

Stanislaus County Elementary Spelling Championship

Word List



(Same book for past years - no revisions were made)

Note: as indicated in the Stanislaus County Spelling Championship Rules (available on the following website: www.scoestudentevents.org) "Words are chosen from multiple sources" in addition to this word list.



abbreviate - uh-BREE-vee-ayt

shorten

In formal papers, it is not proper to abbreviate words.

abdominal - ab-däm-n'l

lower part of the trunk of the human body; in, or for the abdomen

The abdominal bandage seemed too tight.

abhor - ab HOR

to shrink from in fear; detest

I abhor baiting my fishhook with worms.

absurd - AB-surd

so clearly untrue or unreasonable as to be ridiculous

It was absurd to say the baby could reach the counter.

accessory - ak SES uh ree

useful but not essential thing

That necklace is a nice accessory to your outfit.

accommodate - a-kä-ma-DATE

to make fit, suitable, or congruous

The school can now accommodate handicapped students.

acoustics - uh KOOHS tiks

the qualities of a room that enhance or deaden sound

The concert hall is known for its fine acoustics.

active - AK tiv

lively, busy, agile

Last night I baby-sat for a very active two-year old.

acumen - a-ku-men

acuteness of mind; keenness in intellectual or practical matters

He was a businessman of acknowledged acumen.

addendum - a-den-dum

thing added or to be added

The name of the second speaker is an addendum to the program.

addressee - a-dre-sE OR u-dre-sE

person to whom mail, etc., is addressed

His name is that of the addressee on the envelope.

admire - ad-mire

to gaze on with delight

I admire your choice of neckties.

adolescence - "a-del-'e-sen(t)s

the state between childhood and adulthood; a time of growing up

Good habits formed in adolescence are assets in later life.

adolescent - ad-o-les-sent

period of life between puberty and adulthood

An adolescent frequently has trouble communicating with parents.

advise - ad VIZE

to give counsel

I would advise you to study hard for this test.

against - uh GENST

in opposition to

The Student Council voted against school uniforms.

algid - al-jid

cold, chilly

When the door was opened an algid wind came howling in.

allegiance - uh LEE juhn(t)s

the obligation of fidelity in general

The soldier's allegiance to their country was unquestioned.

allegory - al-e-go-ri

a figurative story or narrative

Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" is a celebrated example of the allegory.

almond - ah-mond

the edible, nutlike kernel of the small, dry, peach like fruit of a tree

Modesto is known as an almond-growing region.

amaze - uh MAZE

to fill with great surprise or sudden wonder

The musician's talent will amaze the audience.

ambush - AM-bush

an arrangement of persons in hiding to make a surprise attack

The sheriff did not suspect ambush.

amphibious - am FIB ee uhs

capable of operating on land or water

D-day was marked by an amphibious assault.

anniversary - an uh VUR suhr ee

the yearly commemoration of a special event

Our school will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next year.

antecedence - AN tu-s E d'ns

priority; precedence; going before

The teacher stressed the antecedence of study to success.

antidote - ANT i dote

something that relieves, prevents, or counteracts

Education is often said to be an antidote to crime.

antimacassar - an ti muh KAS ur

a covering to prevent the soiling of the backs of chairs or sofas

To create the Victorian setting, we will need a lace antimacassar for each of the chairs.

apiarist - a-pi-a-rist

one who keeps bee hives

When he retired, he became an enthusiastic apiarist.

apparatus - ap pah RAT us

equipment used to do a particular kind of work

The balance beam is an apparatus in gymnastics.

appoint - uh POYNT

to name or select officially for an office, position

The president will appoint all the committee chairs.

architecture - 'är-ka-"tek-chur

the style of building that designers produce

Colonial style architecture was popular in Southern plantation homes.

argue - AR gyoooh

to dispute or quarrel

My friend and I often argue over trivial details.

arouse - a-rous

to excite to action

The night watchman hastened to arouse the sleeping guests.

arrogance - AR-e-gen(t)s

self-importance; overbearing pride; haughty

His arrogance was difficult to put up with.

aspirin - AS puh(r) in

a white crystalline drug used as a pain and fever remedy

The doctor prescribed aspirin and bed rest for my cold.

assistance - a-SIS-tun(t)s

support

We will need your assistance to put our campaign over the top.

awkward - AW kwuhrd

not graceful, clumsy

My walk was very awkward right after my cast was removed.

ballot - BAL-ut

a ticket or paper by which a vote is registered; act or method of voting

The class president was elected by a written ballot.

bankrupt - BANGK rupt

a person legally declared unable to pay debts

The store's owner was bankrupt and had to go out of business.

banner - ban-er

a flag

The boy scouts held their banner high throughout the parade.

barrel - bar-el

a container with rounded sides and flat top and bottom

The last barrel of water was loaded on to the truck.

basin - BAY suhn

a washbowl or sink

Rinse your contact lenses over a basin with the drain closed.

battalion - ba-'tal-yun

a large group of soldiers arrayed for battle

He had command of a battalion during World War II.

behavior - bee HAYV yuhr

manner of one's conduct

The young child's reward for good behavior was a trip to the zoo.

beleaguer - bih-LEE-gur

to blockade by surrounding with an array

The military operation was planned to beleaguer the enemy.

believe - be-lev'

to have faith or confidence

I believe this will be an interesting contest.

bellwether - bel-weth-er

a male sheep (usually wearing a bell) which leads the flock

The bellwether led the sheep into the slaughterhouse.

benefit - BEN uh fit

promotion of welfare or prosperity

This project will benefit all humankind.

benevolent - buh-NEH-vuh-lunt

doing or inclined to do good; kindly; charitable

He was known as a benevolent despot.

biscuit - BIS kut

a small quick bread

Here's some honey for your biscuit.

blasphemy - BLAS fuh mee

any irreverent act or utterance

It was blasphemy to speak ill of our teachers.

blithe - blithe

joyful; glad; cheerful; lightheartedly gay

The theatergoers were in a blithe spirit.

boisterous - 'boi-st(a-)rus

rowdy

The security officer had to quiet the boisterous group.

botany - 'bah-ten-E

the science of plants

The branch of biology dealing with plant life is called botany.

bougainvillea - boo gan VEE(l) ya

evergreen vine with vibrant colored flowers

The walls of the hotel terrace in Mexico were covered with gorgeous bougainvillea vines.

boulevard - 'bu-la-"värd	<i>a broad often landscaped thoroughfare</i> Sometimes driving on a boulevard is faster than taking the freeway.
bullion - bool-yun	<i>gold or silver</i> A large shipment of gold bullion was delivered to the mint.
buoyancy - 'boi-un(t)-sE	<i>the tendency of a body to float in a fluid</i> Filling the raft with more air will increase its buoyancy.
bureaucracy - byooh RAWK ruh see	<i>a body of (hired) government officials</i> The federal government is criticized for the size of its bureaucracy.
camouflage - KAM uh flahj	<i>the disguise applied to military equipment</i> The uniforms are now tan to camouflage them in the desert.
campaign - kam PANE	<i>a systematic course of aggressive activities</i> At the meeting, they introduced the advertising campaign for the coming season.
capriciousness - ka-pri-sh's-ness	<i>a change without apparent reason; erratic behavior</i> His capriciousness was evident as soon as he appeared at dinner.
caption - KAP shun	<i>a heading or title, as of a newspaper article</i> The caption at the top of the story attracted my attention.
career - kuh RIR	<i>one's progress through life or in a particular vocation</i> I would like to have a career in teaching.
carnivorous - kar NIV uh ruhs	<i>meat-eating</i> The lion is a carnivorous animal.
carousel - kar uh SEL	<i>a merry-go-round</i> I love riding the carousel at the park.

carry - kair-E

take from one place to another

I helped the teacher carry all his books.

cashier - ka-'shir

an officer in a bank or company responsible for receipts and disbursements

The cashier collected the receipts and recorded them for the bank.

casserole - KAS uh role

earthenware or glass baking dish, or food cooked in one

Please bring a vegetable casserole to the potluck.

catastrophe - kuh TAS truh fee

the culminating event of a drama, tragedy

The Northridge Earthquake was a catastrophe.

center - sen-ter

the middle

A small island was in the center of the lake.

central - SEN truhl

in, at, or near the center

Let us get back to the central issue we are here to discuss.

centrifugal - sen-'tri-fyu-gal

radiating or departing from the center

The road was banked to counteract the centrifugal force.

cessation - se-SA-shen

ceasing or stopping, either forever or for a period of time

Shutting the heavy door caused a cessation of all the noise.

chauffeur - SHOH-fer

driver of a private automobile for someone else

The chauffeur drove her to school each day.

chief - CHEEF

a ruler, leader, head

The crew chief will give you your assignments.

chorus - KOR uhs

music repeated between verses

The choir will sing the verses, and all will join in on the chorus.

chrysanthemum - kri SAN thuh mum

popular plant grown for its long-lasting flowers

A chrysanthemum bouquet was the centerpiece for our Thanksgiving table.

cinnamon - SIN uh muhn

a highly aromatic spice

We are serving cinnamon rolls for breakfast.

coalesce - kO-uh-les

to grow together; to unite or merge into a single body

The splint would help the broken bones to continue to coalesce.

coincidence - ko in se dens

the happening of events at the same time by chance

It is quite a coincidence that Steve and his father have their birthdays on the same day.

colleague - KOL eeg

a fellow worker

I would like to introduce my colleague who designed this project.

college - KOL ij

a school after high school

Many high school students also take college courses.

collegian - ka-'lE-j(E-) en

a member of a college; college student

Dad bought the collegian a new set of luggage.

column - KOL uhm

a vertical arrangement of items

Place the cursor at the top of this column.

comfort - kum-fort

to impart strength and hope

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

compatible - kum-PAT-uh-bul

capable of existing together in harmony

In a group, it helps if the members are compatible.

compel - kum-PEL

to enforce or constrain, as to do something

New laws compel judges to issue the maximum sentence.

complexion - kuhm PLEK shun

the skin color of the face

People with a fair complexion need to be very careful in the sun.

concerto - kuhn CHAIR toh

a piece for one or more soloists and orchestra

She played the piano concerto beautifully.

confidential - kan-fa-'den(t)-shul

told in confidence; secret

Do not you dare tell anyone I said this; it is confidential between you and me.

conscientious - KAHN shee en chuhs

scrupulous; careful

I try to be conscientious about getting my homework done.

constitutional - CON-sti-tu-shn'l

of or in the constitution of a person or thing; basic; essential

Everyone in the United States has constitutional rights.

convenient - kuhn VEEN yuhnt

conducive to comfort or ease

It would be more convenient if you would stop by around 6:00.

convert - kuhn vurt

to change from one form to another

Use this key to convert uppercase letters to lowercase ones.

correct - ke-REKT

to change from wrong to right; to point out or mark the errors of

School teachers often take papers home to correct.

correspondence - kor uh SPAHN dun(t)s

a communication by letters

Please file this correspondence alphabetically.

corrupt - COR-rupt

spoiled; contaminated; morally unsound

The corrupt official accepted a bribe.

counterfeit - KOWNT-er-fit

to imitate or copy, especially with intent to deceive

This is the way to check if this bill is counterfeit.

courier - KUR ee uhr

a messenger

The bicycle courier sped through the city's streets.

courteous - KUR tee uhs

marked by respect for and consideration of others

If one is courteous, one will reap many benefits.

crescent - KRES uhnt

the shape of a new moon or one in its last quarter

These little crescent shaped rolls are delicious.

crimson - 'krim-zón

deep red color

The sky, at sunset became beautifully crimson.

crisis - KREYE sis

decisive or crucial time or stage of an event

We knew we had to deal with the crisis quickly and efficiently.

curtain - kur-tin

window drapery

The window curtain matched the bedspread in the room.

daughter - DAWT uhr

a female offspring

We are very proud of all that our daughter has accomplished.

deafen - DEF uhn

overwhelm with noise

The volume of the loudspeaker will deafen the audience.

decent - 'dE-sent

proper and fitting; not immodest

Father provided for a decent, comfortable standard of living.

deciduous - di SIG e wes

shedding leaves annually

The fall colors on the deciduous trees are beautiful.

defendant - di FEN dunt

a person who is sued or accused in court

The jury ruled the defendant is not guilty.

delicacy - de-li-k'-sE

pleasing in taste, odor, texture; fragile beauty of graceful slightness

Caviar is considered a delicacy by many.

delicatessen - deh-lih-kuh-TEH-sun

a shop where sandwich items, meats and cheeses are sold

Let us stop by the delicatessen to pick up things for our picnic.

depressant - di PRES uhnt

a drug that reduces bodily functional activity

The doctor administered a depressant to calm the manic patient's behavior.

depth - DEPTH

distance from the top

The pool goes down to a depth of ten feet.

description - di-SCRIP-shen

the art, process or technique of picturing in words; sort or variety

Her description of the cathedral made us feel as if we had been there.

destroy - di STROY

to tear down

The demolition crew will destroy the whole building.

devoid - du-'void

completely without; empty or destitute

Crippled badly from the accident, he was devoid of any way to resume his former occupation.

dichotomy - deye KOT uh mee

division into two (contrasting) halves, pairs or set

Reconciling the dichotomy between public and private interests is a difficult job.

dictionary - DIK shun air ee

wordbook, lexicon

If you cannot spell the beginning of a word, it is hard to look it up in the dictionary.

dilemma - di LEM uh

predicament; a situation in which one must choose

It was a real dilemma deciding which college to attend.

dinosaur - DEYE nuh sor

any of a group of extinct reptiles

A plastic replica of a huge dinosaur is on display at the science museum.

disassemble - dis uh SEM buhl

to take apart

We will have to disassemble the room immediately following the competition.

discipline - DIS uh pluhn

training that develops self-control or character

The vice principal is in charge of discipline at many schools.

discord - DIS-kord

lack of agreement; conflict; inharmonious combination of tones

The sense of discord in the committee made us nervous.

distress - di-'stres

to cause sorrow or misery; pain, suffering

Arthritic pain causes distress in her stiff knee when she walks.

disturbance - dis TUR buhn(t)s

a tumult or commotion by which the public peace is upset

There was quite a disturbance outside my bedroom window last night.

dollar - DOL-uhr

a coin or piece of paper money in the value of 100 cents

The dollar bill has a picture of George Washington on it.

dormant - DOR ment

sleeping; quiet; still; inoperative; inactive

Some plants and animals are dormant during the cold weather.

dosage - dO-sij

the system to be followed in taking doses, as of medicine

He forgot to take his dosage of cough medicine.

drawl - drol

to speak in a slow, lengthened tone

Pardon my southern drawl.

dreadful - dred-ful

inspiring dread; terrible or awesome

The volcano eruption was dreadful.

dying - dy-ing

losing life

Following the heavy frost, the annual flowers started dying.

dynamite - DEYE nuh mite

a explosive

They had to dynamite the building in order to knock it down.

dysfunction - dis FUNGK shun

deterioration of the natural action of (anything)

The dysfunction of the criminal's family formed the crux of the defense.

eclipse - i-'klips

the partial or total obscuring of the sun when the moon comes between it and the earth; or of the moon when the earth's shadow is cast upon it

We studied the lunar eclipse in class.

ecstatic - ek STAT ik

overwhelming joy or delight

The team was ecstatic over their unexpected win.

effusion - e-fu-shun

a pouring fourth; a gushing or unrestrained utterance

An effusion of praise marked the speech.

embarrass - im BAIR uhs

to cause to feel self-conscious, ill at ease

The students did not want to embarrass themselves in front of their friends.

embroidery - im BROY duhr ee

a decoration made by needlework on cloth

The embroidery on this sampler is a nineteenth century design.

emollient - e-mol-i-ent

something that has a softening or soothing effect

An aggressive ad campaign touted the cream's emollient powers.

employ - im PLOY

to engage services or labor for pay

The new business is seeking to employ fifty qualified workers.

engrave - in-'grAv

to cut or etch into a metal plate or other surface

We will want to engrave the coach's name on the trophy.

enough - i-NUF

sufficient

Do you have enough clothes for your trip?

ensemble - ahn SAHM buhl

a group of musicians playing together

A string ensemble will play at the concert hall tonight.

entrepreneur - ahn truh pruh NUHR

a person who takes the risk of starting and running a business

The young entrepreneur started a roommate matching business.

environment - in VEYE ruhn muhnt

all the influences surrounding and affecting an organism

The National Parks preserve the natural environment.

equal - EE kwahl

of the same quantity or size

These two objects have equal value.

equivalent - quiv-a-lent

equal in quantity, value, force, meaning

Although their education had been equivalent, one twin did much better in mathematics than the other.

erroneous - e-'rO-nE-us

mistaken; wrong

The police report for the accident was erroneous.

error - AIR uhr

mistake

Be careful that you do not make an error in spelling this word.

ethnic - 'eth-nik

designating any or of any of the basic groups or divisions of mankind

His ethnic background was Italian.

euphemism - 'yü-fa-'mi-zum

use of a word considered less distasteful even though less direct
Instead of referring to the body as a corpse, they used the euphemism, remains'.

excellent - EK suh lent

superior in worth of value

They served an excellent dish of spaghetti and meatballs.

excuse - eks-kus

an explanation; that which is offered as a reason

What is your excuse for being late?

exhaustion - ig-'zos-chun

deprivation of strength or energy

The marathon runners' exhaustion was apparent as they entered the stadium.

existence - ig ZIS tun(t)s

the state or fact of being

They were debating the existence of life on Mars.

expertise - ek pur TEEZ

possessing outstanding skill

The soccer player showed expertise in controlling the ball.

extemporaneous - ik STEM puh ray nee uhs

speaking without notes

The highlight was an entertaining speaker who delivered an extemporaneous talk about spelling bees of the past.

extraordinary - ik STROR duh nair ee

exceeding the ordinary degree

The spelling champion demonstrated extraordinary composure under the intense pressure.

extravagance - ik strav e gens

the wasteful spending of money

The new diamond bracelet was an extravagance for the young waitress.

facetious - fa-'sE-shus

joking, especially at an inappropriate time

I did not mean to hurt you with my facetious remarks.

facsimile - fak SIM uh lee

an exact copy, especially one transmitted electronically

I am sending you a facsimile of this report.

Fahrenheit - FAIR uhn hite

a temperature scale

Normal body temperature is 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit.

faithful - FAYTH ful

having or showing a strong sense of duty or responsibility

My dog is a very faithful companion.

familiar - fa-'mil-yur

well acquainted

I am very familiar with the rigors of studying for a spelling competition.

famine - fa-men

any acute shortage

The people were suffering from the famine.

fancy - fan-si

gaudy; not plain

The dress was very fancy.

fashion - fa-shun

to make in a certain way; give a certain form to; shape; mold

The potter will fashion the clay to resemble a lion.

fasten - FAS uhn

to become fixed or joined

Let me help you fasten those buckles.

fastidious - fass-TIH-dee-uss

not easy to please; very critical or discriminating

With fastidious attention to detail, the musician practiced the piece again.

faucet - FAW-sit

a fixture for drawing a liquid from a pipe

A dripping faucet wastes a lot of water.

feather - FETH ur

the lightweight body covering of birds

Use the feather duster to clean these figurines.

fervent - 'fer-vent

having or showing great warmth of feeling

The children showed a fervent devotion to their pet.

fervor - FUR vuhr

intensity of feeling; ardent zeal

Upon seeing the Declaration of Independence, we experienced a surge of patriotic fervor.

fiction - FIK shun

anything made up or imagined, as a statement, story, etc.

The librarian directed us to the fiction section.

fictitious - fik-TISH-es

imaginary happening; not real; false; pretended

Some novelists use a fictitious name under which they write.

flexible - FLEK-suh-bul

capable of being bent, turned or twisted without breaking

It would be easier if you used flexible pipe for this part of the job.

fluid - flü-id

that which can flow; not solid

Water is an important fluid for survival.

foreign - FOR in

connected with another country

Their formal style of dress was very foreign to us.

forest - for-est

dense growth of trees

The family of bears lived in the forest.

forty - FOR tee

cardinal number between 39 and 41

These shoes cost forty dollars.

foulard - foo-lard

a thin, soft material of silk

Her dress was of flaming red foulard.

fountain - 'faunt-ten

a water spray; a spring

We all threw a coin in the fountain and made a wish.

fraud - FRAWD

deceit

Cellular phone fraud is costing millions to legitimate users.

fulminating - ful-mi-nat-ing

thundering forth; exploding

It was a fulminating rally for the political candidate.

furrier - fur-i-er

a dresser of or dealer in furs

The furrier appraised the mink coat at three thousand dollars.

gasconade - gas-kon-ayd

a boast or boasting; bravado

The braggart was insufferable with his ridiculous gasconade.

giggle - GIG uhl

to laugh with rapid, often high-pitched sounds

We all started to giggle when the teacher told a funny joke.

giraffe - juh RAF

large cud-chewing animal with a very long neck and legs

During our trip to the zoo we enjoyed watching the giraffe chew on the leaves.

glossy - glä-sE

having a smooth, shiny appearance or finish

The glossy cat was sleeping in the window.

gnarled - NARLD

distorted, cross-grained

We enjoyed playing under the old gnarled tree in the park.

gobble - GOB uhl

to eat quickly and greedily

The chickens usually gobble all the grain.

gorgeous - GOR-juss

very beautiful

You look gorgeous in that evening gown.

government - GUV-ern-munt

the established political administration

Washington D.C. is the seat of our federal government.

grammar - GRAM uhr

the use of language according to proper rules

Your essay will be graded on content, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

gratuitous - gruh-TOO-uh-tuss

given or received without charge or payment; free

I reject offers of so-called gratuitous merchandise, as some kind of later payment is often expected.

gregarious - grih-GAIR-ee-uss

tending to live associate or congregate with others of the same kind, sociable

Baboons are gregarious animals, seldom found in isolation.

guillotine - GHIH-luh-teen

the instrument of capital punishment in France which beheads the victim

As they marched the prisoner to the guillotine, the crowds begged for mercy.

gymnasium - jim NAY zee uhm

a building used for physical education activities

If the bond passes, we will get a new gymnasium at our school.

hachures - ha-shurz OR hash-urz

short lines used in drawing; shading to denote different surfaces

The hachures on the map told where the elevation was highest.

hammer - HAM uhr

a tool used for pounding nails

Please bring a hammer to the work party tomorrow.

harbor - här-ber

a place of refuge, safety, retreat

Ships lay in the broad sunny harbor at the foot of the street.

harmful - HARM fuhl

able to cause hurt or damage

The cold weather is harmful to these tropical plants.

harvest - här-vest	<p><i>time of year when matured fruit, grain, vegetables, etc., are reaped; season's yield; gathering of a crop</i></p> <p>We usually harvest our pumpkins and squash for Halloween.</p> <hr/>
hidden - HID n	<p><i>concealed; secret</i></p> <p>If I put these clothes under the bed, they will be hidden from view.</p> <hr/>
hieroglyphs - HEYE ruh glifs	<p><i>picture writing, especially ancient</i></p> <p>Egyptian tombs frequently contain hieroglyphs depicting animals.</p> <hr/>
hinge - HINJ	<p><i>a joint or device on which a door, gate, lid, etc., swings</i></p> <p>The hinge needed oiling.</p> <hr/>
homogenize - hO-'mä-ja-'nlz	<p><i>make more uniform by breaking down and blending</i></p> <p>Before they began to homogenize milk, our quarts left by the milkman used to freeze, and the cream would be pushed out of the bottle.</p> <hr/>
homonym - HOM-u-nim	<p><i>a word having the same pronunciation as another but a different meaning</i></p> <p>The teacher asked for a homonym for the word.</p> <hr/>
honest - ON ist	<p><i>frank and open</i></p> <p>The storeowner had an honest face.</p> <hr/>
humble - hum-bl	<p><i>low in condition, rank, or position; lowly; unpretentious</i></p> <p>The humble home was neat and tidy.</p> <hr/>
hypochondriac - heye puh KAHN dree ak	<p><i>a person who suffers from imaginary physical ailments</i></p> <p>Knowing the patient was a hypochondriac; the doctor prescribed a placebo.</p> <hr/>
immigrant - IM uh gruhnt	<p><i>person who comes into a country to become a permanent resident</i></p> <p>Every European immigrant was required to pass through Ellis Island.</p>

impairment - im-pâr'-MENT

to make worse, less, weaker

Dense fog is an impairment to safe driving.

imperceptible - im-per-sep-ti'bl

not plain or distinct to the eye of mind; not easily seen

The scar on her face had healed so well it was almost imperceptible.

imperialism - im PIR-ee-e-liz-em

the policy and practice of seeking to dominate the economic or political affairs of underdeveloped areas or weaker countries

A policy of imperialism hinders the growth of underdeveloped countries.

implement - IM pluh muhnt

to carry out; put into effect

This will require your signature to implement all the provisions of the contract.

impress - im-'pres

to leave pressure on so as to leave a mark

We will impress the leaf on the paper to make a design.

inaugurate - in AW g(y)uh rate

to introduce into office with ceremonies

Every four years we inaugurate our President.

indebted - in DET uhd

owing something

I will forever be indebted to you for your kindness.

inkling - INGK ling

a vague notion or idea

I have an inkling that I will get what I want for my birthday.

inspire - in-SPY-er

to have an animating effect upon; influence or impel

The concert did inspire him to be a musician.

instant - in-stant

a moment of time

The lightning flashed and in the next instant, there was thunder.

insurance - in SHUR uhn(t)s

a system of financial protection

I will have to pay my own auto insurance after I get my driver's license.

intelligence - in-'te-la-jun(t)s

ability to exercise the higher mental functions

The debate centered on whether intelligence was accurately measured by IQ tests.

intermittent - in tur MIT uhnt

starting, stopping and starting again

The weather forecast is for intermittent showers.

interrupt - in tuh RUPT

to break the continuity or course of

Do not interrupt me while I am talking.

intersection - int ur SEK shun

the place or point where two or more things cross

The office is at the intersection of Main and Broadway.

intravenous - in truh VEE nuhs

within or into a vein

The patient was receiving fluids through an intravenous tube.

irresistible - ir i ZIS tuh buhl

impossible to resist or oppose

The food sitting out on the table was an irresistible temptation for the dog.

jostle - JOS uhl

to bump or push, as in a crowd

I hope I do not jostle too many passengers when I take these bags on the plane.

journal - JUR nuhl

a brief account of daily events

We kept a journal of our trip.

judicial - jooh DISH uhl

of or relating to the courts or judges

The defendant was awaiting a judicial decision regarding the acceptability of the evidence.

kaleidoscope - kuh LEYED uh skope

a changing pattern or scene

The sun through the fall trees presented a kaleidoscope of color.

kayak - KI-'ak

an Eskimo canoe, or one similar

The ocean was too rough to take the kayak out today.

kettle - 'ke-tul

a metal container for boiling or cooking things

I will boil some water in the kettle for your tea.

khaki - KAK-ee

a light yellowish brown

The soldiers wore their khaki uniforms during the summer.

kindling - kin(d)-li(ng)

bits of dry wood or other easily-lighted materials for starting a fire

The campers gathered kindling for the fire.

knowledge - NAHL ij

understanding or skill gained by experience or learning

Visiting National Parks has increased our knowledge about geologic formations.

label - LAY buhl

identifying card or paper

We could no longer read the label on the jar.

laboratory - LAB ruh tor ee

a building or room fitted up for conducting scientific experiments

The scientist spent long hours in the laboratory perfecting the vaccine.

lackadaisical - 'la-ka-'dA-zi-kul

lacking life, spirit, or zest

The lackadaisical students are not likely to get good grades.

ladle - LAYD I

to dip out with

The cook will ladle the soup for each customer.

lament - le-MENT

an outward expression of sorrow

A long lament was heard in the garden.

language - LANG gwij

spoken communication

Russian is a difficult language for most foreigners to master.

lantern - lan-tern

transparent case for holding a light and protecting it from wind and weather

The light from the lantern helped us find our way along the rocky path.

league - LEEG

an association of persons united for common interests

There is talk of forming a new baseball league.

lecture - LEK (t)chur

an informative talk given for the purpose of teaching

Today's history lecture was very interesting.

legato - le-ga-to

in music, smooth and connected with no break

The instructor cautioned the piece should be played legato and not staccato.

leisure - LEE-zher

freedom from work or duties

Many retirees find it difficult having so much leisure time.

lemon - lem-un

a small yellow fruit with a bitter taste

The old lady always put lemon in her tea.

leopard - LEP uhrd

a large strong cat of southern Asia and Africa; panther

The leopard grabbed its prey with its strong paws.

lettuce - LET is

any of a genus of plants grown for its edible green leaves

The meal will begin with a salad of lettuce and other vegetables.

license - LEYE suhn(t)s

formal or legal permission to do something specified

In California, you are eligible to apply for a driver's license when you are sixteen.

linen - lin-en

thread, yarns or cloth made from flax

The tablecloth was made of fine linen.

linguistics - ling-gwis-tiks

science of language; study of the structure of languages

Linguistics is usually divided into descriptive, historical, comparative and geographical.

listless - list-less

having no interest in what is going on about one, as a result of illness, weariness, dejection, etc.;

The listless dog lay on the floor by the fire.

literature - LIT ur uh chur

writings in prose or verse having permanent value

My collection of children's literature includes many of the classics.

litter - 'li-ter

scattered rubbish; disorder or untidiness

The litter of paper on the sidewalk was deplorable.

lonely - LOHN lee

alone; solitary

I was very lonely when I first moved to town.

loquacious - loh KWAY shus

given to excess talking

The teacher became very frustrated with the loquacious nature of the students in the class.

machinery - mu-shE-nu-rE

the working parts of a machine or instrument

The workers had the day off because the machinery broke down at the plant.

magnet - MAG nit	<i>a piece of iron or steel that attracts metal</i> We use a colorful magnet to hold notes on our refrigerator.
maintenance - MAYN tuh nun(t)s	<i>the act of keeping in an existing state</i> Proper maintenance of your car will make it last longer.
maneuver - muh NOOH vuhr	<i>a clever often evasive move or action</i> We had to maneuver our way through the downtown traffic.
margarine - MARJ uh ruhn	<i>food product made from usually vegetable oils and skim milk</i> Would you like margarine or butter for your toast?
marmalade - MAR muh lade	<i>a clear jelly containing pieces of fruit and fruit rind</i> Orange marmalade tastes delicious on English muffins.
marriage - MAIR ij	<i>the state of matrimony; wedlock</i> The couple celebrated 50 years of marriage.
masquerade - mas kuh RADE	<i>a party at which people wear masks and costumes</i> What are you going to wear for the masquerade ball?
massive - MAS-iv	<i>large or imposing or impressive; of considerable magnitude</i> The new bank was massive.
mathematician - math (uh)muh TISH uhn	<i>a specialist in the science of numbers</i> A mathematician at the university derived this new number theory.
mausoleum - mah suh LEE uhm	<i>a large stately tomb</i> The mausoleum is on the right as you go into the cemetery.
meaning - meen-ing	<i>sense; that which is intended</i> It was difficult to understand the meaning of the sentence.

medley - med LEE

a musical piece made up of tunes or passages from various works

The chorus performed a medley of show tunes.

memorabilia - mem uh ruh BIL ee uh

things worth remembering

Elvis Presley memorabilia is valuable to many collectors.

mental - MEN tuhl

of or for the mind or intellect

I have a mental picture of what I want it to look like.

metamorphosis - meh-tuh-MOR-fuh-siss

change of form, shape, structure, or substance

As part of her science class, Karen was able to witness the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly.

metaphor - MET uh for

a literary likeness showing implied comparison

An example of a metaphor is “the ship plows the sea.”

method - METH uhd

a way of doing anything

What method did you use to arrive at this answer?

middle - MID I

in between

When we drive to my grandparent’s house my sister and I take turns sitting in the middle.

mileage - ml-lij

aggregate distance in miles or total number of miles traveled.

The salesman bought a new car each year because he had such high mileage on his current one.

mindful - MIND ful

having in mind; aware heedful, or careful

The children were mindful of the danger of playing in the street.

miniature - MIN ee uh chur

something much smaller than the usual size

That is an impressive collection of miniature cars.

miscellaneous - mis uh LAY nee uhs

consisting of many things of different sorts

Most people have a junk drawer for all the miscellaneous things they cannot easily categorize.

mischievous - MIS chuh vuhs

conduct that is often playful but causes harm or annoyance

My mischievous puppy chewed the corner of my social studies book.

misspell - mis SPEL

to spell incorrectly

During the spelling competition, we were not allowed to misspell a single word.

moccasin - MAHK uh suhn

soft leather shoes with the sole and sides of one piece

The podiatrist told me to wear a moccasin to protect my foot after the surgery.

mocha - MOH kuh

a mixture of coffee and chocolate

Mocha is the flavor of the month at the ice cream parlor.

mortgage - MOR gij

a transfer of rights to a piece of property

Generally, the mortgage is a homeowner's major expense.

mystique - mis TEEK

a set of beliefs and attitudes developing around an object

Non-runners cannot appreciate the true mystique of jogging.

napkin - nap-kin

a small cloth used to wipe the mouth and hands when dining

Line the basket with a linen napkin.

narcissistic - nar sis SIS tik

possessed by self-love

The narcissistic attitudes of the "Me Generation" are appalling.

narrate - nar-rate

to tell in writing or speech

The teacher began to narrate the story.

nauseous - NAW shus

affected with tending to cause stomach distress

I felt nauseous after eating too much ice cream.

neglect - nih-GLEKT

to give little attention or respect to

We must not neglect our homework.

neighborhood - NAY buhr hood

the region near where one resides

Our neighborhood holds a Block Party every Labor Day.

ninetieth - NINT ee uhth

the ordinal number 90th

Your spelling scores are above the ninetieth percentile.

ninth - NIN(t)th

the ordinal number 9th

In many school districts, ninth grade is the first year of high school.

nuisance - NYOO suhnts

that which annoys, vexes or harms

Sometimes it can be a real nuisance to have to take care of younger siblings.

obsequious - eb-see-kwee-es

meanly or servilely attentive; overly compliant

General Smith's obsequious staff is good for nothing but fawning and groveling on command.

obsolescent - ahb suh LES uhnt

going out of use; becoming outmoded

Phonograph records are becoming obsolescent.

occasion - a-kA-zhan

a favorable opportunity or circumstance

A sixteenth birthday is an appropriate occasion for a party.

occur - uh KUR

to take place; happen

The celebration will occur next week.

odor - OH dur

a smell

The odor of sulfur filled the lab.

offense - OFF-ense

the condition of being offended, esp. of feeling hurt, resentful, or angry

His friend took offense from the joke.

office - AW fis

a place of business

I usually shop here for office supplies.

ophthalmologist - äp-thel-mäl-e-gest

a physician specializing in diseases of the eye

The ophthalmologist had to dilate the patient's eyes.

opponent - a-pO-nent

person against one; adversary

The candidate's opponent waged a clean campaign.

opportunity - ahp uhr TOOH nuh tee

a fit or convenient time; favorable occasion

The spelling bee will be an opportunity for you to practice your skills and make new friends.

orchestra - OR ki struh

a group of musicians who perform together

Our school orchestra won top honors at the music festival.

orchid - OR kid

the flower of a tropical plant with three petals, the lowest of which is enlarged

When we stepped off the plane in Hawaii, we were each given an orchid lei.

orthodontist - or thuh DAHN tist

a doctor who corrects the position of the teeth

The orthodontist said I would need to wear braces for two years.

orthodox - OR thuh dahks

traditional; conservative in belief

My teacher encourages both orthodox and novel approaches to learning.

ostrich - äs-trich OR OS-trij

a large, swift-running bird of Africa and the Near East

The white ostrich feather adorned her new hat.

outrageous - out RAY juhs

extremely offensive, insulting or shameful

The parents were dismayed by their child's outrageous behavior.

overwhelming - oh vuhr HWEL ming

crushed by reason of force, weight or numbers

The prosecution presented overwhelming evidence against the accused.

package - PAK ij

a small wrapped bundle

I hope there will be a package in the mail for me today.

pamphlet - PAM(P) flit

a short publication with no cover

Please send me the pamphlet you advertised about starting a rock collection.

panic - PAN ik

sudden, unreasonable fear

They did not panic when the fire broke out.

pannikin - pan-i-kin

a small pan or cup

He drank heartily from the pannikin.

pantomime - PAN-tuh-myme

a performance in which a story is told using expressive body or facial movements

In the game of Charades, players pantomime the words or phrases.

parachute - PAIR uh shoot

a device used for making a safe descent from an airplane

The fighter pilot feared that the parachute might not deploy properly.

parent - pair-ent

a mother or father

His parent signed the permission slip.

parliamentary - par luh MEN tree

being in accordance with the rules

When conducting a meeting it is helpful to be familiar with parliamentary procedure.

parochial - puh ROH kee uhl

narrow; provincial

That newscast presented a very parochial view of the problem.

partner - PART nuhr

a person who takes part in some activity in common with another

My partner keeps the books, and I do the purchasing.

pasteurize - PAS chuh rize

partial sterilization of a fluid by exposure to heat

The dairy will pasteurize milk before bottling.

patriarch - PAY tree ark

the father and ruler of a family

The family patriarch always sits at the head of the table.

pattern - PAT uhrn

a regular, mainly unvarying way of acting or doing

I always follow the same pattern when getting ready for school.

peasant - PEZ uhnt

one of a group of lower class workers

Because they were of the peasant class, they could not attend school.

peninsula - pa-'nin(t)-s(u-)la

a long projection of land into water

We drove around the peninsula until we found the best beach.

penitentiary - pen uh TEN shur ee

a prison

The old penitentiary held many clues to the hard life of a convict.

pennant - pen-ant

a long, tapering flag

Which team do you think will win the pennant this year?

people - PEE puhl

human beings

A large group of people gathered to watch the festivities.

perceptible - pur-SEP-tuh-bul

capable of being noticed or observed

The difference between the two brands of hot dogs is hardly perceptible.

perennial - puh REN ee uhl

lasting or active throughout the whole year

To cut down on my yard work I planted mostly perennial shrubs.

perfect - PUR fikt

complete in all respects; flawless

The blazing sunset made a perfect ending to the day.

permeable - PER-mee-uh-bul

having pores or openings that permit liquids or gases to pass through

The skin is a semi-permeable membrane.

perpetuity - pe(r) pe tüed ee

the state or quality of being perpetual

Perpetuity is implied in the fundamental law of all national governments.

perseverance - per se vir ens

continued or steadfast effort in spite of difficulties

After many years of perseverance the Wright Brothers finally made their airplane fly.

persistent - pur SIS tuht

continuing, existing or acting for longer than the usual time

This has been persistent cold spell.

persuade - pur SWADE

to convince

I hope my arguments will persuade you to study harder.

perturb - per-TERB

to cause to be alarmed, agitated, or upset; disturb or trouble greatly

The loudspeaker may perturb the musician in the adjoining rooms.

pestle - pe-sel OR pes-tel

a club-shaped grinding tool

Many indigenous people used a pestle to grind food in a mortar.

phenomenal - fi NAHM un uhl

extraordinary, remarkable

It was phenomenal how fast the flu virus spread.

physique - fi ZEEK

the build of a person's body

The body builder's physique mainly is due to good conditioning.

picturesque - pik-chuh-RESK

resembling or suitable for a painted picture

The picturesque valley draws many visitors.

pigeon - PIJ uhn

any of numerous birds with a stout body and smooth plumage

The fattest pigeon in the park grabbed the most food.

pigment - pig-ment

coloring matter, usually insoluble powder, mixed with oil or water, etc.

Pigment in some plants is increased when they grow in full sun.

plagiarize - PLAY juh rise

to steal and pass off as one's own the works of another

Students who plagiarize articles generally get caught.

plague - PLAYG

a disastrous evil, especially a large number of destructive pests

A plague of locusts destroyed this year's crops.

plaid - PLAD

a pattern of unevenly spaced repeated stripes crossing at right angles

That is a very nice looking plaid skirt.

plaintive - PLAYN-tiv

causing pity

The lost kitten gave a plaintive cry.

platinum - PLAT uh nuhm

a heavy precious metallic element

This antique ring has a platinum band inlaid with diamonds.

poinsettia - poin-'se-tE-a

usually indoor plant with showy red leaves in winter

Our neighbor gave us a poinsettia for the holidays.

poltergeist - POHL tur geyest

a spirit supposed to manifest itself by noises, knocking, etc.

In the play, a poltergeist appears during the seance.

poncho - PAHN choh

a (waterproof) cloak with a slit or hole in the middle for the head

Do not forget to take your poncho in case it rains.

portion - POR shun

share; part of

They were willing to share a portion of the proceeds from the dance.

possibility - päS-e-BIL-et-ee

quality or condition of being done, known or acquired

There is a possibility that our next trip will be to Disneyland.

posture - POS chur

the position or carriage of the body; bearing

Good posture is important for good health.

poultry - POHL tree

domestic fowls

The preschoolers enjoyed their visit to the poultry farm.

powder - POW duhr

any dry substance in the form of very fine, dust like particles

The volcanic ash covered the car with a very fine powder.

prairie - PRAIR ee

a large area of level or rolling grassland

Life on the prairie was often difficult for the early settlers.

precocious - pri KOH shuhs

exhibiting mature qualities or abilities

That preschooler can already read and is precocious in other ways as well.

preliminary - pri LIM uh nair ee

introductory to the main discourse

You will have an opportunity to ask questions during the preliminary round of the competition.

prepare - pri PAIR

to make ready, usually for a specific purpose

How are you going to prepare for the spelling competition?

prescribe - pri SKRIBE

to order or direct the use of something as a remedy

The doctor will probably prescribe a painkiller for your recurring headaches.

prestigious - preh-STIH-juss

having or imparting prestige or distinction

The prestigious writer had a great following.

pretend - pri-'tend

make believe

Sometimes I pretend that I am a pilot.

prior - PREYE uhr

preceding in time; earlier

The ad said that prior experience was necessary.

prism - PRIZ uhm

a transparent solid body which disperses light into a spectrum

When I was cleaning this prism from the chandelier, it broke.

proceed - pruh SEED

to go on or forward, especially after an interruption

We will now proceed with the spelling competition.

procession - pro-'se-sh'n

orderly parade moving forward; in an orderly formal way

The elephants moved in procession—trunk to tail.

proliferation - pru-lif-urA-shun

growing by multiplying new parts

The proliferation of the buds on the rosebud was truly amazing.

prying - prl-ing

improperly curious or inquisitive

Someone was prying into her personal affairs.

psychologist - seye KAHL uh juhst

a professional who studies or treats human behavior and intelligence

The school psychologist will evaluate the students for placement in the special program.

pyramid - PEER uh mid

a polyhedron having a polygon for its base and triangular shaped faces

What is that pyramid shaped building on San Francisco's skyline?

quadratic - kwah DRAT ik

an algebraic term involving the square and no higher power of an unknown quantity

Solve this quadratic equation for the value of x.

quarrel - kwor-el

argument, dispute

The bitter quarrel ended their friendship.

questionnaire - kwes chuh NAIR

a form comprising a series of questions, especially for a survey

Please complete this short questionnaire before leaving.

quietly - kwi-et-li

still; without noise

We drove quietly past the hospital.

raccoon - ra KOOHN

a small carnivore of North America, usually nocturnal

A raccoon raided our campsite while we were asleep.

ransom - RAN suhm

consideration paid for the release of a captured person

The kidnapper demanded \$500,000 in ransom for their child.

rapscallion - rap scal-yun

a rascal; a ne'er do-well

I was advised to stay away from the rapscallion.

rasorial - ra-so-ri-al

scratching the ground in search of food as fowl

Turkeys and pheasants are rasorial birds.

raspberry - RAZ ber ee

small round fleshy red or black berry

These raspberry preserves won a blue ribbon at the county fair.

receive - ri SEEV

to accept; to get or permit to enter

Did you receive my Christmas card?

recess - REE ses

to halt temporarily

The court will recess until this afternoon.

recommend - REK uh mend

to suggest favorably

I recommend this book to you.

reconciliation - rek uhn sil EE ay shun

the act of restoring friendly relations

The treaty provided for reconciliation between the two countries.

reconnaissance - ri KAHN uh suhn(t)s

preliminary survey of an area to gain information

Many missions of reconnaissance were flown over the enemy's territory.

recruit - rih-KROOT

to secure the services of

Did they recruit you for the competitive team?

recur - ri KUR

to happen or occur again

An eclipse of the sun will not recur for another ten years.

redoubt - re-dout

a small enclosed fort often temporary, fortifying hills and passes

The soldiers took up their positions in the unassailable redoubt.

refuge - re-fyüj OR e-fyüzh

a place of safety; shelter; safe retreat

The deer sought a refuge from the hunters.

rehearsal - ri HUR suhl

a practice session preparatory to a public performance

This is the final rehearsal before tomorrow's concert.

rejuvenate - re jüve NATE

to make seem fresh or new again

A long vacation will rejuvenate him.

remembrance - ri MEM bruhn(t)s

memory, the act of remembering

The donation was made in remembrance of the director who passed away recently.

reminisce - rem uh NIS

to think or talk about things from the past

At school I can reminisce about the good time I had at the competition.

remittent - re-mit-ent

temporarily stopping or abating

The doctor said it was a remittent fever and would return.

remnant - REM-nant

what is left over; remainder; residue

The small piece of cloth left from the bolt will sell as a remnant.

rendezvous - RAHN day vooh

a planned meeting; a place for a planned meeting

We will rendezvous at the Park and Ride, then go on together to the party.

repartee - reh-per-TEE

a clever or witty retort; skill in making clever retorts; such retorts collectively

The two humorists engaged in a clever repartee.

reprehensible - rep-re-hen-si-b'l

deserving to be reprehended

Assassination is a reprehensible crime.

reserve - rE-sûrv

to hold; or hold over to a later time

We will reserve a place for you at the table.

reservoir - REZ uhr vwar

a place where water is stored in quantity

During the drought, the reservoir was dangerously low.

residential - rez e den shel

of or having to do with residence

The families who lived in that residential area did not want the prison built near them.

restaurant - 'res-t(&-)r&nt, -t&-"rânt

a public eating place

Before the prom, we are going to a nice restaurant for dinner.

retain - ri TANE (not ree-tain)

to stay constant

I hope this T-shirt will retain its color after washing.

retrieve - ri TREEV

to get back; regain

I hope I can retrieve the lost data.

revenge - ri-venj

to inflict damage, injury, or punishment in return for an injury, insult, etc.

The leaders plotted revenge for the bombing.

rheostat - re-o-stat

an electrical resister for regulating current

The stage lights were dimmed by means of a rheostat.

rheumatism - ROOH muh tiz uhm

any of various conditions characterized by inflammation or pain in muscles or joints

A person's rheumatism is generally worse in cold weather.

robber - rob-er

one who steals or robs

The robber was sent to prison.

romaine - ROH mane

a variety of lettuce with a cylindrical head of long, loose leaves

This Caesar salad recipe calls for romaine lettuce.

routine - rooh TEEN

a regular or customary course of procedure

My morning routine includes feeding the cat.

ruin - ROO in

destroy

Be careful that you do not ruin your good shoes by wearing them in the rain.

sabotage - SAB uh tahzh

deliberate damage of equipment, usually by disgruntled employees

Security was strengthened amidst concerns that striking workers might sabotage the factory.

safety - SAFE tee

freedom from danger; security

Today's presentation was on the safety issues we should employ in case of a disaster.

salmon - SAM uhn

any of various large fish that live in oceans and swim up streams to lay eggs

The fish ladder at the dam allows the salmon to reach their spawning grounds.

sandal - SAN duhl

a shoe consisting of a sole strapped to the foot

I had to take my sandal to the shoe repair shop to have the strap fixed.

satellite - SAT-uh-lite

a moon or man-made vehicle which orbits a celestial body

The weather satellite aided us in tracking the hurricane.

sauterne - so-turn

a kind of sweet white wine from France

He enjoyed a glass of sauterne with his dinner each evening.

scaffold - SKA-fOld

temporary wood or metal framework to support workmen and/or material

They worked from the scaffold easily.

scary - SKAIR ee

causing alarm; frightening

I did not like that scary movie.

schedule - SKEJ ooht

a detailed and timed plan for any procedure

The schedule calls for us to take a break at 10:45.

scheme - SKEEM

a systemic or organized design

That is a nice color scheme you have picked out.

scissors - SIZ urz

a cutting implement with handles and a pair of blades

Using sewing scissors or cutting paper makes them dull.

secede - si-SEED

to withdraw from an organization

South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union.

secret - SEE krit

kept from public knowledge

If I tell you this, will you promise to keep it a secret?

secretary - SEK ruh tair ee

a person who handles correspondence and office tasks

My secretary will send you a letter tomorrow.

seismologist - seyez MAHL uh juhst

a scientist who studies earthquakes

The seismologist confirmed that the earthquake was centered twenty miles offshore.

sequel - SEE kwuhl

an event that follows or comes afterward

The sequel to the show will be aired next week.

shady - SHAY dee

shielded from the sun

The bench under the trees was shady and cool.

shepherd - SHEP urd

a person who tends a flock of sheep

The shepherd led the flock along the path.

sheriff - SHAIR if

a county law enforcement officer

The sheriff responded to a disturbance outside the city limits.

shield - SHEELD

something that protects or defends

The guide recommended that we all wear hats to shield ourselves from the sun.

shoulder - SHOHL dur

the part of the body where the arm joins the body

The running back suffered a shoulder injury and will be out for the season.

shriek - SHREEK

to utter a loud shrill sound, or the sound itself

Your child will shriek with delight upon receiving this special gift.

shuttle - SHUT I

a vehicle that goes back and forth between scheduled stops

You can take the airport shuttle to the hotel.

signal - SIG nuhl

a sign or event fixed or understood as the occasion for prearranged combined action

Traffic was backed up because the signal was broken.

significance - sig-'ni-fi-ken(t)s

the real or implied meaning

What is the significance of putting a heart on the letter to your sweetheart?

silhouette - sill-uh-WET

an outline of an object, filled in with a solid color

When I walked by, I could see my neighbor's silhouette on the window shade.

skirmish - SKIR-mish

a brief encounter between small groups, usually an incident of a battle

The skirmish was quickly forgotten after the peace treaty was signed.

snorkel - snor-k'l

to move or swim under water using a snorkel

We plan to snorkel when we are in Hawaii.

software - SAWFT wair

programs for directing the operation of a computer

This new software helps you trace your family tree.

solitaire - SAHL uh tair

a card game played by one person alone

I played solitaire while waiting for my plane connection.

sortie - sor-tee

one mission or attack by a single plane

The pilot returned unharmed from a dangerous sortie.

sourdough - SOU(uh)R doh

a leaven of dough in which fermentation is active

San Francisco is famous for sourdough french bread.

souvenir - SOOH vuh nir

memento

What did you bring home as a souvenir of your travels?

special - spesh-uhl

out of the ordinary; for a particular purpose or occasion

The children put on their finest clothes for the special occasion.

spectacular - SPEK tak yuh luhr

characterized by grand scenic display

The fireworks display was the most spectacular part of the Independence Day celebration.

spectrum - spek-trem

a continuous range or entire extent

The newspaper reported a wide spectrum of opinions.

spinach - SPIN ich

a potherb widely grown for its edible leaves

I will have the spinach salad.

spontaneity - spahnt uh NAY uht ee

state of acting freely and naturally

The mental health experts advise us to keep an air of spontaneity in our lives.

squabble - SKWAH-bul

to quarrel noisily and to no purpose

Children squabble when they are tired.

statistician - stat is TISH uhn

one engaged in compiling and analyzing numerical data

The team statistician lets us know our batting averages before every game.

stomach - STUHM uhk

pouch where food is digested after swallowing

My stomach always aches when I run after eating.

stubborn - stub-ern

person who refuses to comply; resisting unreasonably; obstinate

Donkeys are said to be stubborn like some people I know.

submit - suhb MIT

to refer to others for decisions

We will submit our plan to the committee.

substantial - sub STAN shuhl

important, essential

There is a substantial difference between the two candidates.

superintendent - super-in-ten-dent

person in charge; supervisor, custodian

The superintendent was found to be honest and trustworthy.

supple - SUP uhl

capable of being bent or folded without creases or breaks; pliant

These boots are made out of very supple leather.

surgeon - SUR juhn

a doctor who specializes in performing operations

The surgeon made a skillful incision.

surround - suh ROUND

to enclose on all sides; encircle

When playing the game, the children would first surround themselves with all the toy cars.

surveillance - sur VAY luhn(t)s

close watch

The police kept a constant surveillance at the suspect's house.

symmetrical - si MET ri kuhl

having balanced proportions

It would look better if the pictures on either side were more symmetrical.

synonym - SIN uh nim

one of two or more words of the same language that have the same meaning

It is helpful to use a thesaurus when you want to find a synonym for a word.

technology - tek-NAH-luh-jee

applied science

The rate of technology seems to increase every day.

temperament - 'tem-p(u-)ru-munt

frame of mind; internal constitution

The composer was a man of melancholy temperament.

tenacious - te-NAE-shes

persistent, stubborn

He had tenacious courage as he faced the endless pile of papers on his desk.

terrace - ter-és

a small, usually roofed balcony, as outside an apartment

Flowerpots lined the terrace outside the apartment.

terrific - tuh RIF ik

extraordinary; astounding

We attended the most terrific party last night.

therapeutic - ther-e-pyüt-ik

servicing to cure or heal; curative

The therapeutic treatment hastened his recovery.

thermometer - thuhr MAHM uh tuhr

an instrument for measuring temperatures

A thermometer placed in the sun will not give an accurate reading.

thesaurus - thi SOR uhs

a dictionary of synonyms

This word processing program features an excellent thesaurus, making it easy for the user to find appropriate synonyms.

tortoise - TOR tuhs

a land turtle

In one of Aesop's fables, the tortoise wins a race against the hare.

tournament - TUR nuh muhnt

a series of contests

Our team won first place in the soccer tournament.

traffic - TRAF ik

the movement or number of automobiles along a street

There is a lot more traffic on the freeway now.

translucent - tranz LOOH suhnt

capable of allowing some light to show through, but not transparent

We purchased a new translucent window for our bathroom.

treasurer - TRAYZH uh ruhr

a person entrusted with handling the funds of an organization

Please turn in all magazine sales money to the treasurer today.

tribute - tri-byüt

something given, done, or said, as a gift, testimonial, to show gratitude

Their success was a tribute to his leadership.

tyranny - TIR uh nee

a government in which absolute power is vested in a single ruler

The people rebelled against the tyranny of their oppressive ruler.

ubiquitous - yoo-BIH-kwuh-tuss

present or seeming to be everywhere at the same time; omnipresent

I knew it was in my mind, but it seemed that everywhere I looked I saw his ubiquitous face.

unanimous - yooh NAN uh muhs

complete agreement

The boxer won a unanimous decision over his opponent.

unconstitutional - un kan ste too shen l

not in agreement with or permitted by a constitution, specifically the U.S. Constitution

It is unconstitutional to deprive me of my rights, insisted the criminal, as they dragged him away.

unprecedented - un-pre-s'-den-t'd

unheard-of; novel

The president took unprecedented steps toward peace.

unruly - un-rool-i

not submissive to rule or restraint

The natives are unruly tonight.

upholstery - up HOHL stuhr ee

materials (as fabric, padding, and springs) used to make a soft covering especially for a seat

We chose this upholstery for our new sofa.

useful - YOOS fuhl

that can be used to advantage; helpful

The fork is a useful utensil.

utensil - yooh TEN(t) suhl

an instrument or container used in a household

A ladle is the proper utensil to use for serving soup.

vacant - VAY kuhnt

having no occupant

They just started building on the vacant lot next door.

vaccine - vak-seen

a substance injected into the body to prevent disease by causing immunity

The polio vaccine was a tremendous advance in medicine.

valet - val AY

an employee who cares for the clothing of hotel patrons

If you leave your suit on the chair, the valet will see to it that it is pressed.

vehicle - VEE-uh-kul

something used to transport persons or goods

We will need a vehicle that holds six people.

vengeance - ven-jans

revenge

The family sought vengeance for the loss.

verbatim - vur-BATE-ihm

in the same words: word for word

Each student in Russell's class was assigned to memorize a poem and then recite it verbatim to the class.

vestige - VES tij

a visible sign or trace left by something vanished or lost

Only a vestige of the city's previous grandeur remained after the bombing.

vignette - vin YET

a brief, appealing scene, as in a movie

The short vignette at the beginning was the key to the whole story.

villain - VIH-lin

an evil person; scoundrel

In a melodrama, the audience boos whenever the villain appears.

visionary - 'vi-zha-"ner-E

having or marked by foresight and imagination

The visionary described a utopia that could never exist.

vociferous - voe SIF e res

characterized by clamor or vehement outcry

The vociferous protest of Liberals could not stop the passage of Proposition 13.

volume - VOL yoom

the quantity, strength, or loudness of sound

The volume of the music was deafening.

vulpine - VUL-pyne

of or like a fox; cunning; crafty

The racketeer had a vulpine scheme but it backfired.

warmth - WORMTH

state of giving off moderate degree of heat

We could feel the warmth of the sun on our faces.

wharf - HWORF

a structure built on the shore to enable ships to receive and discharge cargo and passengers

That restaurant on the wharf serves delicious seafood entrees.

whistle - HWIS uhl

a device or manner by which a shrill sound is produced

The sound of a steam train whistle is music to a railroad buff's ears.

width - WIDTH

distance from side to side; breadth

We have to measure the width of the shelf to make sure it will fit the space.

wrist - rist

the joint of the arm on which the hand turns

Fred sprained his wrist and could not play in the game.

xenophobia - zeh-nuh-FOH-bee-uh

fear or hatred of foreigners

Gene wished very much that he could travel more, but because of his xenophobia he didn't dare go to other countries.

xylophone - 'zI-la-"fOn

a musical instrument sounded by striking the series of bars with two wooden hammers

A toy xylophone makes a wonderful gift for a child.

yacht - YAHT

any of various small ships used especially for pleasure

The annual yacht races will be held on the Bay tomorrow.

yield - YEELD

to give up possession of on claim or demand

Be certain to yield to oncoming traffic.

zealous - ZEL uhs

very eager; very enthusiastic

The politician's zealous supporters campaigned vigorously.

zenith - ZEE-nuth

the point in the celestial sphere that is exactly overhead

When the sun is at its zenith, it shines directly through this hole.

zucchini - zooh KEE nee

a summer squash, dark green in color

Stuffed zucchini is one of my favorite dishes.