



acolyte (n.)

***a person who assists in some religious services by carrying out minor duties; one who attends or assists; a follower**

***The movie director's acolytes hung on his every word.**

***syn.: attendant; retainer; disciple; minion**



coalesce (v.)

***to grow together; to unite to form a whole**

***Dissatisfied members of both parties coalesced behind the third-party candidate.**

***syn.: fuse; meld; converge; amalgamate**



covert (adj.)

***not openly acknowledged; secret**

***The intelligence operation was supposed to be covert, but sophisticated technology revealed it.**

***syn.: clandestine; surreptitious; furtive**



declaim (v.)

***to recite something in the style of a public speech; to speak in a loud, theatrical manner**

***The actress declaimed her lines with passion**

***syn.: orate; decry**



delineate (v.)

*** 1. to describe vividly and in detail**

***The report clearly delineates the steps that must be taken.**

***syn.: depict; portray**

*** 2. to draw an outline of; to represent by drawing**

***In her studio, the architect delineated her plan for the new wing of the building.**

***syn.: trace**



demagogue (n.)

***a leader who seeks power by appealing to people's emotions and prejudices and by making false claims and promises**

***During the 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy was a demagogue who played on people's fear of communism.**

***syn.: agitator; rabble-rouser**



encomium (n.)

***an expression of warm and enthusiastic praise; a tribute**

***At a dinner in his honor, the philanthropist received encomiums (encomia) for his generous financial gift to the cancer center.**

***syn.: accolade; tribute; homage**



obdurate (adj.)

***1. resistant to persuasion; inflexible; stubborn**

***Despite our pleading, Maisie remained obdurate in her determination to hike the hazardous trail.**

***syn.: unyielding; intractable; adamant**

***2. persistent in wrongdoing**

***The judge reasoned that the obdurate high school student would benefit more from focused education and community service than from prolonged incarceration.**

***syn.: intransigent**



prescience (n.)

***foresight; knowledge beforehand of events**

***The ancient Greeks consulted oracles because they believed them to have the power of prescience.**

***syn.: clairvoyance**



protagonist (n.)

*** 1. the chief character in a drama or story**

***The protagonist in Shakespearean tragedy is usually a person destroyed by a character flaw such as jealousy or excessive ambition.**

***syn.: principal**

*** 2. An advocate or champion of a particular cause or idea**

***She was a leading protagonist in the civil rights movement.**

***syn.: adherent; proponent; advocate**



sedulous (adj.)

***completed with careful perseverance; diligent**

***Through their sedulous efforts, workers in Project HOPE delivered medicine and supplies to doctors and patients in the disaster zone.**

***syn.: diligent; meticulous; assiduous**



trenchant (adj.)

***expressed with vigor and penetrating insight; keenly perceptive**

***The reviewer's trenchant criticism did not please the book's author.**

***syn.: incisive; acute; piercing**



utopia (n.)

***a place or state of perfect social and political conditions**

***The utopia promised by communism failed to materialize in Eastern Europe.**

***syn.: idyll; seventh heaven; the Elysian Fields**



valedictory

(n)*1. a farewell address, especially one given at a graduation ceremony

***The valedictory is usually given by a student who has achieved great distinction.**

***syn.: goodbye; departing**

(adj)*2. of or relating to an occasion or expression of farewell

***He made a valedictory address after serving two years as chairman of the charity.**

***syn.: final**



absolve (v.)

***to clear of guilt; or free from a promise or a responsibility**

***The jury's innocent verdict appears to absolve the defendant of any guilt.**

***syn.: exonerate; vindicate**



apothegm (n.)

***a short, instructive saying**

***What do you think of the apothegm “Easy come; easy go”?**

***syn.: proverb; aphorism; axiom; maxim**



aspersion (n.)

***a defamatory expression; an attack on the reputation or integrity of someone**

***His opponents cast aspersions on his patriotism.**

***syn.: slander; censure; opprobrium**



congenital (adj.)

*** 1. existing at or dating from birth**

*** He was born with a congenital heart defect.**

*** syn.: inborn; natural**

*** 2. being an essential characteristic of someone**

*** He is a congenital liar.**

*** syn.: intrinsic; innate**



élan (n.)

[ā län]

***a lively spirit with a distinctive style**

***The band played with such élan that it was invited to lead the parade.**

***syn.: flair; finesse; panache**



germane (adj.)

***pertinent and fitting; relevant to a subject under consideration**

***During her press conference, the governor refused to answer questions that weren't germane to her proposed budget.**

***syn.: apropos; analogous; felicitous**



hiatus (n.)

***an interruption or gap in space, continuity, or time; a break from the normal routine**

***After his accident, the actor took a brief hiatus from the television series.**

***syn.: respite; break**



break even

(idiom - informal)

***make just enough money to pay for one's expenses or investment**

***When my parents started their restaurant, they had to use their savings to cover their expenses, and they were actually losing money. This year they're taking in enough money to pay their bills, and it looks as if they're going to break even, and even earn a profit.**

***syn.: balanced; equivalent**



XXXX

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

MONDAY

September 04



ardent (adj.)

***showing or having warmth of feeling; passionate;
showing strong feelings**

***When the rock star checks his mail, he almost always
finds one or two bizarre gifts from some of his most
ardent fans.**

***syn.: zealous; fervent; vehement; torrid**



scrutinize (v.)

***to examine in detail with careful or critical attention**

***I carefully scrutinized my opponent's every move.**

***syn.: analyze; inspect; investigate**



regale (v.)

- * to entertain lavishly or agreeably**
- * After the wedding we were regaled with an array of food, drink, and music.**
- *syn.: entertain; delight; feast**



stick it out

(idiom - informal)

***remain in a negative situation until the end (used to encourage someone not to give up)**

***I know your first few months at university have been difficult, but I'd really encourage you to stick it out until the end of the year. If you're still unhappy then, you can think seriously about transferring elsewhere.**

***syn.: persist; persevere**



procure (v.)

*** To obtain or get by care, effort, or the use of special means**

*** In order to make sandwiches to feed the homeless, we will need to procure donations from local businesses.**

***syn.: solicit; get; purchase**



dreary (adj.)

- * sorrowful; sad**
- * The family struggled through dreary economic times.**
- *syn.: bleak; somber; cheerless**



lament (v.)

- * to feel or express sorrow or regret for**
- * I deeply lament the lost opportunity to reconnect with my grandmother before she died.**
- *syn.: bemoan; regret; wail**



instill (v.)

- * to infuse slowly or gradually into the mind or feelings**
- * They have infused a love of music in their children.**
- *syn.: insinuate; diffuse; inspire**



give way to

(idiom - formal)

***be replaced by, usually over a long period**

***Older technologies inevitably grow obsolete as newer ones are invented and become more established. For example, typewriters gave way to computers as the 1980s progressed.**

***syn.: succumb; yield; acquiesce**



procrastinate (v.)

- * to defer action; delay**
- * He procrastinated and missed the submission deadline.**
- *syn.: postpone; suspend; stall**



aloof (adj.)

- * at a distance, especially in feeling or interest; reserved**
- * She seemed rather aloof when in fact she was just shy.**
- *syn.: detached; indifferent; unsociable**



ponder (v.)

- * To consider something deeply and thoroughly; meditate**
- * Take a few minutes to ponder the question before you jump to a conclusion.**
- *syn.: contemplate; speculate; evaluate**



mediocrity (n.)

- * Average ability or accomplishment; unexceptionality**
- * We were disappointed by the mediocrity of the meal.**
- *syn.: normality; commonness; averageness**



make a concerted effort

(idiom - formal)

***make a strong and deliberate effort to accomplish or complete something**

***To reduce harmful emissions in urban areas, city governments must make a concerted effort to develop reliable public's transit options and reduce people's reliance on cars.**

***syn.: collaborate; unite**



marginal (adj.)

- * of minor importance, significance, relevance, or effect**
- * There has only been a marginal improvement in her condition.**
- *syn.: insignificant; minor; negligible**



benighted (adj.)

- * intellectually or morally ignorant; unenlightened**
- * Many English invasions were staged as missionary enterprises designed for the good of benighted natives.**
- *syn.: uncultivated; crude; primitive**



bourgeois (n.)

***a member of the middle class**

*** He is accusing them of having a bourgeois and limited vision.**

***syn.: common; materialistic; conventional**



gloat (v.)

*** to think about with great or excessive, and often smug or malicious, satisfaction**

***If you are the winner of a contest, you should not gloat and make your competitors feel inferior.**

***syn.: exult; relish**



crunch time

(idiom - informal)

***period of great pressure at work/school due to upcoming deadlines**

***A particularly stressful time for me is usually mid- to late December. It's crunch time at my office because there are always many reports that need to get submitted before the end of the year, and some of them haven't even been started.**

***syn.: critical: pivotal**



chicanery (n.)

*** clever deception through the use of misleading or confusing words/acts**

***Suspect some kind of chicanery if the offer seems too good to be true.**

***syn.: duplicity; subterfuge; fraud**



approbation (n.)

- * approval or commendation; conclusive proof**
- * A murmur of approbation and satisfaction ran through the crowd.**
- *syn.: endorsement; approval; support**



naïve (adj.)

[nie-eev]

*** having or showing a lack of experience, judgment, or information**

*** If you're naïve enough to believe him, you'll believe anyone.**

***syn.: childlike; gullible; innocent**



chronic (adj.)

- * constant; continuing a long time or recurring frequently**
- * He suffers from chronic arthritis.**
- *syn.: habitual; persistent; enduring**



XXXX

Professional Development for Teachers

FRIDAY

October 06



XXXX

FALL BREAK

MON.-FRI.

October 9-13



loathe (v.)

- * **unwilling; reluctant; disinclined**
- * **They were rivals who bitterly loathed each other.**
- * **syn.: reluctant; hesitant; resisting**



skeptic (n.)

*** a person who questions the validity or authenticity of something purporting to be factual**

*** You can believe in ghosts if you like, but I'm still a skeptic.**

***syn.: cynic; dissenter; unbeliever**



assert (v.)

*** to state with assurance, confidence, or force; state strongly or positively**

*** He asserted his innocence of the crime.**

***syn.: affirm; proclaim; cite**



diminutive (adj.)

*** small; little; tiny**

*** My grandmother was a diminutive woman, less than five feet tall.**

***syn.: miniature; undersize; minute**



a long shot

(idiom - informal)

***something very unlikely**

***I have great news: I've been accepted into the music program at Julliard. I knew it was a long shot when I applied, so I was really shocked to find out that I'd been admitted.**

***syn.: unpromising; shaky; precarious**



tyrant (n.)

- * any person in a position of authority who uses power oppressively or unjustly.**
- * Often when one tyrant is deposed in a rebellion, another takes his place.**
- *syn.: despot; bully**



vile (adj.)

- * **highly offensive, unpleasant, or objectionable**
- * **The bus driver was astonished by the vile words that came out of the child's mouth.**
- * **syn.: repulsive; disgusting**



succumb (v.)

- * to give way to superior force; yield**
- * We should try not to succumb easily to the views of news media.**
- *syn.: capitulate; submit; quit**



novelty (n.)

- * state of being new or unique**
- * The toy's novelty soon wore off.**
- *syn.: fresh; original; innovation**



off the beaten path/track

(idiom - informal)

***a location that is not well known; away from major attractions**

***I know you like to visit big cities like New York or Chicago, but maybe next time we could try somewhere a bit more off the beaten path. We don't have to go camping, but a smaller city that doesn't get many tourists might be nice.**

***syn.: isolated; secluded; remote**



uncouth (adj.)

- * awkward, clumsy, or unmannerly**
- * The uncouth young man did not know which fork to use during the salad portion of the formal dinner.**
- *syn.: coarse; crude; rude**



peruse (v.)

- * to read through with thoroughness or care**
- * He leant forward to peruse the document more closely.**
- *syn.: analyze; inspect; scrutinize**



remorse (n.)

- * a deep and painful regret for wrongdoing**
- * She felt a sharp pang of remorse after her outburst.**
- *syn.: repentance; guilt; shame**



destitute (adj.)

- * without means of subsistence; lacking food, clothing, shelter**
- * In many countries around the world, because of military, social, and political turmoil, the general population is destitute.**
- *syn.: impoverished; indigent; poor**



fall out of fashion

(idiom - formal)

***become outdated**

***Some trends persist and become a permanent part of a culture while others quickly fall out of fashion. For example, bell-bottom jeans were extremely popular during the 1960s but declined in popularity afterward.**

***syn.: unpopular; out-of-date; obsolete**



susceptible (adj.)

- * capable of being affected emotionally**
- * These plants are particularly susceptible to frost.**
- *syn.: vulnerable; impressionable**



liable (adj.)

*** legally responsible**

*** The court ruled he could not be held personally liable for his wife's debts.**

***syn.: accountable; obligated**



authentic (adj.)

- * not false or copied; genuine**
- * Experts have confirmed that the signature on the letter is authentic.**
- *syn.: real; true; legitimate**



wane (v.)

- * **to decrease in strength, intensity, importance**
- * **The scandal caused the politician's popularity to wane.**
- * **syn.: decrease; dim; fade**



try one's hand at

(idiom - informal)

*** try out an activity to see if one is good at it or enjoys it**

*** My friends are really into paddle boarding right now, and they keep asking me to come with them. I'd like to try my hand at it and see whether I like it before I buy my own equipment, though.**

***syn.: try; attempt; endeavor**



ominous (adj.)

- * portending evil or harm; foreboding; threatening**
- * The car engine had been making an ominous sound all the way from my friend's house.**
- *syn.: sinister; threatening; perilous**



paramount (adj.)

- * chief in importance or impact; supreme; preeminent**
- * In today's competitive job market, it is paramount that one obtains a specialized work license or a college degree.**
- *syn.: predominant; foremost**



assimilate (v.)

*** to take in and incorporate; to bring into conformity**

***Students have a lot of information to assimilate on the first day of school.**

***syn.: integrate; join**



discern (v.)

*** to perceive by the sight or some other sense or by the intellect**

*** It was not difficult to discern that the defendant killed her husband for the million dollar life insurance policy.**

***syn.: distinguish; ascertain; judge**



(to be) like pulling teeth

(idiom - very informal; speaking only)

***extremely difficult; used when a person is very unwilling to do something**

*** I love my dad, but he is so stubborn when it comes to his health. When he had Covid, he kept insisting he could take care of everything on his own. Getting him to go to the doctor was like pulling teeth.**

***syn.: arduous; gruelling; problematical**



XXXX

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

MON.-FRI.

November 20-24



feign (v.)

[fayn]

*** to put on an appearance of; to represent fictitiously**

*** My sister can feign illness and my mom will let her stay home from school.**

***syn.: dissemble; fabricate; bluff**



quest

(n)*1. a search or pursuit made in order to find something

*** The Forty-Niners went on a quest for gold.**

***syn.: adventure; pursuit; crusade**

(v)*2. to seek; search

*** They were questing for gold. I respectfully quest your assistance in this matter.**

***syn.: pursue; search; probe**



subtle (adj.)

*** fine or delicate in meaning or intent; difficult to perceive or understand**

*** He didn't seem to understand my subtle hints.**

***syn.: slight; indirect; ingenious; indistinct**



serenity (n.)

- * the quality of being calm or tranquil**
- * The relaxed, comfortable atmosphere adds to the feeling of serenity inside the cabin.**
- *syn.: composure; patience; stillness**



take something at face value

(idiom - formal or informal)

***accept something as true based on initial or superficial appearance**

*** Marketers often exaggerate the benefits of a product in order to gain sales. As a result, their claims should not generally be taken at face value.**

***syn.: accredit; assume; expect**



benevolent (adj.)

*** characterized by or expressing goodwill or kindly feelings**

*** The good work that the American Red Cross has done has earned them the reputation of being a benevolent organization.**

***syn.: compassionate; philanthropic; generous**



brash (adj.)

*** impertinent; impudent; tactless**

*** The brash reporter offended the celebrity with his insistent manner and lost out on getting an interview.**

***syn.: bold; brazen; rude**



dwindle (v.)

- * to become smaller and smaller; shrink**
- * Our energy dwindled as the meeting dragged on.**
- *syn.: decline; decrease; diminish**



miser (n.)

*** A person who lives in wretched circumstances in order to save and hoard money**

***To save money, the miser ate only one meal a day.**

***syn.: hoarder; tightwad; cheapskate**



Barking up the wrong tree

(idiom - informal)

- * following the wrong course of action**
- * In the initial months of Covid-19, scientists were sometimes barking up the wrong tree in their recommendation on preventative steps.**
- *syn.: misstep; confound; miscalculation**



agile (adj.)

- * Quick and well coordinated in movement**
- * Leopards are sure-footed, agile, and graceful in their movements.**
- *syn.: athletic; limber; nimble; dexterous**



ensue (v.)

- * to follow in order or as a consequence**
- * After one athlete shouted insults at another, the referees separated them quickly so that a fight would not ensue.**
- *syn.: derive; follow; proceed**



distraught (adj.)

- * deeply agitated or anxious**
- * She slung a sisterly arm around her friend's shoulders, understanding how distraught she was.**
- *syn.: distressed; perturbed; troubled**



embark (v.)

- * **1. to board a vehicle as a journey**
- * **They embarked on their trip to America with high hopes.**
- * **syn.: launch; said; board**

- * **2. to start an enterprise, business, etc.**
- * **The company has embarked upon a risky new adventure.**
- * **syn.: establish; institute; initiate**



on and off again

(idiom - informal)

*** inconsistently**

*** The weather in my hometown can be pretty unpredictable. It usually rains on and off again for most of the spring, and it can be kind of hard to know what to wear.**

***syn.: unpredictable; uncertain; erratic**



SCOUR (v.)

*** 1. to rub hard especially with a rough material for cleansing**

*** He scoured the pan with steel wool.**

***syn.: scrub; rub; cleanse**

*** 2. to go through or range over in or as if in a search**

*** Detectives scoured the country for their witness.**

***syn.: dig; search; comb; scan**



emaciated (adj.)

*** very thin and feeble especially from lack of nutrition or illness**

*** He was deadly pale and terribly emaciated, with the protruding, brilliant eyes of a man whose spirit was greater than his strength.**

***syn.: gaunt; skeletal; thin; wizened**



abound (v.)

- * to be present in large numbers or in great quantity: to be prevalent**
- * They live in a region where oil abounds.**
- *syn.: overflow; burst; teem**



manifestation (n.)

- * a perceptible, outward, or visible expression**
- * The first manifestations of her behavior problems occurred soon after she left home.**
- *syn.: embodiment; epitome; avatar; image**



XXXX

End of Semester 1 – 60% Day

FRIDAY

December 22