the start of something new.	The vote may usher in change.
water down	To make something weaker or less strong.	They water down the proposal.
zero in on	To focus attention closely on something.	Detectives zero in on a suspect.

Precise Adjectives

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
cumbersome	Large and difficult to carry or use.	The machine is cumbersome.
unwieldy	Hard to move or manage because of size.	The parcel was unwieldy.
ponderous	Slow and heavy; dull.	His prose is ponderous.
nimble	Quick and light in movement.	She is nimble on her feet.
deft	Skilful and quick with the hands.	He gave a deft reply.
clumsy	Awkward and likely to knock things over.	He is clumsy with tools.
ungainly	Awkward and not graceful.	The bird looked ungainly.
lithe	Moving easily and gracefully.	The dancer is lithe.
rugged	Rough, strong and durable.	It is rugged terrain.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
frail	Weak and delicate.	The old man looked frail.
hardy	Strong and able to endure hard conditions.	These plants are hardy.
rickety	Weak and likely to break.	The chair was rickety.
solid	Firm, strong and not hollow.	The table is solid.
jagged	Having a rough, uneven, pointed edge.	The rocks were jagged.
slippery	Smooth and hard to hold or stand on.	The path was slippery.
crumbly	Easily breaking into small pieces.	The cheese is crumbly.
compact	Small and neatly fitted together.	The kit is small and compact.
porous	Having tiny holes that let liquid through.	The stone is porous.
viscous	Thick and sticky, said of a liquid.	The liquid is viscous.
brackish	Slightly salty, said of water.	The water tasted brackish.
parched	Extremely dry.	The land was parched.
humid	Having a lot of moisture in the air.	The air was humid.
balmy	Pleasantly warm.	It was a balmy evening.
sweltering	Uncomfortably hot.	The day was sweltering.
frigid	Extremely cold.	The wind was frigid.
tepid	Only slightly warm.	The coffee was tepid.
scalding	Hot enough to burn.	The water was scalding.
putrid	Rotten and smelling very bad.	The smell was putrid.
rancid	Smelling or tasting stale and unpleasant.	The butter was rancid.
stale	No longer fresh.	The bread was stale.
mellow	Soft, smooth and pleasant.	The wine is mellow.
zesty	Having a fresh, sharp flavour.	The dish was zesty.
succulent	Juicy and tender.	The meat was succulent.
delectable	Extremely pleasant to taste.	The cake was delectable.
wholesome	Good for your health.	It is a wholesome meal.
nourishing	Providing the food needed for health.	Soup is nourishing.
noxious	Harmful or poisonous.	The fumes were noxious.
potent	Very powerful or strong in effect.	It is a potent drug.
innocuous	Harmless.	The remark seemed innocuous.
harmless	Not able to cause harm.	The snake is harmless.
inert	Not active; not reacting.	The gas is inert.
malleable	Able to be shaped easily.	Gold is very malleable.
pliable	Easily bent without breaking.	The wire is pliable.
rigid	Stiff and not able to bend.	The frame is rigid.
elastic	Able to stretch and return to shape.	The band is elastic.
weightless	Having no noticeable weight.	Astronauts feel weightless.
bulky	Large and awkward to handle.	The coat is bulky.
cavernous	Very large and empty like a cave.	The hall was cavernous.
cramped	Too small and lacking space.	The flat is cramped.
lofty	Very high, or grand in style.	The ceilings are lofty.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
squat	Short and thick.	It is a squat little building.
towering	Extremely tall.	Towering cliffs lined the bay.
sprawling	Spreading out over a large area.	It is a sprawling city.
snug	Warm, cosy and comfortable.	The cabin was snug.
roomy	Having plenty of space.	The car is roomy.
gaping	Wide open.	There was a gaping hole.
bottomless	Extremely deep.	It seemed a bottomless pit.
winding	Turning and twisting.	We drove up a winding road.
meandering	Following a winding course.	The meandering river was calm.
circuitous	Longer than the direct way; roundabout.	We took a circuitous route.

Precise & Formal Verbs

60 words

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
ameliorate	To make a bad situation better.	Reforms may ameliorate the problem.
assuage	To make an unpleasant feeling less severe.	Nothing could assuage her grief.
placate	To make an angry person calm.	He tried to placate the crowd.
mollify	To calm someone's anger.	She tried to mollify the angry client.
stifle	To stop something from happening or being expressed.	He tried to stifle a yawn.
quash	To officially reject or put an end to something.	The court will quash the verdict.
thwart	To prevent someone from achieving something.	They thwart his every plan.
impede	To slow down or block progress.	Debt can impede growth.
hinder	To make it difficult for something to happen.	Snow may hinder travel.
hamper	to make an activity harder to do.	Fog will hamper the search.
obstruct	To block or get in the way of something.	Do not obstruct the exit.
curtail	To reduce or limit something.	They had to curtail spending.
curb	To control or limit something.	Laws curb air pollution.
constrain	To limit or restrict something.	Budgets constrain his choices.
relinquish	To give up something willingly.	He had to relinquish control.
forsake	To abandon someone or something.	She would never forsake a friend.
renounce	To give up a claim or belief formally.	He chose to renounce the throne.
disavow	To deny any connection with something.	They disavow any link.
abolish	To end a law or system officially.	They will abolish the tax.
foment	To stir up trouble or bad feeling.	They tried to foment unrest.
spur	To encourage someone to act.	Praise can spur effort.
impel	To force or strongly urge someone to act.	Duty seemed to impel him.
compel	To force someone to do something.	Hunger can compel action.
prod	To urge someone gently to act.	We had to prod him into action.
entice	To attract someone by offering something.	Low prices entice buyers.

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WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
lure	To tempt someone into doing something.	Bright lights lure tourists.
beguile	To charm someone, often in a deceptive way.	Her smile can beguile anyone.
captivate	To attract and hold someone's attention.	The story will captivate children.
enthral	To hold someone's attention completely.	The dancers enthral the crowd.
mesmerise	To hold someone's attention as if hypnotised.	The flames mesmerise him.
dispel	To make a feeling or belief go away.	Facts can dispel a myth.
dissipate	To gradually disappear or scatter.	The fog began to dissipate.
disperse	To spread out over a wide area.	Police made the crowd disperse.
dispense	To give out something to people.	Machines dispense the tickets.
allot	To give out shares of something.	They allot each child a desk.
apportion	To share out in fair amounts.	We must apportion the blame.
consign	To hand something over to someone's care.	They consign old files to storage.
relay	To pass a message from one to another.	Please relay my thanks.
impart	To give or pass on knowledge.	Teachers impart knowledge.
instil	To gradually put an idea into someone's mind.	Coaches instil discipline.
inculcate	To fix an idea in someone's mind by repeating it.	Schools inculcate good habits.
beget	To cause or bring about.	Violence tends to beget violence.
spawn	To produce or cause a large number of things.	Hit films often spawn sequels.
catalyse	To cause or speed up a change.	The crisis may catalyse reform.
hasten	To make something happen sooner.	Stress can hasten illness.
prolong	To make something last longer.	Drugs can prolong life.
truncate	To shorten something by cutting off part.	They had to truncate the talk.
abridge	To shorten a piece of writing.	Editors abridge the novel.
condense	To make something shorter or more compact.	Please condense the report.
distil	To reduce something to its essential parts.	She can distil a complex idea.
encapsulate	To express the main idea briefly.	A slogan can encapsulate an idea.
personify	To be a perfect example of a quality.	She seems to personify calm.
typify	To be a typical example of something.	These cars typify the era.
characterise	To describe the qualities of something.	Bold colours characterise her work.
circumscribe	To limit something within bounds.	Rules circumscribe his power.
subsume	To include something within a larger group.	Such terms subsume many ideas.
supplant	To take the place of something else.	Phones supplant cameras.
eclipse	To make something seem less important.	Newcomers may eclipse the old stars.
overshadow	To be more important or noticeable than another.	Scandal can overshadow success.
surpass	To be better or greater than something else.	She hopes to surpass her rival.

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