





15 to 17

AGE GROUP



15 to 17
age group

A

abbreviate**verb** /ə'brɪ:vɪeɪt/

to shorten

*She does not like it when you abbreviate her name.***abdicate****verb** /'æbdɪkeɪt/

to renounce; to give up

*Edward VIII surprised the entire world when he decided to abdicate the British throne to marry Wallis Simpson.***abet****verb** /ə'bet/

to help encourage someone to commit an offense or to do something wrong

*He tried to aid and abet him in committing a crime.***abhor****verb** /əb'hɔː[r]/

to hate something very much, especially for moral reasons

*I abhor the practice of child labour.***abiogenesis****noun** /ˌaɪbɪəʊ'dʒɛnɪsɪs/

the supposed origin of living organisms from nonliving matter

*Abiogenesis proposes that life has arisen from non-life at some particular point in the ancient, unobservable past.***abiotic****adjective** /ˌaɪbɪə'tɪk/

without life

*The abiotic factors of the environment include light, temperature, and atmospheric gases.***abominable****adjective** /ə'bɒmɪnəbəl/

extremely unpleasant and causing disgust

*The abominable treatment of prisoners by the military caused international uproar.***aboriginal****adjective** /ˌæbə'ɹɪdʒənəl/relating to the original people or animals of a place
*Her studies of the primitive art forms of aboriginal Australians were widely reported.***aborigine****noun** /ˌæbə'ɹɪdʒəni/

a member of a race of people who were the original inhabitants of a country

*The Australian Aborigine is fighting for his rights.***abortive****adjective** /ə'bɔːtɪv/

unsuccessful; failed

*After two abortive attempts at writing a novel, Ali decided to give up.***abrogate****verb** /'æbrəgeɪt/

to cancel or abolish

*The general tried to abrogate the constitution.***abrupt****adjective** /ə'brʌpt/

sudden or hasty

*The film had an abrupt ending.***abscess****noun** /'æbses/

a swollen and infected area on your skin or in your body, full of pus

*The surgeon refused to lance the abscess.***abscond****verb** /əb'skɒnd/

to run away secretly

*Ali planned to abscond from his boarding school at midnight.***abstinence****noun** /'æbstɪnəns/

the practice of not allowing yourself something, especially food or drink

The doctor recommended abstinence from fatty foods for the heart patient.

A

15 to 17
age group**asurd****adjective** /əb'sɜːd/

not at all logical or sensible

*The committee disagreed with his absurd idea.***abysmal****adjective** /ə'bɪzməl/

of a very low standard

*The coach was very disappointed by his team's abysmal performance in the match.***abyss****noun** /ə'bɪs/

a very deep hole that seems to have no bottom

*Ahead of the divers was a gaping abyss.***accede****verb** /æk'sɪːd/

to agree to a policy or opinion

*They will not accede to his unjust demands.***accentuate****verb** /ək'sɛntʃuːt/

to emphasise something or to make it more noticeable

*Girls use mascara to accentuate their eye lashes.***accept****verb** /ək'sept/

to take something that is offered

*She decided not to accept the job.***acclaim****verb** /ək'kleɪm/

to praise or welcome somebody or something publicly

*A dinner was arranged so the senior management could acclaim Nancy as the employee of the year.***accolade****noun** /'ækələɪd/

an award of praise, approval or honour

*To be chosen to represent their country is the highest accolade for most athletes.***accomplice****noun** /ə'kʌmplɪs/

a partner in crime

*The robber was caught, but his accomplice managed to escape.***accordance****noun** /ə'kɔːdnɪs/

conformity

*All students are expected to behave in accordance with the school's regulations.***accrue****verb** /ə'kruː/

to increase by growth or development (especially of money)

*Debts will accrue if regular payments are not made on time.***accusatory****adjective** /ə'kjuzətəri/

accusing

*The newspaper refused to publish the accusatory article.***acerbic****adjective** /ə'sɜːbɪk/

critical in a direct and rather cruel way

*The letter was written in her usual acerbic style.***achievement****noun** /ə'tʃiːvmənt/

a thing done successfully, especially with effort and skill

*It was a remarkable achievement for such a young player.***acrimonious****adjective** /,ækri'məniəs/

bitter

The acrimonious dialogue with her boss led to her immediate dismissal.

15 to 17
age group

A

acromegaly**noun** /ˌɑkrəʊ'megəli/

chronic disease characterized by the enlargement of various bones and organs of the body

*Her disease has been diagnosed as acromegaly.***acronym****noun** /'ækrənɪm/

a word formed from the first letters of the words that make up the name

*AIDS is an acronym for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.***acrylic****noun** /ə'krɪlɪk/

a kind of fibre, plastic or resin made from an organic acid

*Acrylic dries very quickly as it does not absorb water.***adage****noun** /'ædɪdʒ/

a well known phrase expressing a general truth about people or the world

*Had he believed in the adage 'The early bird gets the worm', he would have applied for the job months ago.***adder****noun** /'ædə[r]/

a small poisonous snake, often with diamond-shaped marks on its back

adhere**verb** /əd'hɪə[r]/

to stick firmly to something

*You must adhere strictly to the terms of the treaty.***adjudicate****verb** /ə'dʒu:dɪkeɪt/

to make an official decision about who is right in a disagreement

*The tribunal's function is to adjudicate disputes between employers and employees.***adjutant****noun** /'ædʒʊtənt/

an army officer who does office work and helps other officers

*The adjutant worked late, completing documents for the general.***adolescence****noun** /ˌædə'lesns/

the time in a person's life when he or she develops from a child into an adult

*A happy childhood and adolescence is a result of excellent parenting.***adventitious****adjective** /ˌædvən'tɪʃəs/

not planned; happening accidentally

*The adventitious similarities of their actions surprised their friends and families.***adversary****noun** /'ædvəsəri/

opponent; enemy

*Batman struggled to save Gotham City from the schemes of his wicked adversary, the Joker.***aegis****noun** /'i:dʒɪs/

with the protection or support of a particular organisation or person

*The peacekeepers in Somalia work under the aegis of the UN.***aeon****noun** /'i:ən/

a very long period of time; many thousands of millions of years

*It took an aeon for man to evolve.***aerodrome****noun** /'eərədrəʊm/

a small airport, used mainly by private planes

The millionaire keeps his private planes at a small aerodrome on his estate.

A

15 to 17
age group**aerogramme****noun** /'eərəgræm/

a pre-stamped, lightweight paper that folds into its own envelope

*The aerogramme has often been considered more convenient than a separate letter and an envelope.***aeronautics****noun** /,eərə'nɔ:tɪks/

the science or practice of building and flying aircraft

*Her father encouraged her to study aeronautics.***aesthete****noun** /'i:sθi:t/

a person who has a love and understanding of art and beautiful things

*As an aesthete, she bought only the most beautiful paintings for her new house.***affable****adjective** /'æfəbl/

pleasant and friendly

*Her affable personality won her many friends.***affirmation****noun** /,æfə'meɪʃn/

a solemn pledge in place of an oath

*The constitution of this country requires an oath or affirmation by its office holders.***affluent****adjective** /'æfluənt/

having a lot of money and a good standard of living

*One could tell from her clothes that she belonged to an affluent family.***agglomeration****noun** /ə,ɡlɒmə'reɪʃn/

a group of things put together in no particular order or arrangement

*It took two weeks to sort through the agglomeration of items she had collected on her trip.***agrarian****adjective** /ə'greəriən/

connected to land or its cultivation

*The country's economy is based on its agrarian strength.***alacrity****noun** /ə'lækrəti/

eagerness or enthusiasm; great willingness

*He accepted her offer with alacrity.***albino****noun** /æ'lbi:nəʊ/

a person or animal lacking skin pigmentation

*As an albino, I suffer from weak eyesight.***algae****noun** /'ældʒi:/

plants that grow in water, with no real stems or roots

*I noticed that the pond was covered with a thick, green blanket of algae.***alimony****noun** /'æliməni/

the money paid regularly to a former wife or husband when the marriage is ended

*Mrs. Jones was awarded \$200 monthly alimony by the court when she was divorced by her husband.***allege****verb** /ə'ledʒ/

to state something as a fact but without giving proof

*To allege that John could have broken into their house is absurd, as he was with me all afternoon.***allegiance****noun** /ə'li:dʒəns/

loyalty to a person or cause

*The nobles all swore allegiance to their new king.***alleviate****verb** /ə'li:vieɪt/

to make more bearable, reduce pain, grief or suffering

The doctor prescribed a drug to alleviate his pain.

15 to 17
age group

A

alliance**noun** /əˈlaɪəns/

an association of countries or groups who wish to support each other
An alliance was formed between two major charitable organisations to help the victims of the Iranian earthquake.

alliteration**noun** /əˌlɪtəˈreɪʃn/

the use of the same letter or sound at the beginning of words that are close together
"Wailing in the winter wind," is an example of alliteration.

altercation**noun** /ɪˌɔːltəˈkeɪʃn/

a noisy argument or disagreement
Throughout the entire altercation, not one sensible word was said.

amalgamate**verb** /əˈmælgəmeɪt/

to combine; to put two or more things together so that they form one
The unions will attempt to amalgamate the local committees into one national body.

ambiguity**noun** /ɪˌæmbɪˈɡjuːəti/

a double meaning
Please write clear definitions in order to avoid ambiguity.

ambivalence**noun** /əmˈbɪvələns/

the state of having contradictory or conflicting feelings about something or someone
There is much ambivalence in the minds of the public about our involvement in the war.

ammunition**noun** /ɪˌæmjʊˈnɪʃn/

supply of bullets to be fired from guns
The battle was lost due to the lack of ammunition.

amnesty**noun** /ˈæmnəsti/

an official pardon
The president granted a general amnesty to all political prisoners.

amok**adverb** /əˈmɒk/

in a state of wild and angry excitement
The crowd ran amok and set fire to government buildings.

amphibian**noun** /æmˈfɪbiən/

an animal that can live both in water and on land
The frog is an amphibian.

amphisbaena**noun** /æmfɪsˈbiːnə/

a mythological serpent having a head at each end of its body
The amphisbaena struck with both its heads.

anabolism**noun** /əˈnabəlaɪzəm/

constructive metabolism
Anabolism is the process whereby complex proteins and fats are formed from simpler ones.

anachronism**noun** /əˈnækrənɪzəm/

a person, a custom or an idea that seems old-fashioned and does not belong to the present
The monarchy is seen by many people as an anachronism in the modern world.

anarchy**noun** /ˈænəki/

political disorder or confusion
The country was in a state of anarchy after the king's abdication.

A

15 to 17
age group**anchovy****noun** /ˈæntʃəvi/

a small fish with a strong salty flavour
The anchovy is a popular topping for pizzas.

anemone**noun** /əˈneməni/

a small plant with colourful flowers shaped like cups
The anemone was the show piece of her garden.

angstrom**noun** /ˈɒŋstrəm/

a unit of length, equal to one tenth of a millimicron to express electromagnetic wavelengths

While measuring the electromagnetic wavelengths in the area, the scientist used angstrom as the unit of measurement.

antecedent**noun** /ˌæntɪˈsi:dnt/

a thing or an event that exists or comes before another, and may have influenced it
An antecedent can shape the future of a nation.

anthropoid**noun** /ˈænrəpɔɪd/

human-like, especially in shape
The statue had definite anthropoid characteristics.

anthropomorphic**adjective** /ˌænrəpəˈmɔːfɪk/

suggesting human characteristics for animals or inanimate things
Many religions have an anthropomorphic image of God.

antipathy**noun** /ænˈtɪpəθi/

a feeling of strong dislike
She made no attempt to hide her feelings of antipathy.

antipodean**adjective** /ˌæntɪpəˈdiːən/

things that come from Australia and New Zealand
This New Zealand factory produces some of the best antipodean drinks.

antiseptic**noun** /ˌæntɪˈseptɪk/

a substance that helps to prevent infection in wounds by killing bacteria
It is advisable to apply an antiseptic to any wound.

anxiety**noun** /æŋˈzɪəti/

the state of feeling nervous or worried that something bad is going to happen
Some hospital patients experience high levels of anxiety.

apathy**noun** /ˈæpəθi/

the feeling of not being interested in or enthusiastic about anything
There is widespread apathy amongst the electorate.

apex**noun** /ˈeɪpeks/

the top or highest point
At 41 he'd reached the apex of his career.

aphid**noun** /ˈeɪfɪd/

very small insect that is harmful to plants

apoapsis**noun** /əpəʊpsɪs/

the point in an orbit farthest from the body being orbited
Kepler's law of planetary motion states that an object is at its lowest velocity at the apoapsis.

apocalypse**noun** /əˈpɒkəlɪps/

the destruction of the world
It is said that many signs will herald the apocalypse.

15 to 17
age group

A

apothecary**noun** /ə'pɒθəkəri/

a person who made and sold medicines in the past
A famous apothecary once had his shop in the house where we now live.

apprehensive**adjective** /ɪæprɪ'hensɪv/

worried or frightened that something unpleasant may happen
His apprehensive glances at the people who were walking on the street revealed his nervousness.

approbation**noun** /ɪæprə'beɪʃn/

approval or agreement
She looked for some sign of approbation from her parents.

arbitrate**verb** /'ɑːbɪtreɪt/

to officially settle an argument or disagreement between two people or groups
She was called upon to arbitrate in the dispute between the union and the management.

archaic**Adjective** /ɑː'keɪk/

old and no longer used
"Thou art" is an archaic form of "you are".

arrhythmia**noun** /ə'ɪθmiə/

an alteration in rhythm of the heartbeat
The doctor told the patient that her discomfort was caused by arrhythmia.

artichoke**noun** /'ɑːtɪʃəʊk/

the flowerhead of a tall herb eaten as a vegetable
The recipe required an artichoke to be steamed, chopped and added to rice.

asbestos**noun** /əz'bestɒs/

a fibrous mineral formerly used for making incombustible or fireproof articles
As asbestos has been shown to cause lung cancer, it is not used for insulation or as a fire proof material any longer.

asphyxiate**verb** /ə'sfɪksɪət/

to suffocate
The smoke in the burning house might asphyxiate the residents.

assassin**noun** /ə'sæsɪn/

a person who murders somebody important or famous, for money or for political reasons
The assassin waited patiently for his victim to leave the conference building.

assonance**noun** /'æsnəns/

resemblance of sounds in words that are close together
Assonance is more a feature of verse than prose.

assuage**verb** /ə'sweɪdʒ/

to make an unpleasant feeling less severe
His reply did little to assuage my suspicions.

asteroid**noun** /'æstəɔɪd/

any one of the many small planets which go around the Sun
The movie Armageddon was about an asteroid hitting the Earth.

astigmatism**noun** /ə'stɪgmətɪzəm/

a fault in the shape of a person's eye that prevents them from seeing clearly
The optician told me that I suffer from astigmatism, and require corrective glasses.

A

15 to 17
age group**astir****adjective** /ə'stə[r]/in a state of excited movement
*The news set the whole town astir.***asylum****noun** /ə'saɪləm/protection that a government gives to people from other countries, usually for political reasons
*He was granted asylum.***atmolysis****noun** /æt'mɒləsɪs/a process of separating gases or vapours of different molecular weights
*The students have been asked to carry out an atmolysis experiment in the next hour.***autecology****noun** /ɔ:tɪ'kɒlədʒi/the branch of ecology that deals with the individual organism or species in relation to its environment
*The chapter dealing with autecology was the first one in the book.***authenticate****verb** /ɔ:'θentɪkeɪt/to prove that something is genuine, real or true
*An expert was needed to authenticate the Van Gogh painting.***autonomous****adjective** /ɔ:'tɒnəməs/self-governing
*They proudly declared themselves part of a new autonomous province.***autopsy****noun** /'ɔ:tɒpsi/an official examination of a dead body by a doctor in order to discover the cause of death
*The medical examiner ordered an autopsy to determine the cause of her death.***auxiliary****adjective** /ɔ:g'zɪliəri/giving help or support
*The event managers arranged for an auxiliary generator in case of a power failure.***avalanche****noun** /'ævələ:nʃ/a large mass of snow, ice and rock that falls down the side of a mountain
*It took rescuers three days to find the campers after the avalanche.***avuncular****adjective** /ə'vʌŋkjələ[r]/like an uncle in being friendly towards a younger person
*My father's friend dotes on us with an avuncular affection.***axiomatic****adjective** /,æksɪə'mætɪk/self-evident
*It is axiomatic that life is not always easy.***azure****adjective** /'æzə[r]/bright blue in colour like the sky
The artist had painted an angel in the azure sky.

15 to 17
age group

B

baboon**noun** /bə'bu:n/

an African and Asian monkey with a long face like a dog's

baccalaureate**noun** /ˌbækə'lɔ:riət/

the last secondary school in some schools
After his failure to pass the baccalaureate for the third time, he finally gave up his ambition to attend college.

balmy**adjective** /'bɑ:mi/

pleasant, warm
He enjoyed the balmy weather in Florida.

bamboozle**verb** /bæm'bu:zl/

to confuse somebody, especially by tricking them
He tried to bamboozle the bank into investing in an almost bankrupt company.

barnacle**noun** /'bɑ:nəkl/

a shellfish that attaches itself to rocks and the bottoms of ships

barricade**verb** /ˌbærɪ'keɪd/

to stop people from getting past or entering
They decided to barricade all the doors and windows.

basilisk**noun** /'bæzɪlɪsk/

(in ancient stories) a creature like a snake, that can kill people by looking at them or breathing on them

beady**adjective** /'bi:di/

(of eyes) small, round and bright like beads
He is a bald man with beady eyes.

begrudge**verb** /bɪ'grʌdʒ/

to feel unhappy about having to do, pay or give something
I begrudge every minute I have to spend attending meetings.

beguile**verb** /bɪ'gaɪl/

to cheat, to charm
The witness saw the woman beguile the elderly man into giving her his savings.

belch**verb** /beltʃ/

to let air come up noisily from your stomach and out through your mouth
In some cultures it is not considered rude to belch after a good meal.

beleaguer**verb** /bɪ'li:gə/

lay siege
The general ordered his forces to beleague the weakened enemy until they surrendered.

belie**verb** /bɪ'laɪ/

to give a false impression of somebody or something
Her energy and youthfulness belie her age.

bellicose**adjective** /'belɪkəs/

aggressive; willing to fight
The bellicose youth was cautioned by the police.

belligerent**adjective** /bə'ɪdʒərənt/

unfriendly and aggressive
Her belligerent attitude earned her a bad reputation.

B

15 to 17
age group**benefactor****noun** /'benɪfæktə[r]/

a person who gives money or other help to an organisation such as a school or charity
Edhi has become the benefactor of thousands of destitute people.

beneficiary**noun** /,benɪ'fɪʃəri/

a person who receives money or property when somebody dies
I am the sole beneficiary of my uncle's estate.

bequest**noun** /bɪ'kwɛst/

money or property that you ask to be given to a particular person when you die
The artist's bequest of his paintings to the gallery was much appreciated.

bereavement**noun** /bɪ'ri:vmənt/

the state of having lost a relative or loved one because they have died
Hamza's friends gathered to console him on his sister's sudden bereavement.

berserk**adjective** /bə'zɜ:k/

uncontrollably violent
We were quite surprised at her berserk behaviour upon seeing a cockroach.

bespectacled**adjective** /bɪ'spektəklɪd/

wearing glasses
The mean children made fun of the bespectacled boy.

betrothed**noun** /bɪ'trəʊðd/

the person to whom one is engaged
Mariam was Yusuf's betrothed and was due to be married next month.

bibliophile**noun** /'bɪbliəfaɪl/

a person who loves or collects books
My father, a keen bibliophile, spent a year looking for a rare anthology of poetry.

bicentenary**noun** /,baɪsɛn'tɪ:nəri/

the two-hundredth anniversary of an event
They marked Mozart's bicentenary by arranging a series of concerts.

bifurcate**verb** /'baɪfəkeɪt/

divided into two branches or forked
Does the river bifurcate when it reaches the plains?

bison**noun** /'baɪsɪn/

a wild ox found in North America and Europe, with a large shaggy head

bivalve**noun** /'baɪvælɪv/

a shellfish (e.g. an oyster) that has a shell with two hinged parts
The cockle is an example of a bivalve sold as food at seaside resorts in England.

bivouac**noun** /'bɪvuæk/

temporary camp without tents or cover, used especially by soldiers or mountaineers
The soldiers had to camp in a bivouac on the mountainside.

bleat**verb** /bli:t/

to make a sound like that of a sheep or goat
We could hear the lamb bleat for its mother.

blithe**adjective** /blaɪð/

carefree
He drove with a blithe disregard for the rules of the road.

15 to 17
age group

B

oisterous**adjective** /'bɔɪstərəs/

noisy and full of life and energy

*It was a challenge keeping ten boisterous seven-year-olds amused.***botany****noun** /'bɒtəni/

the scientific study of plants and their structure

*It was her wish to get a degree in botany from a good university.***bourgeois****adjective** /'buəʒwaɪ/

relating to urban middle class, mainly interested in possessions and social status

*They were a traditional bourgeois family.***brevity****noun** /'brevəti/

the quality of using few words when speaking or writing

*Brevity is the soul of wit.***broach****verb** /brəʊtʃ/

to begin talking about a subject that is difficult to discuss

*He hesitated to broach the subject of an increase in his allowance.***brunt****noun** /brʌnt/

the main force of something unpleasant

*Schools will bear the brunt of the cuts in government expenditure.***brusque****adjective** /bruːsk/

using very few words and sounding rude

*The sergeant spoke in an extremely brusque manner.***brute****noun** /bruːt/

a person who treats people or animals in an unkind, cruel way

*That man is a brute; he beats his donkey every day.***budgerigar****noun** /'bʌdʒərɪgɑː[r]/

a small bird of the parrot family, often kept in a cage as a pet

buffalo**noun** /'bʌfələʊ/

ox-like mammal

buffoonery**noun** /bə'fuːnəri/

the act of behaving in a silly but amusing way; clowning

*All the teachers are tired of Ali's buffoonery in class.***bulge****noun** /bʌldʒ/

a rounded swelling; an outward curve

*What is that bulge in your shirt pocket?***bumblebee****noun** /'bʌmbliː/

a large bee that makes a loud noise as it flies

bumptious**adjective** /'bʌmpʃəs/

offensively conceited

*His bumptious attitude irritates his colleagues.***bunting****noun** /'bʌntɪŋ/

small flags hung up to decorate streets

*The colourful bunting gave the city a festive look.***buoyancy****noun** /'bɔɪənsi/

the power to float or rise in a fluid; relative lightness

Buoyancy allows a boat to float on water, and provides a lift for balloons.

B**15 to 17**
age group**buoyant****adjective** /'bɔɪənt/

tending to increase or stay at a high level

*There is a buoyant demand for houses these days.***bureau****noun** /'bjʊərəʊ/

an office or organisation that provides information on a particular subject

*The employment bureau was inundated with applications after the closure of the coal mine.***bureaucracy****noun** /bjʊə'rɒkrəsi/

the system of official rules and ways of doing things that a government or an organisation has

*As a civil servant, my uncle understands how bureaucracy works.***byword****noun** /'baɪwɜːd/

a person or a thing that is a well known or typical example of a particular quality

The limousine is a byword for luxury.

15 to 17
age group

C

cadaverous**adjective** /kə'dævərəs/

like a corpse; deadly pale

*Ali was a tall man with a long, cadaverous face.***cadence****noun** /'keɪdnz/

the rise and fall of voice in speaking

*The cadence of her mother's voice lulls the baby to sleep.***cadge****verb** /kædʒ/

to beg for food or money

*He managed to cadge some money from his friend.***cadre****noun** /'kɑ:də[r]/

a small group of people who are specially chosen and trained for a particular purpose

*The general trained a secret cadre in desert warfare.***caffeine****noun** /'kæfi:n/

a stimulant found in tea and coffee

*These days caffeine is added to drinks known as "energy drinks."***cajole****verb** /kə'dʒəʊl/

to persuade someone to do something by flattering them; coax

*She knows she can cajole her father into doing anything for her.***calibre****noun** /'kælibə[r]/

the quality of something, especially a person's ability

*The firm needs more people of your calibre.***callisthenics****noun** /,kælis'theniks/

physical exercises intended to develop a strong and graceful body

*The physical instructor recommended callisthenics to his students.***callous****adjective** /'kæləs/

hard hearted; unsympathetic

*I abhor terrorists' callous disregard for human life.***calm****adjective** /kɑ:m/

quiet and still

*Everyone liked Hasan for his cool and calm approach towards things.***calypso****noun** /kə'lipsoʊ/

a Caribbean song about a subject of current interest

*Listening to a calypso is more interesting than reading the newspaper.***camaraderie****noun** /,kæmə'reɪdəri/

friendly feeling and goodwill amongst comrades

*What he loved about his job was the camaraderie amongst his colleagues.***cantankerous****adjective** /kæn'tæŋkərəs/

bad tempered and always complaining

*The school gatekeeper is a very cantankerous old man.***capacious****adjective** /kə'peɪʃəs/

spacious

*Thousands of travellers waited for their flights in the capacious lounges of the airport terminal.***capillary****noun** /kə'pɪləri/

any of the smallest tubes in the body which carry blood

The medical student was amazed to see how tiny each capillary was.

C

15 to 17
age group**carcinogenic****adjective** /ˌkɑːsɪnəˈdʒenɪk/

likely to cause cancer

*The carcinogenic activity of several carcinogens is attributed to the radiations they emit.***caricature****noun** /ˈkærɪkətʃʊə[r]/

a picture, description of somebody that makes them look funny by exaggerating certain characteristics
The caricature of the politician was very skilfully drawn.

carnage**noun** /ˈkɑːnɪdʒ/

the violent killing of a large number of people

*He could not forget the scene of carnage which he had witnessed as a boy.***carrion****noun** /ˈkæriən/

the decaying flesh of dead animals

*The crows were feeding on carrion at the side of the road.***carthorse****noun** /ˈkɑːtɜːs/

strong, large horse kept for pulling carts

*The man parked his carthorse right in the middle of the road.***castanets****noun** /ˌkæstəˈnets/

a musical instrument, used by Spanish dancers, consisting of two small round pieces of wood which are held in the hand and hit together with the fingers to make a noise

*The dancers were performing to the rhythm of castanets.***catadromous****noun** /kəˈtadrəməs/

(of fish) living in fresh water but migrating to marine waters to breed

*To breed, the catadromous eels travel from freshwater to the depths of the ocean.***catafalque****noun** /ˈkætəfælk/

a raised structure on which the body of a dead person lies

*The catafalque built for the president's body, was the most elaborate I have ever seen.***catalyst****noun** /ˈkætəlɪst/

a substance that makes a chemical reaction happen faster without itself being changed

*Iron is used as a catalyst in many chemical reactions.***catastrophe****noun** /kəˈtæstrəfi/

a sudden or widespread disaster

*The tsunami of December 2004, was a catastrophe that affected millions.***categorical****adjective** /ˌkætəˈɡɒrɪkəl/

explicit, direct, absolute

*After his categorical refusal yesterday, I do not expect him to change his mind.***caterpillar****noun** /ˈkætəpɪlə[r]/

the worm-like larva of a butterfly or moth

caucus**noun** /ˈkɔːkəs/

a meeting of the members or leaders of a political party to choose candidates or decide a common policy

*A caucus will be held on Tuesday to choose delegates to the party's national convention.***cease****verb** /siːs/

stop or end

The troops were ordered to cease fire.

cemetery**noun** /ˈsemətəri/

a place set apart for graves or tombs

*He was told that there was a large cemetery behind the hill.***centipede****noun** /ˈsentɪpiːd/

a small creature like an insect, with a long thin body and many legs

*A centipede was coming out of a stone wall.***centurion****noun** /senˈtʃʊəriən/

(in ancient Rome) an army officer who commanded 100 soldiers

*The centurion marched his men to the furthest point of the Roman Empire.***cephalopod****noun** /ˈsefələpəd/

a marine mollusc such as the octopus, squid, cuttlefish, or nautilus, having a large head, large eyes and prehensile tentacles

cerebral**adjective** /ˈserəbrəl/

relating to the mind rather than the feelings

*He writes extremely cerebral poetry and does not emphasise emotions enough.***cerebration****noun** /serɪbrəɪʃn/

thought

*Mathematical problems frequently require much cerebration.***ceremonious****adjective** /ˌserəˈməʊniəs/

extremely formal

*He unveiled the picture with a ceremonious gesture.***chaetognaths****noun** /ˈki:təɡnəθs/

marine invertebrates comprising of arrowworms

*No Sentence Required***chameleon****noun** /kəˈmiːliən/

a small lizard that can change its colour to that of its surroundings

chamois**noun** /ˈʃæmwɑː/

a species of goat antelope that lives in mountainous areas

chancellor**noun** /tʃɑːnsələ[r]/

an important official

*He was Chancellor of the Exchequer during the last government.***chant****noun** /tʃɑːnt/

words or phrases that a group of people shout or sing again and again

*To encourage the team, the crowd broke into a chant of "Winners! Winners!"***chaos****noun** /ˈkeɪɒs/

a state of great confusion and disorder

*The heavy snow has caused chaos on the roads.***charade****noun** /ʃəˈrɑːd/

a situation in which people pretend that something is true when it clearly is not

*Their whole marriage had been a charade; they never loved each other.***charisma****noun** /kəˈrɪzmə/

the powerful personal quality that some people have to attract and impress other people

The need for a political candidate to have charisma has increased with the enhanced role of the media.

C

15 to 17
age group**charred****adjective** /ˈtʃɑːd/

burnt and black

*He sat staring at the charred remains of his first attempt at a barbecue.***chassis****noun** /ˈʃæsi/

the frame that a vehicle is built on

*The body of the car had been destroyed in the accident, but the chassis was undamaged.***chasten****verb** /ˈtʃeɪsn/

to make somebody feel sorry for something they have done

*To chasten the students, the teacher gave them extra homework.***chastise****verb** /tʃæˈstaɪz/

to scold

*The coach began to chastise the team for their lack of commitment.***chattel****noun** /ˈtʃætəl/

something that belongs to you

*People do not like to be treated like chattel.***chauffeur****noun** /ˈʃəʊfə[r]/

a person employed to drive car

*They are looking for a chauffeur to drive their son to school.***chime****verb** /tʃaɪm/

to show time by making a ringing sound

*I heard the clock chime once.***chisel****noun** /ˈtʃɪzəl/

a tool with a sharp, flat edge at the end, used for shaping wood, stone or metal

*Mary cut her name into a block of stone using a hammer and a chisel.***choir****noun** /ˈkwaɪə[r]/

a group of people trained to sing together, especially in church services or public performances

*My son sings in his school choir.***cholesterol****noun** /kəˈlestəroʊl/

a substance found in blood, fat and most tissues of the body that can cause heart disease

*Eating large amounts of 'fast food' can lead to an elevated level of cholesterol in the blood.***chore****noun** /tʃɔː[r]/

a task that you do regularly

*He had one last chore to do before he could go out and play.***choreography****noun** /ˌkɔːriˈɒɡrəfi/

the designing and arranging the steps and movements in dances

*The choreography of the ballet was brilliantly done.***chronicle****verb** /ˈkrɒnɪkl/

to record events in the order in which they happened

*The gossip columnist was paid to chronicle news items on celebrities.***chrysalis****noun** /ˈkrɪsəlɪs/

the case around a caterpillar that is changing into a butterfly or moth

The butterfly emerged from its chrysalis and fluttered its wings.

15 to 17
age group

C

cicada**noun** /sɪˈkɑːdə/

an insect which, in the male, has a pair of resonating organs that produce a high-pitched, droning sound

cinematography**noun** /ˌsɪnəməˈtɒɡrəfi/

the art or process of making films/movies
Cinematography is now being offered as a degree course at many good universities.

circumlocution**noun** /ˌsɜːkəmleɪˈkjuːʃn/

indirect or roundabout verbal expression
Because he couldn't muster the courage to be blunt, he used circumlocution.

cirrocumulus**noun** /ˌsɪrəʊˈkjuːmjʊləs/

a high altitude cloud form consisting of small white rounded masses in regular groupings
Karachi's skies are usually covered with cirrocumulus during the summer evenings.

clairvoyant**noun** /kleɪˈvɔɪənt/

a person believed to be able to see future events or to communicate with people who are dead or far away
You don't have to be a clairvoyant to predict the outcome of the election.

claustrophobic**adjective** /ˌkloʊstrəˈfəʊbɪk/

giving a feeling of dread for confined places
Prisoners are usually forced to live in small claustrophobic cells.

coalesce**verb** /ˌkəʊəˈles/

to come together to form one larger body
I watched the rain drops on my window coalesce into streams as they neared the bottom of the frame.

coaxial**adjective** /kəʊˈæksɪəl/

having a common axis
Coaxial digital cables are the most common type of connection cable used for digital audio.

cobra**noun** /ˈkəʊbrə/

venomous snake, native to Asia and Africa and capable of expanding the skin of the neck to form a flattened hood

cockerel**noun** /ˈkɒkərəl/

a young male chicken

cocoon**noun** /kəˈkuːn/

a covering of silk thread that some insects make to protect themselves while they transform into adults
The insect was now old enough to come out of its cocoon.

cognisance**noun** /ˈkɒɡnɪzəns/

knowledge or understanding of something
He was deputed to bring the affair to the cognisance of the court.

cognisant**adjective** /ˈkɒɡnɪzənt/

having knowledge or an understanding of something
He believed that in order to succeed in life you must focus on cognisant personal development.

collaborate**verb** /kəˈlæbəreɪt/

to work together with somebody in order to achieve something
He decided to collaborate with a popular artist on designing a cover for his new book.

C

15 to 17
age group**collateral****adjective** /kə'lætərəl/

connected to something else, but in addition to it and less important

*Even targeted bombings result in some form of collateral damage.***combustible****adjective** /kəm'bʌstəbl/

able to catch fire easily

*The fire commissioner ordered that all combustible materials be kept in safe containers.***comeuppance****noun** /kʌm'ʌpəns/

a punishment or fate that one deserves

*I was glad to see that the bad guy got his comeuppance at the end of the film.***commensurate****adjective** /kə'menʃərət/

matching something in size, importance, quality

*His salary will be commensurate with his experience.***commiserate****verb** /kə'mɪzəreɪt/

to show sympathy

*They went to commiserate with their cousin on having lost the election.***comparatively****adverb** /kəm'pærətɪvli/

as compared to something else

*Comparatively speaking, flossing is better than using a dental stick.***compendium****noun** /kəm'pendiəm/

a collection of facts, drawings and photographs on a particular subject, especially in a book

*You will find a compendium on the subject, from our archives in the library.***compilation****noun** /ˌkɒmpɪ'leɪʃn/

a collection of items, especially pieces of music or writing, taken from different places and put together

*His latest CD is a compilation of all his best songs.***compliance****noun** /kəm'pleɪzəns/

willingness to accept what others say or do without protest

*Sometimes his compliance was seen as a weakness.***complaisant****adjective** /kəm'pleɪzənt/

readiness to please others

*Omer is the most complaisant child I've ever met.***compunction****noun** /kəm'pʌŋkʃn/

a feeling of guilt

*They used inside information without compunction.***concentric****adjective** /kən'sentɹɪk/

(of circles) having a common centre

*The planets do not orbit the Sun in concentric circles.***concession****noun** /kən'seʃn/

an act of giving something up, in order to end an argument or to make a situation less difficult

*It became apparent that one of the parties had to make a concession for the talks to move on.***conciliatory****adjective** /kən'sɪliətəri/

reconciling; pacifying

*She was still angry despite his conciliatory words.***concomitant****adjective** /kən'kɒmɪtənt/

happening at the same time as something else

Exercise has the concomitant result of feeling healthy and looking good.

15 to 17
age group

C

concuss**verb** /kən'kʌs/

to become unconscious or confused for a short time due to a blow on the head
The cricket ball hitting his head will probably concuss him.

condescension**noun** /kɒndɪ'senʃn/

an act or instance of assuming an air of superiority
With dry condescension Mr. Blain described the natives as "primitive" and "uncivilised."

condiment**noun** /kɒndɪmənts/

seasoning; spice
Each condiment adds to the rich flavour of the dish.

confiscate**verb** /'kɒnfɪskət/

to officially take something away from somebody
The headmaster decided to confiscate the mobile phone of any student found using one in class.

confluence**noun** /'kɒnfluəns/

the place where two rivers flow together and become one
They built the city at the confluence of two rivers.

conformity**noun** /kən'fɔ:məti/

behaviour or actions that follow the accepted rules of society
In conformity with the rules and regulations, she requested the chairman to preside over their annual meeting.

congenial**adjective** /kən'dʒi:niəl/

sympathetic, agreeable
My father loves to go out for a meal with congenial companions.

connivance**noun** /kə'naɪvəns/

help in doing something wrong
With the connivance of his friends, he made a plan to scare the teacher.

conscientious**adjective** /kɒnʃi'entʃəs/

taking care to do things carefully and correctly
As a conscientious editor, she checked every definition for its accuracy.

conservatoire**noun** /kən'sɜ:vətwaɪ[r]/

a school of music, drama especially in France
She studied at the Paris Conservatoire.

consonance**noun** /'kɒnsənəns/

agreement
The policy is popular because of its consonance with traditional party doctrine.

construe**verb** /kən'stru:/

to interpret
He decided to construe her remark as an apology and took the matter no further.

consummate**adjective** /kən'sʌmət/

extremely skilled; perfect
He gave a consummate performance as a troubled teenager in his latest film.

contemptuous**adjective** /kən'temptʃuəs/

scornful
She gave him a contemptuous look.

contingent**adjective** /kən'tɪndʒənt/

dependent on something that may or may not occur
In case of rain the teacher had a contingent plan for the kids.

C

15 to 17
age group**continuum****noun** /kən'tɪnjuəm/

a sequence of things of a similar type
Historians see the past, the present and the future as forming some kind of continuum.

contraflow**noun** /'kɒntrəfləʊ/

redirected traffic sharing the road with traffic coming in the other direction
The traffic police had to create a contraflow due to the reconstruction of the parallel road.

contravene**verb** /,kɒntrə'vi:n/

conflict with
He did not want to contravene the law in how he went about his business.

convergence**noun** /kən'vɜːdʒəns/

the process by which things stop being different and become the same
The president stressed the need to move towards greater economic convergence with neighbouring countries.

conversant**adjective** /kən'vɜːsnt/

familiar with something
Tourists are not always conversant with the customs of the countries they visit.

conveyance**noun** /kən'veɪəns/

a vehicle
During the transit strike, commuters used various kinds of conveyance to get to their destinations.

conviction**noun** /kən'vɪkʃn/

a strongly held belief
Nothing could shake the lawyer's conviction that his client was innocent.

coronagraph**noun** /kə'rɒnəgrɑːf/

a telescope for observation of the sun's corona
The coronagraph enables us to view the Sun's corona.

corroborate**verb** /kə'rɒbəreɪt/

to provide supporting evidence
Finding a witness to corroborate his client's story proved impossible.

corymb**noun** /'kɒrɪmb/

a flat-topped cluster of flowers
Crabapple flowers appear in corymbs.

cosmos**noun** /'kɒzməʊs/

the universe seen as a well-ordered whole
Astronauts are required to have basic knowledge of the cosmos.

countermand**verb** /,kaʊntə'mɑːnd/

to cancel an order that has been given
The new chairman wanted to countermand the last directive given by his predecessor.

covenant**noun** /'kʌvənənt/

a promise to somebody, or a legal agreement
We must comply with the terms of the covenant.

credence**noun** /'kriːdəns/

belief in or acceptance of something as the truth
I have little credence in his promises.

crescent**noun** /'kresnt/

a shape that resembles a segment of a ring tapering to points at the ends
The crescent on Pakistan's flag is white.

15 to 17
age group

C

cretaceous**adjective** /krɪ'teɪʃəs/

pertaining to the period from 146-65 million BC, when dinosaurs existed until their extinction
The end of the cretaceous period heralds a time of mass extinction for many groups of animals.

croak**noun** /krəʊk/

a low, harsh sound made in the throat, like the sound made by a frog
The doctor asked the patient a question but she could only manage a croak in response.

crocodile**noun** /'krɒkədɪl/

a large aquatic reptile, native to tropical and subtropical regions and having thick, armour-like skin and long tapering jaws

crocus**noun** /'krɒkəs/

a small yellow, purple or white flower that appears in early spring
She plucked a crocus from her garden.

crustacean**noun** /krʌ'steɪʃn/

any creature with a soft body that is divided into sections, and a hard outer shell

cryptic**adjective** /'kriptɪk/

with a meaning that is hidden or not easily understood
Her cryptic smile left us unsure of her feelings.

cuckoo**noun** /'kʊku/

a greyish European bird characterised with a call that sounds like its name.

culmination**noun** /kʌlmɪ'neɪʃn/

attainment of the highest point
His inauguration as president marked the culmination of his political career.

cumbersome**adjective** /'kʌmbəsəm/

large and heavy; difficult to carry
The new television was a cumbersome object to get up the stairs.

curmudgeonly**adjective** /kɜ:'mʌdʒənli/

bad-tempered or miserly
Because of his curmudgeonly behaviour, he received very few invitations.

cygnet**noun** /'sɪgnət/

a young swan

cytoplasm**noun** /'saɪtəʊpləzəm/

cell substance between the cell membrane and the nucleus
Cytoplasm is all the living material in a cell, excluding the nucleus.

D

15 to 17
age group**dais****noun** /'deɪs/

a stage, especially at one end of a room, on which people stand to make speeches
When he approached the dais, he was greeted with cheers from the audience.

daub**verb** /dɔ:b/

to spread a substance such as paint thickly onto something
They planned to daub the walls of the building with thick red paint.

dauntless**adjective** /'dɔ:ntləs/

not easily frightened, bold
Despite the danger involved, the dauntless soldier volunteered for the assignment.

dawdle**verb** /'dɔ:dl/

to take a long time to do something or go somewhere
I watched her dawdle her way to the tennis courts.

dearth**noun** /dɜ:θ/

a lack of something
There was a dearth of reliable information on the subject.

decapitate**verb** /dɪ'kæpɪteɪt/

to cut someone's head off
They used to decapitate convicted murderers in France.

deceased**noun** /dɪ'si:st/

dead person
The body of the deceased was carried to the graveyard.

deception**noun** /dɪ'sepʃn/

the act of deliberately making somebody believe something that is not true
His deception came as a shock to everyone.

decipher**verb** /dɪ'saɪfə[r]/

to decode
I could not decipher the doctor's handwriting.

decomposition**noun** /,dɪ:kɒmpə'zɪʃn/

the process of breaking down gradually by natural chemical processes
The science class observed the decomposition of the orange over a period of two weeks.

decrepit**adjective** /dɪ'kreɪt/

very old and in poor condition or health
The movie had been shot in an old and decrepit police station.

decrepitude**noun** /dɪ'kreɪtju:d/

the state of being old and in poor condition or health
The house had a forlorn air of decrepitude.

defeatist**adjective** /dɪ'fi:tɪst/

expecting not to succeed
If you maintain your defeatist attitude, you will never succeed in life.

defection**noun** /dɪ'fekʃn/

desertion
There has been a defection from the ruling party.

deference**noun** /'defərəns/

respectful behaviour
She showed deference to the wishes of her parents in planning her wedding.

15 to 17
age group

D

delicatessen**noun** /ˌdɛlɪkəˈtesn/

a shop that sells cooked meats and cheeses, and special or unusual foods that come from other countries

Her brother is the owner of a delicatessen.

delinquent**noun** /dɪˈlɪŋkwənt/

a young person who shows a tendency to commit crimes

A juvenile delinquent is usually sent to a special school by the courts.

deliquescence**noun** /ˌdɛlɪˈkwɛsəns/

liquification of salts by absorption of moisture from the atmosphere

Some of the salt specimens in the lab melted due to deliquescence.

delusion**noun** /dɪˈluːʒn/

a false belief or opinion about yourself or your situation

He laboured under the delusion that success was at hand.

demeanour**noun** /dɪˈmiːnəʊ[r]/

the way one looks or behaves

We were greatly impressed by his gentlemanly demeanour.

demography**noun** /dɪˈmɒɡrəfi/

population changes over a period of time

In order to complete the survey it is essential to include information regarding demography.

denouement**noun** /ˌdɛɪˈnuːmənt/

the end of a play, book in which everything is explained or settled; the end result of a situation

I enjoyed the unexpected denouement in the film we watched last night.

derivative**noun** /dɪˈrɪvətɪv/

something developed or produced from something else

Petrol is a derivative of crude oil.

derogatory**adjective** /dɪˈrɒɡətəri/

critical; discrediting

He resented her derogatory remarks.

destitute**adjective** /ˈdɛstɪtʃuːt/

without money, food and the other things necessary for life

Destitute beggars live on the streets.

desuetude**noun** /ˈdɛswɪˌtʃud/

disused condition

People find it difficult to understand words that have fallen into desuetude.

dexterity**noun** /dɛkˈstɛrəti/

skill in using your hands

A child's dexterity is tested by getting him to place blocks on top of each other.

diabetes**noun** /ˌdaɪəˈbiːtiːz/

a medical condition, caused by lack of insulin, which makes the patient produce a lot of urine and feel very thirsty

Even though Atif's mother has diabetes, she doesn't let it hinder her active lifestyle.

dialogue**noun** /ˈdaɪəlɒɡ/

a conversation between two or more people

The dialogue between the leading actors in the second act was the best part of the play.

D

15 to 17
age group**diaphanous****adjective** /daɪ'æfənəs/

(of cloth or fabric) so light, delicate and fine that you can see through it

*The veil was made of diaphanous white silk.***diarrhoea****noun** /ˌdaɪə'riə/

a condition in which faeces are discharged from the bowels frequently

*Unfortunately she had a bad case of diarrhoea on the day of her exam.***diatribe****noun** /'daɪətraɪb/

bitter verbal attack

*The union launched a diatribe against the company.***dicey****adjective** /'daɪsi/

uncertain and dangerous

*There was a dicey moment as one of our party made a risky climb up the cliff wall.***diegesis****noun** /diə'dʒɪsɪs/

narrative or plot, typically of a film

*The diegesis of his new film was so complicated that even the director had trouble understanding it.***differentiable****adjective** /dɪfə'renʃɪəbəl/

able to be differentiated

*The differentiable specimens had minute variations.***dilettante****noun** /ˌdɪlə'tænti/a person who does or studies something, but is not serious about it and does not have much knowledge
*I am looking for a serious painter, not a dilettante.***diminuendo****noun** /dɪˌmɪnju'endəʊ/

a gradual decrease in how loudly a piece of music is played or sung

*The song was played with a diminuendo.***diocese****noun** /'daɪəsɪs/

a district under the care of a bishop

*The diocese raised money to help alleviate poverty in the city.***discern****verb** /dɪ'sɜːn/

to know, recognise or understand something, especially something that is not obvious

*His father was unable to discern whether or not his son was telling the truth.***disconsolate****adjective** /dɪs'kɒnsələt/

very unhappy and disappointed

*The disconsolate players left for home without a trophy.***discountenance****verb** /dɪs'kaʊntəns/

to embarrass

*With such composure, he survived every attempt to discountenance him.***discrepancy****noun** /dɪs'kreɪnsɪ/

inconsistency

*The teacher noticed a marked discrepancy between the quality of Maya's homework and her class work.***discursive****adjective** /dɪs'kɜːsɪv/

rambling; without structure

*They were irritated and bored by his discursive comments.***disheartened****adjective** /dɪs'hɑːtnd/

lacking hope or confidence

The disheartened team did not stay for the farewell dinner.

15 to 17
age group

D

dispassionate**adjective** /dɪs'pæʃənət/

not influenced by emotion

*The sensitive case required a dispassionate prosecutor.***dispirited****adjective** /dɪ'spɪrɪtɪd/

having no hope or enthusiasm

*His dispirited attitude towards life is a result of many unfortunate events.***dispossessed****noun** /ɪ'dɪspə'zest/people who have had property taken away from them
*The dispossessed of today's world are the refugees who live in abject poverty.***disputatious****adjective** /ɪ'dɪspju'teɪʃəs/

argumentative; fond of argument

*People avoided discussing contemporary issues with him because of his disputatious behaviour.***disquisition****noun** /ɪ'dɪskwɪ'zɪʃn/

a long complicated speech or written report on a particular subject

*In his disquisition, he outlined the steps he had taken to reach his conclusion.***dissident****noun** /dɪ'sɪdənt/

a person who disagrees, especially someone who opposes his government

*He was a political dissident in his youth.***distract****adjective** /dɪ'stræɪt/

inattentive or preoccupied

*The distract student was unable to deliver his speech.***divergent****adjective** /daɪ'vɜːdʒənt/

differing in character, form or opinion; deviating

*The two witnesses presented the jury with remarkably divergent accounts of the same incident.***divination****noun** /ɪ'dɪvɪ'neɪʃn/

the act of finding out and saying what will happen in the future

*I base my opinions not on any special gift of divination but on the laws of probability.***doctrinaire****adjective** /ɪ'dɒktrɪ'neə[r]/

strictly following a theory in all circumstances, even if there are practical problems or disagreements

*The repressive response of the doctrinaire hard-liners crushed Weng's dreams of democracy.***dodo****noun** /'dɒdɒʊ/

an extinct, large, clumsy, flightless bird of the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean

doe**noun** /ɪ'dəʊ/

a female deer, rabbit or hare

dolphin**noun** /'dɒlfɪn/

a marine cetacean mammal related to the whale but generally smaller and having a beak-like snout

domineering**adjective** /ɪ'dɒmɪ'nɪəriŋ/

controlling; overbearing

*His arrogant, domineering manner made people resent him.***dormouse****noun** /'dɔːmaʊs/

a small animal like a mouse, with a tail covered in fur

D

15 to 17
age group**dossier****noun** /'dɒsiə/

a collection of documents

*The company records contain a dossier on him.***dowager****noun** /'daʊədʒə[r]/

a woman of high social rank who has a title from her dead husband

*It was an honour to meet the dowager Duchess of Norfolk.***draught****noun** /dra:ft/

a flow of cool air in a room

*I got a stiff neck from the draught coming from the window.***dreary****adjective** /'drɪəri/

dull or boring

*During his chequered career he had lived in five star hotels as well as dreary boarding houses.***dromedary****noun** /'drɒmədəri/

a one-humped domesticated camel widely used as a beast of burden in northern Africa and western Asia

dubious**adjective** /'dju:biəs/

of doubtful result

*I felt that going to the beach at midnight was a rather dubious idea.***ductile****adjective** /'dʌktai/

(of a metal) that can be made into a thin wire

*Copper is a ductile metal.***dulcet****adjective** /'dʌlsɪt/

sounding sweet and pleasant

*I recognised her because of her dulcet voice.***duplicity****noun** /dju:'plɪsəti/

dishonest behaviour that is intended to make somebody believe something that is not true

*People were shocked when they found out about his duplicity.***dwindle****verb** /'dwɪndl/

to get smaller gradually

*It was depressing to watch my savings dwindle to nothing.***dyke****noun** /daɪk/

a long thick wall constructed to prevent flooding especially from the sea

*To prevent the village being flooded, a temporary dyke was created around the lake.***dyslexia****noun** /dɪs'leksiə/

a disorder of the brain that causes difficulty in reading and spelling

*Dyslexia has become commonly diagnosed among children nowadays.***dystrophia****noun** /dɪs'trɒfɪə/

when lake water is too acidic and poor in oxygen to support life

The lake was classified with a high level of dystrophia and couldn't support any living organisms in it.

15 to 17
age group

E

ebullience**noun** /ɪˈbʌliəns/

high spirits

*She emanated ebullience after learning of her promotion.***ecclesiastic****noun** /ɪˈkliːziˈæstɪk/

a priest or minister in the Christian Church

*As a humble ecclesiastic, he barely made enough money to make ends meet.***ecclesiastical****adjective** /ɪˈkliːziˈæstɪkəl/

relating to the church

*They visited an old ecclesiastical building.***eclectic****adjective** /ɪˈklektɪkəl/

not following one style or set of ideas but choosing from a wide variety

*The exhibition contained an eclectic collection of paintings and photographs.***eclipse****noun** /ɪˈklɪps/an obscuring of the light from one celestial body by the passage of another between it and the observer
*In ancient times people thought that an eclipse was a harbinger of bad luck.***effervesce****verb** /ɪˈfəˈves/

to produce bubbles of gas, to come out in bubbles

*When you unscrew a bottle of cola, it will effervesce.***effervescence****noun** /ɪˈfəˈvesns/

enthusiasm and energy

*She was never depressed for long; her natural effervescence soon reasserted itself.***elaboration****noun** /ɪˈlæbəreɪʃn/

the addition of details

*You do not have much time to speak, so avoid any unnecessary elaboration in your speech.***elicit****verb** /ɪˈlɪsɪt/

to draw out information by reasoning or by questioning

*The teacher was able to elicit the names of the students involved in the practical joke.***ellipsis****noun** /ɪˈlɪpsɪs/

the act of leaving out a word or words deliberately, when the meaning can be understood without them

*The paragraph ended with an ellipsis.***elliptical****adjective** /ɪˈlɪptɪkəl/

ambiguous, either purposely or because key words have been left out

*An elliptical remark baffles one because it is not perfectly clear.***emancipate****verb** /ɪˈmænsɪpeɪt/

to free somebody, especially from legal, political or social restrictions

*Attempts to emancipate slaves were unpopular in Mississippi.***embellish****verb** /ɪmˈbeɪlɪʃ/

to ornament something; add details to it

*In order to embellish the design, the artist added flowers to it.***embezzle****verb** /ɪmˈbezl/

to take money that was left in your care

He was planning to embezzle company funds to pay for his vacation in Europe.

E

15 to 17
age group**embezzlement****noun** /ɪm'beɪzləmənt/

theft of money that you are responsible for or that belongs to your employer

*He was found guilty of embezzlement.***emblazon****verb** /ɪm'bleɪzn/

to decorate something with a design

*The man was asked to emblazon the baseball caps with the team's logo.***embryology****noun** /ɛmbri'ɒlədʒi/the scientific study of the development of embryos
*She wants to go to a university renowned for its department of research in embryology.***embryonic****adjective** /ɛmbri'ɒnɪk/

in an early stage of development

*The plan, as yet, only exists in embryonic form.***emendation****noun** /ɛːmen'deɪʃn/

a change or correction in a text

*A minor emendation was made to the minister's speech.***emeritus****adjective** /ɪ'merɪtəs/

retired but retained in an honorary capacity

*He is an emeritus professor of biology.***eminent****adjective** /ɪ'mɪnənt/

famous and respected, especially in a particular profession

*He is an eminent architect.***emphatic****adjective** /ɪm'fætɪk/

uttered with emphasis

*He responded to my question in an immediate and emphatic manner.***empirical****adjective** /ɪm'pɪrɪkəl/

based on experiments or experiences rather than ideas or theories

*He distrusted hunches and relied entirely on empirical data.***empiricism****noun** /ɪm'pɪrɪsɪzəm/a belief that knowledge is derived from observation
*He supported empiricism and had little patience with theories.***enamoured****adjective** /ɪ'næmərd/

liking a lot

*Sara was quite enamoured of the fashion industry.***encomiastic****adjective** /enkəmiæstɪk/

giving praise

*Some critics believe that his encomiastic statements about Napoleon were inspired by his desire for material advancement.***encroachment****noun** /ɪn'krəʊtʃmənt/

a gradual intrusion

*The encroachment of new factories in the neighbourhood lowered the value of property.***encumber****verb** /ɪn'kʌmbə[r]/

to make it difficult to do something

*Their heavy cases encumber them throughout the journey.***endearment****noun** /ɪn'diəmənt/a word or an expression that is used to show affection
Your loving endearment that came with the flowers brightened up my day.

15 to 17
age group

E

enigmatic**adjective** /ɛnɪg'mætɪk/

mysterious and difficult to understand

*Many have tried to fathom the enigmatic smile of Mona Lisa.***entirety****noun** /ɪn'taɪərəti/

the whole of something

*We watched the programme in its entirety.***entomologist****noun** /ɪ,ɛntə'mɒlədʒɪst/

person who is trained to study insects

*An entomologist can help create insecticides for various crops.***entomology****noun** /ɪ,ɛntə'mɒlədʒi/

the study of insects

*I found entomology the least interesting part of my biology course.***entrepreneur****noun** /ɪ,ɒnrəprə'nɜː[r]/

a person who makes money by starting or running a business

*As an entrepreneur, she decided to open an internet cafe in her area.***envision****verb** /ɪn'vɪʒn/

to imagine a future situation

*They envision a prosperous future for the country.***enzyme****noun** /'enzaim/

a biological substance, which helps a chemical change happen or happen quickly, without being changed itself

*The new detergent formula had a special enzyme that cleaned clothes better.***eocene****adjective** /'iːəʊsiːn/

relating to, or denoting, the 2nd epoch of the Tertiary period, which occurred 40 million years ago

*The Himalayas were formed during the eocene period.***ephemeris****noun** /ɪ'fɛmərɪs/

data or tabular statement of the calculated positions of a celestial body at regular intervals throughout a period

*Ephemerides can be used by navigators to determine their longitude while at sea.***epiphany****noun** /ɪ'pɪfəni/

a moment of sudden and great revelation

*I experienced an epiphany that changed the way I viewed myself.***epitaph****noun** /'epɪtə:f/

words that are written or said about a person, especially on a gravestone

*In his will, he dictated the epitaph he wanted on his tombstone.***equanimity****noun** /ɪ,ɛkwə'nɪməti/

calmness of temperament

*She accepted the prospect of her operation with equanimity.***equinox****noun** /'iːkwɪnɒks/

the time of year when day and night are equal in length

*The autumnal equinox is on or around 22nd of September.***escape****verb** /ɪ'skeɪp/

to get away from a place from where you have been kept as a prisoner or not allowed to leave

He made five attempts to escape from prison but failed each time.

E

15 to 17
age group**escutcheon****noun** /ɪˈskʌtʃn/

a shield or emblem bearing a coat of arms
The knight carried his escutcheon with great pride.

espalier**noun** /ɪˈspæliə[r]/

a fruit tree or ornamental shrub whose branches are trained to grow flat against a wall, supported on a lattice
I explained to the gardener that I wanted an espalier on the wall, where it would get the sun.

estranged**adjective** /ɪˈstreɪndʒd/

no longer living with your husband, wife or family
He did not want to go to the party where his estranged wife was expected to be.

eulogy**noun** /ˈjuːlədʒi/

a speech or piece of writing praising somebody or something very much
The speaker delivered a heart-warming eulogy about his colleague.

europa**noun** /juəˈrɒpə/

large natural satellite of the planet Jupiter

There has been speculation that life might exist underneath the icy crust of Europa.

eutectic**adjective** /juːˈtektɪk/

denoting a mixture of substances in fixed proportions that melts and freezes at a single temperature
The chemicals were mixed together in accordance to their eutectic point.

eutrophic**adjective** /juːˈtrɒfɪk/

the decomposition, and so depreivation of oxygen to, the previously abundant plant life of a lake rich in organic and mineral nutrients
The fish did not survive due to the eutrophic condition in the lake.

evanescent**adjective** /ɪˈvæːnesnt/

disappearing quickly from sight or memory
I love to search the night sky for the fleeting, evanescent beauty of a shooting star.

eviscerate**verb** /ɪˈvɪsəreɪt/

to disembowel
I witnessed two vultures eviscerate the carcass of a buffalo near my village.

evocation**noun** /ɛvəˈkeɪʃən/

the act of recalling something to the conscious mind
The lawyer was successful in winning the case through his evocation of some of the forgotten details.

ewe**noun** /juː/

a female sheep, especially when full grown

exacerbate**verb** /ɪgˈzæsəbeɪt/

to make something worse
By scratching a skin rash, you exacerbate the condition.

exasperate**verb** /ɪgˈzæspəreɪt/

annoy or irritate somebody very much
Traffic conditions in the city continue to exasperate me.

excruciating**adjective** /ɪkˈskruːʃɪeɪɪŋ/

extremely painful
He went through excruciating pain when his arm was fractured.

exculpate**verb** /ɪˈeksklɪpeɪt/

show or declare that somebody is not guilty of wrongdoing
We felt that we had to exculpate the innocent man as soon as we could.

15 to 17
age group

E

exhilarate**verb** /ɪgˈzɪləreɪt/

to excite

*Speed can exhilarate any young driver.***exhort****verb** /ɪgˈzɔ:t/to try hard to persuade somebody to do something
*The teacher decided to exhort the students to work harder for their final exams.***exile****noun** /ˈeksaɪl/the state of being sent to live in a country that is not your own, especially for political reasons or as a punishment
*He wrote some of his finest novels while in exile.***existential****adjective** /ɪgzɪˈstɛnʃəl/

connected with human existence

*The professor of existential philosophy enlightened the students with his views.***exorbitant****adjective** /ɪgˈzɔ:bitənt/

(of a price) much too high

*The exorbitant air fare means that I can only visit my mother once a year.***expatiate****verb** /ɪkˈspeɪʃieɪt/

to write or speak in detail about a subject

*I sat with the architect and listened to him expatiate on his vision of a new city.***expedient****adjective** /ɪkˈspi:diənt/

useful or necessary for a particular purpose, but not always fair or right

*Most people, faced with a decision, will choose the most expedient option.***expedite****verb** /ˈɛkspədaɪt/

to make a process happen more quickly

*Please do what you can to expedite the building work.***expeditiously****adverb** /ɛkspəˈdi:ʃəsli/

rapidly and efficiently

*The work was carried out as expeditiously as possible.***explicit****adjective** /ɪkˈsplɪsɪt/

clear and easy to understand

*He gave me explicit directions on how to get there.***exploit****verb** /ɪkˈsplɔɪt/

to treat a person or situation as an opportunity to gain an advantage for yourself

*He used his contacts to exploit the situation.***extemporaneous****adjective** /ɪkˌstɛmpəˈreɪniəs/

carried out or performed with little or no preparation; impromptu

*They gave a delightful, extemporaneous performance as an encore.***extenuate****verb** /ɪkˈstɛnʃueɪt/

to lessen or attempt to lessen the seriousness of something

*It is easier for us to extenuate our own short comings than those of others.***exterior****noun** /ɪkˈstriəriə[r]/

the external face of something

The exterior of the house needed repair after the storm.

E

15 to 17
age group

extricate

verb /'ekstrikeɪt/

to escape or enable to escape from a difficult situation

He found that he could not extricate himself from the meeting.

exuberant

adjective /ɪg'zju:bərənt/

full of energy, excitement and happiness

She gave an exuberant performance.

15 to 17
age group

F

facetious**adjective** /fə'si:ʃəs/

trying to be amusing but in a way or at a time that is not considered appropriate

*Anna's facetious behaviour made everyone at the dining table angry.***facilitate****verb** /fə'sɪlɪteɪ/

to make an action or a process possible or easier

*My job is to facilitate the boarding of passengers at Heathrow Airport.***factitious****adjective** /fæk'tɪʃəs/

not genuine but created deliberately and made to appear to be true

*I could see right through his factitious enthusiasm.***faeces****noun** /fi:si:z/

excrement; solid waste matter that leaves the body

*The faeces of most aquatic animals are enclosed in a membrane.***fallacious****adjective** /fə'leɪʃəs/

wrong; based on a false idea

*I could not listen to his fallacious arguments any longer.***fallacy****noun** /'fæləsi/

a false idea that many people believe is true

*It is a fallacy to say that the camera never lies.***falter****verb** /'fɔ:ltə[r]/

to become weaker or less effective

*I heard his voice falter as he began his speech.***fanaticism****noun** /fə'nætɪsɪzəm/

extreme beliefs or behaviour, especially in connection with religion or politics

*The leader of the group was held responsible for the fanaticism of his followers.***farce****noun** /fɑ:s/

a situation or an event that is so unfair or badly organised that it becomes ridiculous

*The trial was a complete farce.***fascicle****noun** /fæsɪk'l/

a separately published instalment of a book or other printed work

*Charles Dickens published the first fascicle of his novel, A Tale of Two Cities, to great acclaim.***fastidious****adjective** /fæ'stɪdiəs/

carefully selective

*Everything was planned in fastidious detail.***fathom****verb** /'fæðəm/

to understand or find an explanation for something

*I cannot fathom the twisted workings of his mind.***feasible****adjective** /'fi:zəbl/

likely to be achieved

*It could be a more feasible project if more people are hired.***felicitous****adjective** /fə'lɪsɪtəs/

very suitable; giving a good result

*He was famous for his felicitous remarks.***ferocious****adjective** /fə'rəʃəs/

very aggressive or violent

Our neighbour has a ferocious guard dog.

F

15 to 17
age group**ferrule****noun** /'feru:l/

a piece of metal or rubber that covers the end of an umbrella or a stick to protect it

The old lady's walking-stick slipped because the ferrule had come off.

fiasco**noun** /fi'æskəʊ/

something that does not succeed, often in a way that causes embarrassment

Our last party was a complete fiasco because the caterers went to the wrong address.

fictitious**adjective** /fɪk'tɪʃəs/

invented; not true

We are interested in the source of these fictitious rumours.

figurative**adjective** /'fɪgərətɪv/

used in a way that is different from the usual meaning, in order to create a particular mental image
"He exploded with rage" is a figurative expression.

figurine**noun** /'fɪgərɪn/

a small statue of a person or animal used as an ornament

As she was cleaning the mantelpiece, the figurine fell and smashed to pieces.

filch**verb** /fɪltʃ/

to steal, commonly, that which is of little value

He tried to filch my pencils.

filigree**noun** /'fɪlɪgri/

delicate decoration made from gold, silver or copper wire

The filigree on the earring enhanced its beauty.

firmament**noun** /'fɜ:məmənt/

(old use or literary) the sky

He is a rising star in the literary firmament.

fission**noun** /'fɪʃn/

(physics) the act or process of splitting the nucleus of an atom, when a large amount of energy is produced

Energy is produced in the sun by nuclear fission.

flabbergast**verb** /'flæbəgɑ:st/

to astonish; to strike with wonder

This news will flabbergast all those who had given up hope.

flagellate**verb** /'flædʒəleɪt/

to whip yourself or somebody else, especially as a religious punishment

Some people believe that if they flagellate themselves they will earn many spiritual rewards.

flagellum**noun** /flə'dʒeləm/

a long whiplike outgrowth from a cell that acts as an organ of locomotion

The scientist was successful in making flagellum in a test tube.

flamboyant**adjective** /flæm'bɔɪənt/

showy; ostentatious

Freddie Mercury was a flamboyant star of the British hard rock scene.

flea**noun** /fli:/

a small, wingless, bloodsucking insect that has legs adapted for jumping and is parasitic on warm-blooded animals

15 to 17
age group

F

florigen**noun** /ˈflɔːrɪdʒən/

a plant hormone that promotes flowering
Florigen induced plants are a boon to the horticulture industry.

flotsam**noun** /ˈflɒtsəm/

parts of boats, pieces of wood or rubbish that are found floating on the sea or along the shore
He took home an interesting piece of flotsam that he found on the beach.

fluctuation**noun** /ˈflʌktʃuːeɪʃn/

variation in size, amount, quality
The frequent fluctuation of electricity has resulted in my refrigerator breaking down.

fluorescent**adjective** /ˌflɔːresnt/

producing light by a form of radiation
He wore a fluorescent band across his coat to be visible at night.

fluoridation**noun** /ˌflɔːrɪˈdeɪʃn/

the addition of fluoride to drinking water to help prevent tooth decay
Some people are against the fluoridation of potable water.

fluvial**adjective** /ˈfluːviəl/

of relating to, or living in a stream of river
The fluvial processes comprise of the motion of the sediment and the erosion of the river bed.

fluxion**noun** /ˈflʌkʃən/

a function corresponding to the rate of change of a variable quantity
In the past, people could tell time by the fluxion of sundials.

foible**noun** /ˈfɔɪbl/

a silly habit or strange or weak aspect of a person's character, that is considered harmless
He had the annoying foible of twiddling his thumbs.

forbearance**noun** /fɔːˈbearəns/

patience
The woman exercised much forbearance when dealing with her naughty children.

foreboding**noun** /fɔːˈbəʊdɪŋ/

a premonition, especially of misfortune
She had a foreboding that the news would be bad.

forensic**adjective** /fəˈrensɪk/

connected with the scientific tests used by the police when trying to solve a crime
Fifty years after the murder, forensic scientists were able to solve the crime.

forfeit**verb** /ˈfɔːfɪt/

give up the right to something
He had to forfeit the match because he failed the drugs test.

formaldehyde**noun** /fɔːˈmældɪhaɪd/

a liquid made by mixing formaldehyde and water, used for preserving biological specimens
Formaldehyde is used in the manufacture of resins and fertilisers.

formidable**adjective** /ˈfɔːmɪdəbl/

impressive or powerful
We must not take the battle lightly as we are facing a formidable foe.

F

15 to 17
age group**forsythia****noun** /fɔː'saɪθiə/

a shrub native to Asia and widely cultivated for its early-blooming yellow flowers

When spring comes, forsythia bursts into yellow blossoms spreading from the ground to the tip of each branch.

forthright**adjective** /'fɔːθraɪt/

direct and honest in manner and speech

He has a reputation for being a forthright critic.

fortitudinous**adjective** /,fɔːtɪ'tjuːdnəs/

courageous

Citizens wish to see a fortitudinous leadership in the country.

fortuitous**adjective** /fɔː'tjuːɪtəs/

happening by chance, especially a lucky chance that brings a good result

His success was due to fortuitous circumstances.

fowl**noun** /faʊl/

a bird, especially one kept on a farm, especially the common, widely domesticated chicken

A chicken is a type of fowl.

frankincense**noun** /'fræŋkɪnsɛns/

a substance that is burnt to give a pleasant smell

The Romans burned frankincense on their altars and at cremations.

fratricide**noun** /'frætɪrɪsaɪd/

the crime of killing one's brother

The risk of fratricide has always been a consequence of civil warfare.

fraudulent**adjective** /'frɔːdjələnt/

intended to deceive somebody, usually in order to make money illegally

The government is trying to stop fraudulent and misleading advertisements.

frenetic**adjective** /frə'netɪk/

involving a lot of energy and activity in a way that is not organised

His frenetic activities convinced us that he had no action plan prepared.

frolic**noun** /'frɒlɪk/

a lively, enjoyable activity during which people forget their problems and responsibilities

The children are having a frolic in the garden.

frolicsome**adjective** /'frɒlɪksəm/

lively and playful

The frolicsome puppy tried to run away with my shoe.

fulfilling**adjective** /fʊl'fɪlɪŋ/

making someone satisfied or happy through allowing their character or abilities to develop fully

At long last I have found a fulfilling and well paid job.

fumble**verb** /'fʌmbəl/

to hold or handle something clumsily

I always fumble with my notes nervously before I begin a speech.

functionary**noun** /'fʌŋkʃənəri/

a person with official duties

As his case was transferred from one functionary to another, he lost hope of ever getting his work done.

15 to 17
age group

F

furtherance

noun /fɜːðərəns/

the act of furthering or helping forward; promotion; advancement; progress

He took these actions purely in the furtherance of his own interests.

fusillade

noun /ˌfjuːzəlɪd/

a rapid series of shots fired from one or more guns

The gangster was shot in a fusillade of bullets fired from all sides.

G

15 to 17
age group**gaffe****noun** /gæf/

a mistake that a person makes in public or in a social situation, especially something embarrassing

He blushed when he realised what a gaffe he had made.

gaiters**noun** /'geɪtə[r]s/

protective coverings of cloth or leather for the ankles and lower legs

The stonemason presented himself for work wearing a pair of strong leather gaiters.

garret**noun** /'gærət/

a room, often dark and unpleasant, at the top of the house especially in the roof

There is some old furniture in the garret that I'm giving away.

garrulity**noun** /gærjʊlɪti/

excessive talking, especially about trivial matters

His extreme garrulity irritated his colleagues.

gastronomy**noun** /gæ'strɒnəmi/

the art and practice of cooking and eating good food

Whilst he was in Europe, he developed a keen interest in gastronomy.

gastropod**noun** /'gæstrəpɒd/

a mollusc such as the snail, slug, or limpet

The thing sticking to a rock was a gastropod.

gawp**verb** /gɔ:p/

to stare at somebody or something in a rude or stupid way

As a child I was told not to gawp at strangers.

gecko**noun** /'gekəʊ/

a small tropical and subtropical lizard having toes with suction cups that enable them to climb on vertical surfaces

gelignite**noun** /'dʒelɪɡnaɪt/

a powerful explosive

The engineers used gelignite to blast a tunnel through the mountain.

generality**noun** /,dʒenə'ræləti/

a statement that discusses general principles or issues rather than details or particular examples

To say that women are bad drivers is a generality and should be avoided.

genial**adjective** /'dʒi:niəl/

friendly and cheerful

He is liked by everyone because of his genial manner.

genocide**noun** /'dʒenəsəɪd/

the murder of a whole race or group of people

The genocide in Rwanda is still remembered with abhorrence.

genteel**adjective** /dʒen'ti:l/

behaving in a very polite way, often in order to make people think that you are from a high social class

Her genteel speech occasionally lapsed into her original cockney accent.

genuflect**verb** /'dʒenjʊflekt/

to bend the knee, as in worship

He did not genuflect when the leader entered the room.

15 to 17
age group

G

geometrician**noun** /ˌdʒi:əmi'triʃən/

a person who is practiced in or who studies geometry
Proficiency in mathematics is a pre-requisite for a geometrician.

geriatric**adjective** /ˌdʒeri'ætrɪk/

concerned with old people
The geriatric ward is the busiest in the hospital.

gerontology**noun** /ˌdʒerɒn'tɒlədʒi/

the scientific study of old age and the process of growing old
As a student of gerontology, she often visits old people's homes.

gesticulate**verb** /dʒe'stɪkjuleɪt/

to use expressive movements of the hands or body with or instead of speech
He would often gesticulate during his lectures.

geyser**noun** /gi:zə[r]/

a natural spring that sometimes sends hot water or steam up into the air
The geyser will remain quiescent for twenty-four hours after it erupts.

gherkin**noun** /'gɜ:kɪn/

a small cucumber that has been preserved in vinegar before being eaten
I always eat a gherkin with my cheese sandwich.

ghetto**noun** /'getəʊ/

a part of a city, especially a slum area, occupied by a minority group or groups
The pop star reminisced about his childhood in the ghetto.

gibberish**noun** /'dʒɪbəriʃ/

words that have no meaning or are impossible to understand
You were talking gibberish in your sleep.

gibbet**noun** /'dʒɪbɪt/

an upright wooden structure on which criminals used to be hanged; the gallows
We saw a gibbet in the Tower of London from the seventeenth century.

gingivitis**noun** /ˌdʒɪndʒɪ'vaɪtəs/

a condition in which the gums around the teeth become painful, red and swollen
Gingivitis is often caused by bad oral hygiene.

giraffe**noun** /dʒə'ra:f/

an African mammal with a long neck and legs, a tan coat with orange or black blotches, and short horns

glacial**adjective** /'gleɪʃl/

caused or made by glaciers
The deep valley had a glacial origin.

gladden**verb** /'glædn/

to make someone feel pleased or happy
They came to a conclusion that will gladden the hearts of all animal-rights activists.

glimmer**noun** /'glɪmə[r]/

a faint unsteady light
We could see a glimmer of light on the far shore.

globule**noun** /'glɒbjʊ:l/

a little globe; a small particle of matter, of a spherical form
A globule of fat dripped from the meat.

G

15 to 17
age group**gluttonous****adjective** /ˈɡlʌtənəs/

eating and drinking too much

*The boy's gluttonous appetite will cause him health problems in the future.***gnat****noun** /næt/

a small, biting, two-winged fly

gnaw**verb** /nɔː/

to keep on biting or chewing something hard, so that it gradually disappears

*My dog will gnaw on a juicy bone for hours.***gouge****verb** /ɡaʊdʒ/

to make a hole or cut in something with a sharp object in a rough or violent way

*The horrified boy watched the lion's claw gouge a wound in the horse's side.***gourmand****noun** /ˈɡuəmənd/

a greedy or ravenous eater; a glutton

*He is a gourmand; he ate the whole cake by himself.***gourmet****adjective** /ˈɡuəmeɪ/

a connoisseur of fine food and drink

*His ambition was to become a gourmet chef and cook at the finest restaurant in New York.***graffiti****noun** /grəˈfiːti/

drawings or writing on a wall in a public place

*The hooligans covered the college wall with graffiti.***grail****noun** /ɡreɪl/

a thing that you try very hard to find or achieve, but never will

*Peace is the Holy Grail of our time.***grandiloquence****noun** /grænˈdɪləkwəns/

the use of long and difficult words

*I was amused at the grandiloquence of his speech.***grandiloquent****adjective** /grænˈdɪləkwənt/

using long or complicated words to impress people

*He was known to be a grandiloquent speaker.***grapnel****noun** /ˈɡræpnəl/

a small anchor

*The grapnel holding the ship in place broke and it started to drift away.***gratification****noun** /ˌɡrætɪfɪˈkeɪʃn/

satisfaction

*Teachers find gratification in the success of their students.***gratuitous****adjective** /ɡrəˈtʃuːtəs/

done without any good reason or purpose and often having harmful effects

*The increase of gratuitous violence on television is of great concern to sociologists and parents alike.***gravitate****verb** /ˈɡrævɪteɪt/

to move towards somebody/something that you are attracted to

*Many young people gravitate to the cities in search of work.***gregarious****adjective** /ɡrɪˈɡeəriəs/

enjoying the company of other people

She is such an outgoing and gregarious person.

15 to 17
age group

G

grievance**noun** /ˈɡriːvəns/

something that you think is unfair and that you complain or protest about

*He had been nursing a grievance against his boss for months.***gristle****noun** /ˈɡrɪsl/

a hard substance in meat that is unpleasant to eat

*The piece of meat was full of gristle, so it was returned to the butcher.***groggy****adjective** /ˈɡrɒɡi/

weak and unable to think or move well because you are ill or very tired

*She was in a groggy state and could hardly sit up straight.***grotesque****adjective** /ˈɡrəʊˈtesk/

strange in a way that is unpleasant or offensive

*The cave walls were decorated with paintings of grotesque creatures.***guava****noun** /ˈɡwɑːvə/

the fruit of a tropical tree

*Guava is my favourite fruit.***guile****noun** /gaɪl/

the use of clever but dishonest behaviour

*She achieved her high position by guile.***guinea****noun** /ˈɡɪni/

old British coin or unit of money worth 110p

*The antique shop sold me a beautiful, golden guinea which I gave to my son for his graduation.***gullible****adjective** /ˈɡʌləbəl/

too willing to believe or accept what other people tell you and therefore easily tricked

*Farah is such a gullible person that she believes everything anyone tells her.***gusset****noun** /ˈɡʌsɪt/

an extra piece of cloth sewn into a piece of clothing to make it wider, stronger or more comfortable

*The tailor inserted the gusset into the dress.***gustatory****adjective** /ˈɡʊstətɔːri/

concerned with tasting or the sense of taste

*The restaurant offered many gustatory delights.***gyrate****verb** /dʒaɪˈreɪt/

wind or coil round; take a circular course

According to the prediction, the stock prices will gyrate around last week's high.

H

15 to 17
age group**haberdashery****noun** /ˌhæbəˈdæʃəri/

small articles for sewing e.g. needles, pins, buttons and thread

*They kept a good supply of haberdashery at the back of the shop.***hacienda****noun** /ˌhæsiˈendə/

a large farm in a Spanish-speaking country

*Many African slaves were brought to America to work on a hacienda.***hackneyed****adjective** /ˈhæknɪd/

used too often and therefore boring

*The teacher advised her students to avoid hackneyed phrases in their essays.***haemoglobin****noun** /ˌhiːməˈɡləʊbɪn/

a red substance in the blood that carries oxygen and contains iron

*Her blood test showed a low level of haemoglobin.***halcyon****adjective** /ˈhælsiən/

peaceful and happy

*He was remembering the halcyon days of his youth.***hallucination****noun** /həˌluːsɪˈneɪʃn/

an illusion

*High temperatures can cause hallucination.***hammock****noun** /ˈhæmək/

a type of bed made from net, to hang between two trees

*Tim slept in his hammock all day long.***harangue****verb** /həˈræŋ/

to criticise loudly and angrily

*He walked to the front of the stage and began to harangue the audience.***haughty****adjective** /ˈhɔːti/

proud and disdainful

*I didn't like the haughty tone in which she spoke to me.***haulage****noun** /ˈhɔːlɪdʒ/

the business of transporting goods by road or railway

*The freight charges for the haulage of cargo has been increased.***hauteur****noun** /əʊˈtɜː[r]/

an unfriendly way of behaving with people, suggesting you are better than them

*Everyone disliked her due to her hauteur.***havoc****noun** /ˈhævək/

a situation where there is a lot of damage and destruction

*The floods caused havoc in the area.***hawser****noun** /ˈhɔːzə[r]/

a thick rope or steel cable used on a ship

*The ship was tied to the pier by a hawser.***headdress****noun** /ˈheddres/

a covering or band for the head, especially one worn on ceremonial occasions

*He always took special care of his headdress.***heady****adjective** /ˈhedɪ/

having a strong effect on your senses

*The heady smell of hot spices reminds me of my grandmother's cooking.***hearth****noun** /hɑːθ/

the floor at the bottom of a fireplace

The cat curled up in its favourite spot on the hearth.

15 to 17
age group

H

hebetude**noun** /ˈheɪtjʊd/

the state of being dull and lethargic
Due to lack of sleep, she was always in a state of hebetude at work.

hedgehog**noun** /ˈhedʒhɒɡ/

a small insectivorous mammal covered with dense erectile spines which rolls into a ball for protection

heifer**noun** /ˈheɪfə[r]/

a young female cow, especially one that has not yet given birth to a calf

heinous**adjective** /ˈheɪnəs/

morally very bad
He was sentenced to twelve years in prison for his heinous crime.

heliozoan**noun** /ˌhi:lɪəˈzəʊən/

single-celled animal having numerous spindle-like pseudopods that radiate from a central cell mass

herbarium**noun** /ˈherbəriəm/

a collection of dried specimens of plants systematically arranged
She has a large collection of plants in her herbarium.

heritage**noun** /ˈherɪtɪdʒ/

that which is inherited
These ancient buildings are part of the national heritage.

hierarchy**noun** /ˈhaɪərɑːki/

a system in which people are organised into different levels of importance from highest to lowest
She is high up in the management hierarchy.

hieroglyphics**noun** /ˈhaɪərəˈɡlɪfɪks/

writing that uses pictures or symbols
The discovery of the Rosetta Stone enabled scholars to read the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics.

hilarity**noun** /hɪˈlærəti/

a state of great amusement causing loud laughter
The announcement was greeted with great hilarity.

hinge**noun** /ˈhɪndʒ/

a piece of metal or plastic on which a door, lid or gate moves freely as it opens or closes
She oiled the hinge to stop the gate from squeaking.

histamine**noun** /ˈhɪstəmiːn/

chemical substance produced in the body in response to an allergy or injury
The sneezing in respiratory allergies is caused by the release of histamine.

histrionic**adjective** /ˌhɪstriˈɒnɪk/

very emotional and attention seeking
We grew tired of her histrionic displays and ignored them.

hive**noun** /haɪv/

a structure made for bees to live in
We ate some delicious honey straight out of the hive.

hoax**noun** /həʊks/

intended to make somebody believe something that is not true, especially something unpleasant
The unnerving telephone call I received last night was a hoax.

H

15 to 17
age group**hoist****verb** /hɔɪst/

to raise or pull something up to a higher position, often using ropes or special equipment

*It was the duty of the sailors to hoist the flag every morning.***hollandaise****noun** /ˌhɒlˈləndeɪz/

a creamy sauce of melted butter, egg yolks and vinegar, served especially with fish

*At the restaurant, she ordered grilled fish with hollandaise.***holocaust****noun** /ˈhɒləkɔːst/

a situation in which many things are destroyed and people killed, especially because of war or a fire

*The consequences of a nuclear holocaust would be calamitous.***horde****noun** /hɔːd/

a large crowd of people

*There is always a horde of tourists here in the summer.***hornet****noun** /ˈhɔːnɪt/

a large stinging wasp that builds large papery nests

horrendous**adjective** /hɒˈrendəs/

absolutely terrible

*The horrendous accident had left him shaken.***hullabaloo****noun** /ˌhʌləˈbeɪluː/

a lot of loud noise, especially made by people who are annoyed or excited about something

*They looked out of the window to find out what the hullabaloo was about.***hybrid****noun** /ˈhaɪbrɪd/

an animal or plant that has parents of different species or varieties

*A mule is a hybrid of a male donkey and a female horse.***hydrangea****noun** /haɪˈdreɪndʒə/

a bush with white, pink or blue flowers that grow closely together in the shape of a ball

*French hydrangea has either pink or blue flowers.***hydrodynamics****noun** /ˌhaɪdrəʊˈdaɪˈnæmɪks/

a branch of physics that deals with the motion of fluids and the forces acting on solid bodies immersed in liquids

*Hydrodynamics plays a key role in Kayak racing***hydrophobia****noun** /ˌhaɪdrəˈfəʊbiə/

fear of water

*My dog seemed to be developing hydrophobia, and the vet told me it could be rabies.***hydrotropism****noun** /haɪˈdrɒtrəˈpɪzəm/

the directional growth of plants in response to the stimulus of water

*Roots often display hydrotropism in growing towards a water source.***hyena****noun** /haɪˈiːnə/

a carnivorous mammal which feeds as a scavenger and has powerful jaws, relatively short hind limbs, and coarse hair

hygiene**noun** /ˈhaɪdʒiːn/

cleanliness practiced to maintain health

The standards of hygiene in the hotel kitchen left much to be desired.

hymn

noun /hɪm/

a song of praise, especially one praising God and sung by Christians

The members of the congregation sang their favourite hymn with gusto.

hyphen

noun /ˈhaɪfən/

a short dash used to join words or parts of words together

The hyphen is an important part of punctuation.

hypotenuse

noun /haɪˈpɒtənjuːz/

the side opposite the right-angle of a right-angled triangle

The hypotenuse is the longest side of a right-angled triangle.

hypothesis

noun /haɪˈpɒθəsɪs/

a theory that has not yet been proved to be true or correct

She needed to confirm the hypothesis of her thesis with the professor.

hypothetical

adjective /ˌhaɪpəˈθetɪkəl/

based on a situation or ideas which are possible and imagined rather than real or true

Why do we have to consider hypothetical cases when we have actual case histories before us?

hypoxia

noun /haɪˈpɒksɪə/

a deficiency in the amount of oxygen reaching the tissues

The horse died due to hypoxia.

hysteria

noun /hɪˈstɪəriə/

a state of extreme excitement, fear or anger in which a person loses control of their emotions

The crowd at the concert was gripped by mass hysteria.

15 to 17 age group

iambic

adjective /aɪˈæmbɪk/

(of rhythm in poetry) in which one short or weak syllable is followed by one long or strong syllable
The poem was written in iambic pentameter.

icicle

noun /ˈaɪsɪkl/

a pointed piece of ice that is formed when water freezes as it falls
An icicle was hanging from the roof.

iconoclastic

adjective /aɪˌkɒnəˈklæstɪk/

attacking cherished traditions
George Bernard Shaw's iconoclastic plays started conventional people.

idiom

noun /ˈɪdiəm/

a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words
'Let the cat out of the bag' is a good example of an idiom, and means to tell a secret inadvertently.

idiosyncratic

adjective /ɪˌdɪɒsɪŋˈkrætɪk/

characteristic of an individual
We all have our own idiosyncratic ways of dealing with grief.

idolatry

noun /aɪˈdɒlətri/

the worship of idols, images, or anything which is not God
He supports his local team with a fervour that borders on idolatry.

idyll

noun /ˈɪdɪl/

a picturesque scene or incident, especially one connected with the countryside
He was writing about a community living in a rural idyll.

idyllic

adjective /ɪˈdɪlɪk/

peaceful, beautiful
She dreams of a house set in idyllic surroundings.

ignominious

adjective /ɪˌɡnəˈmɪniəs/

humiliating
He made one disastrous mistake and his career came to an ignominious end.

illicit

adjective /ɪˈlɪsɪt/

not permitted or allowed
His illicit business was being monitored by the police.

illiteracy

noun /ɪˈlɪtərəsi/

inability to read and write
He was ashamed of his father's illiteracy.

illustrious

adjective /ɪˈlʌstriəs/

very famous and much admired, luminous by achievement
The composer was one of many illustrious visitors to the town.

imaginative

adjective /ɪˈmædʒɪnətɪv/

having or showing new or exciting ideas
The imaginative art teacher created amazing costumes for the school play.

imbricate

verb /ˈɪmbrikeɪt/

arrange things so that they overlap
The worker was told to imbricate the roof tiles.

imbroglio

noun /ɪmˈbrəʊliəʊ/

a complicated situation that causes confusion or embarrassment, especially one that is political
He found himself in the middle of a political imbroglio.

imbrue**verb** /ɪmˈbruː/

to stain (something, especially one's hands or sword)
They were unwilling to imbrue their hands with his blood.

imbue**verb** /ɪmˈbjuː/

to fill somebody or something with strong feelings, opinions or values
I try to imbue my students with a sense of personal responsibility for their actions.

immaculate**adjective** /ɪˈmækjələt/

perfectly clean
He wore an immaculate white suit on his wedding.

impale**verb** /ɪmˈpeɪl/

to push a sharp pointed object through something
I watched him impale a gherkin with his fork and eat it.

impeach**verb** /ɪmˈpi:tʃ/

to charge an important public figure with a serious crime
The American public hopes that Congress will not have to impeach any more presidents.

impeccable**adjective** /ɪmˈpekəbəl/

perfect
The actress was acclaimed for her impeccable taste in clothes.

impecunious**adjective** /ɪmˈpɪkjʊːniəs/

without money
He contributed to funds to assist impecunious and disabled people.

imperceptible**adjective** /ɪmpəˈseptəbl/

slight; subtle
Even after turning on the air conditioner, there was only an imperceptible change in temperature.

impermeable**adjective** /ɪmˈpɜːmiəbəl/

not allowing a liquid or gas to pass through
The canoe is made from an impermeable wood.

impertinent**adjective** /ɪmˈpɜːtɪnənt/

not showing respect, rude
The teacher was quite annoyed with Faisal for asking impertinent questions.

imperturbable**adjective** /ɪmpəˈtɜːbəl/

not excitable
He remained imperturbable and in full command of the situation, in spite of the panic surrounding him.

impetus**noun** /ɪmˈpɪtəs/

something that encourages a process or activity to develop quickly
A new federal highway programme would create jobs and give added impetus to our economic recovery.

impinge**verb** /ɪmˈpɪndʒ/

to have a noticeable effect on somebody or something, especially a bad one
He never allowed his work to impinge on his private life.

impish**adjective** /ɪmˈpɪʃ/

showing a lack of respect for something or somebody in a way that is amusing rather than serious
The little boy smiled in an impish manner.

15 to 17 age group

implacable

adjective /ɪmˈplækəbəl/
(of strong negative opinions or feelings) that cannot be changed
The families of Romeo and Juliet were implacable enemies.

implicate

verb /ɪmˈplɪkeɪt/
to show that somebody is involved in something
She tried to avoid saying anything that would implicate her further.

implication

noun /ɪmˈplɪˈkeɪʃn/
a possible effect or result of an action or a decision
The development of the site will have a serious implication for the surrounding countryside.

implicit

adjective /ɪmˈplɪsɪt/
suggested without being directly expressed
She has implicit faith in her husband's ability.

implore

verb /ɪmˈplɔː[r]/
to ask somebody to do something in an anxious way because you want or need it very much
We implore you to leave immediately.

imponderabilia

noun /ɪmˌpɒndərəˈbɪliə/
those things which cannot be weighed
Happiness and health are imponderabilia.

imponderable

adjective /ɪmˈpɒndərəbəl/
difficult or impossible to weigh or assess
I can evaluate the data gathered in this study, but the imponderable items are not easy to analyse.

imprimatur

noun /ɪmˈprɪˈmɑːtə[r]/
official approval of something, given by a person in a position of authority
It is contempt of court to defy a judge's imprimatur.

impromptu

adverb /ɪmˈprɒmptjuː/
done without preparation
One of his strong points is his ability to speak impromptu.

impulsive

adjective /ɪmˈpʊlsɪv/
acting suddenly without thinking
She is an impulsive buyer.

impunity

noun /ɪmˈpjʊːnəti/
freedom from punishment or harmful consequences of an action
She breaks traffic rules and regulations with impunity.

impute

verb /ɪmˈpjʊːt/
to say, often unfairly, that somebody is responsible for something
Her employers tried to impute the thefts to her.

inadvertently

adverb /ɪˌnədˈvɜːtəntli/
by accident; without intending to
His hand inadvertently knocked over the cup of coffee.

inarticulate

adjective /ɪˌnɑːˈtɪkjələt/
not able to express ideas or feelings clearly or easily
Ahmed was an inarticulate boy and was shy of speaking in public.

inaudible

adjective /ɪnˈɔːdəbəl/
not loud enough to be heard
The song was playing at such an inaudible volume that we could hear nothing.

incandescence

noun /ɪnˈkændəsəsi/
the emission of visible light by a body, caused by its high temperature
She was blinded by the extreme incandescence of the high noon sun.

incandescent

adjective /ɪnˈkændəsnt/
giving out light when heated
The incandescent lamp gives a soft, white light.

incapacitate

verb /ɪnˈkæpəsɪteɪt/
to make incapable or unfit
Mental illness alone will not incapacitate a person from making a valid contract.

incarcerate

verb /ɪnˈkɑːsəreɪt/
to put somebody in prison or in another place from which they cannot escape
To incarcerate him would mean dealing with the anger of his tribe.

incarnation

noun /ɪnˈkɑːneɪʃn/
a period of life in a particular form
He believed he had been a prince in a previous incarnation.

incendiary

adjective /ɪnˈsendiəri/
designed to cause fire
The explosion was caused by an incendiary device.

incense

verb /ɪnˈsens/
to make somebody very angry
Very few things incense me more than intolerance.

inception

noun /ɪnˈsepʃn/
the start
She was involved with the project from its inception.

incessant

adjective /ɪnˈsesnt/
never stopping
The incessant meetings exhausted me.

incidental

adjective /ɪnˈsɪdntl/
not essential
The scholarship covered his major expenses at college and some of his incidental expenses as well.

incision

noun /ɪnˈsɪʒn/
a sharp cut
The surgery just requires a minor incision.

incite

verb /ɪnˈsaɪt/
to encourage somebody to do something violent, illegal or unpleasant
The union leader arranged a protest meeting to incite other members to strike.

inclement

adjective /ɪnˈklemənt/
(of the weather) not pleasant; cold, wet
We were unable to go on the field trip due to inclement weather conditions.

incognito

adverb /ɪnˈkɒɡniːtəʊ/
in a way that prevents other people from finding out who you are
Movie stars often prefer to travel incognito.

incoherence

noun /ɪnˈkəʊhɪərəns/
a lack of ability to express yourself clearly, often because of emotion
His incoherence was due to his anger at missing the flight.

15 to 17 age group

incommunicado

adverb /ɪnkəmjʊnɪˈkɑːdəʊ/
without means of communication
The prisoner has been held incommunicado for more than a week.

incompatible

adjective /ɪnkəmˈpætəbl/
opposed in character
The doctor gave her a list of incompatible drugs, not to be had with her prescription.

inconceivable

adjective /ɪnkənˈsiːvəbl/
unimaginable
We all protested when she gave the inconceivable excuse of not being aware of the problem.

incongruous

adjective /ɪnˈkɒŋgruəs/
strange and not suitable in a particular situation
We should do away with incongruous traditional methods in this technical age.

inconsequential

adjective /ɪnˌkɒnsɪˈkwɛnʃl/
not important
I've wasted an hour of my valuable time on inconsequential chatter.

inconsiderate

adjective /ɪnkənˈsɪdərət/
not giving enough thought to other people's feelings or needs
Her inconsiderate remarks left a bad impression on the jury.

incontrovertible

adjective /ɪnkɒntrəˈvɜːtəbl/
undeniably true
The case was dismissed so quickly because the lawyer provided incontrovertible evidence.

incorporeal

adjective /ɪnkɔːˈpɔːriəl/
without body or form
We must devote less time pleasing our material bodies, and concentrate on enriching our incorporeal minds.

incredibly

adverb /ɪnˈkredəbli/
unbelievably
He ran incredibly fast to beat the world record.

incriminate

verb /ɪnˈkrɪmɪneɪt/
to prove the guilt of
The youths were arrested and searched for anything that would incriminate them.

incubate

verb /ɪŋkjubeɪt/
(of a bird) to sit on its eggs in order to keep them warm until they hatch
The bird sat for several weeks trying to incubate her eggs, but they failed to hatch.

indefensible

adjective /ɪndɪˈfensəbl/
not justifiable
She was put on probation for her indefensible behaviour.

indefinite

adjective /ɪnˈdefɪnət/
not specified
She will be away for an indefinite period.

indelible

adjective /ɪnˈdeləbl/
impossible to forget or remove
The experience made an indelible impression on me.

indemnity

noun /ɪnˈdemnəti/
compensation for damage or loss
The victorious nation has demanded huge indemnity from its former enemy.

indicative**adjective** /ɪn'dɪkətɪv/

showing or suggesting something

*The indicative result showed a strong retail market.***indignation****noun** /ɪˌɪndɪg'neɪʃn/

anger resulting from perceived injustice

*He felt indignation at the ill treatment of helpless animals.***indiscriminate****adjective** /ɪˌɪndɪ'skrɪmɪnət/

unselective

*She disapproved of her son's indiscriminate television viewing.***indisputable****adjective** /ɪˌɪndɪ'spju:təbl/

undeniable

*In the face of so many indisputable statements, I withdrew my complaint.***indissoluble****adjective** /ɪˌɪndɪ'sɒljəbl/

lasting

*The supposedly indissoluble bonds of marriage are often broken.***indistinguishable****adjective** /ɪˌɪndɪ'stɪŋɡwɪʃəbl/

not clear

*His indistinguishable speech left many confused.***inert****adjective** /ɪ'nɜ:t/

without power to move or act

*The president has to operate within an inert political system.***inertia****noun** /ɪ'nɜ:ʃə/

lack of energy; lack of desire or ability to move or change

*According to Newton, an object in a state of inertia will remain so for eternity.***inevitable****adjective** /ɪn'evɪtəbl/

that cannot be avoided or prevented

*He met his inevitable fate.***inexorable****adjective** /ɪn'eksərəbl/

relentless

*The inexorable rise of crime is a cause for concern.***inexplicable****adjective** /ɪˌɪnɪk'splɪkəbl/

that cannot be understood or explained

*For some inexplicable reason he gave up an excellent job offer.***infallible****adjective** /ɪn'fæləbl/

never wrong; never making mistakes

*He relied heavily on his infallible calculator for solving his arithmetic problems.***infamous****adjective** /ɪnfəməs/

well known for being bad or evil

*Jesse James was an infamous outlaw.***infidel****noun** /ɪn'fɪdəl/

an offensive way of referring to somebody who does not believe in what the speaker considers to be the true religion

*The radical cult leader called the non-believer an infidel.***infuriating****adjective** /ɪn'fjuəriətɪŋ/

making you extremely angry

*He has an infuriating habit of whistling while he is reading.***inherent****adjective** /ɪn'herənt/

existing permanently in something

I felt there was an inherent weakness in the design.

15 to 17 age group

inhumane

adjective /ɪnhju:'meɪn/

very cruel, not caring about the suffering of other people

His inhumane treatment of prisoners lost him his job as a prison warden.

innuendo

noun /ɪnju'endəʊ/

an allusive or oblique remark

Humour should not include sarcasm, innuendo or any other form of cruelty.

inordinate

adjective /ɪn'ɔ:dɪnət/

far more than is usual or expected

She had an inordinate amount of energy.

insistent

adjective /ɪn'sɪstənt/

continuing for a long period of time in a way that cannot be ignored

The insistent ringing of the telephone was giving me a headache.

insouciance

noun /ɪn'su:siəns/

carefreeness; lack of concern

She approached the exam with an air of complete insouciance.

insuperable

adjective /ɪn'su:pərəbl/

cannot be overcome

In the face of insuperable difficulties he maintained his equilibrium.

insurrection

noun /ɪnsə'rekʃn/

uprising; resistance movement

An armed insurrection took place against the regime of the dictator.

integrate

verb /ɪntɪgreɪt/

to combine two or more things so that they work together

The policy is to integrate children with special needs into ordinary schools.

integument

noun /ɪn'tegument/

outer covering of skin

The turtle takes advantage of its hard integument to protect itself from potential danger.

intermittent

adjective /ɪntə'mɪtənt/

stopping and starting often over a period of time, but not regularly

Intermittent rain marred our picnic.

internecine

adjective /ɪntə'nɪ:sɪn/

mutually destructive

During the war internecine street fighting broke out between rival groups.

intimidation

noun /ɪn'tɪmɪ'deɪʃn/

bullying behaviour

The school bully was punished for his intimidation of younger children.

intransigent

adjective /ɪn'trænsɪdʒənt/

refusing to behave differently or change one's attitude

They put pressure on the government to change its intransigent stance.

intrigue

noun /ɪn'tri:g/

underhand plotting

She writes novels that are based on mystery and intrigue.

introspective

adjective /ɪntrə'spektɪv/
tending to think a lot about your own thoughts, feelings
He writes deep introspective poetry.

intuition

noun /ɪntjuːʃn/
immediate insight
She had an intuition that she would have a visitor that day.

invalidate

verb /ɪn'vælidet/
to prove that an idea, a story or an argument is wrong
The relatives who had received nothing from their uncle, sought to invalidate the will.

invariant

adjective /ɪn'veəriənt/
never changing
His invariant character made him dependable.

invest

verb /ɪn'vest/
to buy property, shares in a company in the hope of making a profit
Now is a good time to invest in this company.

inviolable

adjective /ɪn'vɪələbəl/
that must be respected and not attacked or destroyed
Her inviolable faith in her husband's integrity never wavered during his incarceration.

invulnerable

adjective /ɪn'vʌlnərəbəl/
that cannot be harmed or defeated
Gunners raked the beach from invulnerable positions on the cliffs.

irascible

adjective /ɪ'ræsəbəl/
becoming angered very easily
His irascible temperament used to frighten me.

irreconcilable

adjective /ɪ'rekənsaɪəbəl/
implacably hostile
Even after much effort from both sides, they remain irreconcilable enemies.

irremediable

adjective /ɪrɪ'mi:diəbəl/
impossible to cure or put right
His lack of planning has put us all in an irremediable situation.

irrepressible

adjective /ɪrɪ'presəbəl/
not able to be controlled or restrained
The irrepressible David Beckham scored two goals.

isotope

noun /'aɪsətəʊp/
one of two or more forms of a chemical element with different physical properties
An isotope of carbon is used for carbon dating.

isthmus

noun /ɪsməs/
a narrow strip of land with sea on either side, forming a link between two larger areas of land
As we drove along the isthmus, we appreciated the beauty of the sea on either side of us.

itinerant

adjective /aɪ'tɪnərənt/
travelling from place to place
He was an itinerant peddler, and travelled widely selling his wares.

itinerary

noun /aɪ'tɪnərəri/
a plan of a journey, including the route and the places that you visit
Before leaving for France, we discussed the itinerary with the travel agent.

J

15 to 17
age group**jactitation****noun** /dʒæktɪ'teɪʃən/

the restless tossing of the body in illness
The doctor assured us that the jactitation of the patient would begin to calm later in the day.

jacuzzi**proper noun** /dʒə'ku:zi/

a large bath with a pump that moves the water around, giving a pleasant feeling to your body
Once you get into a Jacuzzi, you do not want to come out.

janitor**noun** /'dʒænitə[r]/

a caretaker
My office building is looked after very well by an old janitor who has been there for twenty years.

jaundice**noun** /'dʒɔ:ndɪs/

a yellow discoloration of the skin or eyes
He developed jaundice, and was not able to attend college for the whole semester.

jaundiced**adjective** /'dʒɔ:ndɪst/

not expecting something or someone to be good or useful because of past experiences
I found it depressing to spend time with George because he had such a jaundiced view of life.

jaunty**adjective** /'dʒɔ:ntɪ/

showing that you are feeling confident and pleased with yourself
He set his hat at a jaunty angle and went off for his interview.

jocund**adjective** /'dʒɒkənd/

cheerful and light-hearted
He was a jocund character, always full of fun.

jostle**verb** /'dʒɒsl/

to push roughly against somebody in a crowd
Someone always happens to jostle me when I am standing with a cup of tea.

journalese**noun** /,dʒɜ:nə'li:z/

a hackneyed writing style
The article was full of journalese and grammatical errors.

joust**noun** /dʒaʊst/

a medieval sporting contest in which two opponents on horseback fought with lances
In a joust, the object is to unseat your opponent.

jubilant**adjective** /'dʒu:bɪlənt/

feeling or showing great happiness because of a success
The fans were in a jubilant mood after the victory.

jubilation**noun** /,dʒu:bɪ'leɪʃn/

a feeling of great happiness because of a success
There was great jubilation in the family when a baby girl was born after four boys.

Judaism**proper noun** /'dʒu:deɪzəm/

the religion of the Jewish people
Judaism is one of the world's oldest religions.

judicature**noun** /'dʒu:dɪkətʃə[r]/

the system and administration of justice in a country
No society can be stable if it does not have an effective judicature.

judicious**adjective** /dʒu'dɪʃəs/

careful and sensible; showing good judgement
At a key moment in his life, he made a judicious investment which resulted in his present good fortune.

juggernaut**noun** /ˈdʒʌɡənɔ:t/

a very large lorry or truck

*I felt very insecure in my tiny car when the juggernaut pulled out of its lane to pass me.***jugular****adjective** /ˈdʒʌɡjələ[r]/

any of the three large veins in the neck that carry blood from the heart to the head

*The knife nicked his jugular vein, but he survived.***jurisdiction****noun** /ˌdʒʊərɪsˈdɪkʃn/

the authority that an official organisation has to make legal decisions about somebody or something

*Local courts do not have jurisdiction over a diplomat of another country.***jurisprudence****noun** /ˌdʒʊərɪsˈprʊ:dns/

the scientific study of law

*I still visit the old professor who used to teach us jurisprudence when we were at the university.***jussive****adjective** /ˈdʒʌsɪv/

expressing a command

*His requests were of a jussive nature.***justifiable****adjective** /ˈdʒʌstɪfəɪəbl/

capable of being justified, or shown to be just

*To extend a loan, the bank must have a justifiable reason.***juvenile****adjective** /ˈdʒu:vənəl/

not yet adult

*She was appalled at her cousin's juvenile behaviour.***juxtapose****verb** /ˌdʒʌkstəˈpəʊz/

to place things side by side

In his exhibition he decided to juxtapose photographs of settled family life with those of refugees in camps.

K

15 to 17
age group**kaleidoscope****noun** /kə'laɪdɒskəʊp/

a tube with coloured glass and mirrors at one end which is turned to form different patterns

The child was fascinated by the colours and patterns in the kaleidoscope.

kerb**noun** /kɜːb/

the edge of the raised path at the side of a road, usually made of long pieces of stone

Stop at the kerb and look both ways before crossing the road.

kinetic**adjective** /kɪ'netɪk/

of or produced by movement

A car can move due to kinetic energy.

kiosk**noun** /'kiːɒsk/

a small shop, open at the front, where newspapers and drinks are sold

I buy my newspaper from the kiosk at the station.

kitchenette**noun** /,kɪtʃɪ'net/

a small room or part of a room used as a kitchen

The flat has a kitchenette overlooking the garden.

kitsch**adjective** /kɪtʃ/

popular but considered to have no artistic value and to be lacking in good taste

There were a couple of kitsch plastic dogs on the mantelpiece.

knave**noun** /neɪv/

a dishonest man or boy

The role of the knave in the play was quite insignificant.

knead**verb** /niːd/

to press and stretch dough, clay to make it ready to use

Her mother told her to knead the dough properly.

knowledgeable**adjective** /'nɒlɪdʒəbl/

knowing a lot

She is regarded as a knowledgeable film critic.

kosher**adjective** /'kəʊʃə[r]/

prepared according to the rules of Jewish law

Muslims are also allowed to eat kosher meat.

krypton**noun** /'krɪptɒn/

a colourless gas that does not react with anything

Krypton is mostly used in fluorescent lights and lasers.

kudos**noun** /'kjuːdəs/

the admiration and respect that goes with a particular achievement or position

She did most of the work, but all the kudos went to her partner.

kumquat**noun** /'kʌmkwɒt/

a fruit like a very small orange with sweet skin that is eaten, and sour flesh

I have never eaten a kumquat.

15 to 17
age group**laboratory****noun** /lə'bɒrətəri/

a room or building used for scientific research, experiments, teaching
Our school's laboratory is very well equipped.

labyrinth**noun** /'læbərɪnθ/

a complicated series of paths, which is difficult to find your way through
Once you enter the old city, you find yourself lost in a labyrinth of narrow streets.

lacerate**verb** /'læsəreɪt/

to cut skin or flesh with something sharp
I taught the apprentice to use the machine carefully, so that it would not lacerate his hand.

lachrymose**adjective** /'lækrɪməʊs/

(formal) having a tendency to cry easily; tearful
She has a lachrymose disposition.

lacklustre**adjective** /'læk'lʌstə[r]/

not interesting or exciting; dull
We were disappointed by his lacklustre performance.

laconic**adjective** /lə'kɒnɪk/

using a few words
He made a laconic remark.

lacquer**verb** /'lækə[r]/

to cover something such as wood or metal with lacquer
The student learnt how to lacquer the paintings she had done on wood.

laggard**noun** /'læɡəd/

a slow and lazy person
At boarding school you were labelled a laggard if you were not out of bed by the second bell.

lair**noun** /leə[r]/

a place where a wild animal sleeps or hides
The bear hibernates in his lair throughout the winter, and does not eat until the spring.

lambaste**verb** /læm'beɪst/

to attack or criticise somebody very severely, especially in public
They could only lambaste the report as a gross distortion of the truth.

lamentable**adjective** /'læməntəbəl/

very disappointing
The new employee showed a lamentable lack of interest in the work.

laminated**adjective** /'læmɪneɪtɪd/

covered with a thin layer e.g. of plastic
All the delegates were given laminated identity cards at the conference.

languish**verb** /'læŋɡwɪʃ/

to be forced to stay somewhere or suffer something unpleasant for a long time
She continues to languish in a foreign prison.

languor**noun** /'læŋɡə[r]/

the state of feeling lazy and without energy
A pleasant feeling of languor stole over him.

lantern**noun** /'læntən/

something enclosing a light, and protecting it from wind, rain
I could see his face by the light of the lantern.



15 to 17 age group

lapilli

noun /lə'pɪlɪ/

rock fragments ejected from a volcano
Lapilli usually range in size from 2mm to 64 mm in diameter.

larynx

noun /'lærɪŋks/

the area at the top of the throat that contains the vocal cords
When I had an infection in my larynx, I could hardly speak.

lattice

noun /'lætɪs/

a structure made of strips of wood or metal that cross over each other with spaces between them, used as a fence or support for climbing plants
Last year I put up a lattice in the garden and had a fine show of sweet peas.

laureate

noun /'lɔːrɪət/

a person who has been given an official honour or prize for something important they have achieved
The Nobel Laureate was given a state reception when he returned from Sweden.

layette

noun /leɪ'et/

a set of clothes and other things for a new baby
They went to London to buy the layette for their baby.

league

noun /li:g/

a group of people or nations who have combined for a particular purpose
She is attending a meeting of the Women's League for Peace.

leatherette

noun /,leðə'ret/

an artificial material that looks or feels like leather
I want to buy a jacket made of leatherette.

leech

noun /li:tʃ/

aquatic bloodsucking worm of which one species was formerly used by physicians to bleed patients

leeway

noun /'li:weɪ/

the amount of freedom that you have to change something or to do it in the way you want to
The new government has given the council greater leeway to introduce and carry out reforms.

legacy

noun /'legəsi/

money or property that is left to you by somebody when they die
They each received a legacy of Rs. 50,000 from their grandfather.

legendary

adjective /'ledʒəndrɪ/

of or pertaining to a legend or legends; famous
We were told legendary tales of her adventures.

legerdemain

noun /'ledʒədəmeɪn/

skilful use of your hands when performing tricks or conjuring
We were fascinated by the legerdemain of the magician, as he conjured various items out of thin air.

legion

noun /'li:dʒən/

a large group of soldiers that forms part of an army
To serve in a Roman legion was a great honour.

legionnaire

noun /,li:dʒə'neə[r]/

a member of the legion, especially the French Foreign Legion
The French legionnaire was renowned for his combat tactics.

15 to 17
age group

L

legitimate**adjective** /lɪ'dʒɪtɪmət/

allowed and acceptable according to the law
It seemed a perfectly legitimate question.

legitimise**verb** /lɪ'dʒɪtəmaɪz/

to make something wrong or unfair acceptable in law
They tried to legitimise their actions by going to court.

leisurely**adjective** /'leɪʒəli/

without hurrying
After a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, we went to the beach.

leniency**noun** /'liːniənsi/

quality of being less strict than expected
Considering the gravity of the offence, we were surprised at the leniency of the sentence.

lenient**adjective** /'liːniənt/

not as strict as expected
The lawyer pleaded with the judge to grant his client a more lenient sentence.

leonine**adjective** /'liːənəm/

like a lion
He had leonine features.

lessor**noun** /le'sɔː[r]/

a person who allows somebody the use of a building, area on lease
The lessor offered a five-year lease on the office.

lethargy**noun** /'leθədʒi/

the state of not having any energy or enthusiasm for doing things
I used to worry about my child's lethargy.

leukaemia**noun** /luː'kiːmiə/

a serious disease in which too many white blood cells are produced, causing weakness and sometimes death

When he was diagnosed with leukaemia, his family was in a state of shock for many days.

leverage**noun** /'liːvərɪdʒ/

the act of using a lever to open or lift something
The correct leverage is required to move this load.

levity**noun** /'levəti/

behaviour that shows a lack of respect for something serious and that treats it in an amusing way
We were shocked at the display of levity by members of the family at the funeral.

liaise**verb** /li'eɪz/

to work closely with somebody and exchange information with them
She will liaise with teachers across the country to improve the system of education.

liaison**noun** /li'eɪzən/

a relationship between two groups of people involving the exchange of information or ideas
There is an excellent liaison between our two departments.

liberate**verb** /'lɪbəreɪt/

to free from restriction
His mission was to liberate the country from the dictator.

lieutenant**noun** /lef'tenənt/

an officer of middle rank in the army, navy, or air force
The young naval lieutenant looked dashing in his white uniform.



15 to 17
age group

ligature

verb /'lɪgətʃə/

the act of binding or tying up

The ligature of the artery was done with skill.

ligneous

adjective /'lɪgnɪəs/

made, consisting of, or resembling wood; woody

They built the table out of ligneous material.

likelihood

noun /'laɪklihʊd/

possibility

There is a strong likelihood that share prices will rise tomorrow.

lineaments

noun /'lɪniəmənts/

the typical features of something

Her actions were marked with the lineaments of her character.

linguist

noun /'lɪŋgwɪst/

a master of the use of language

She is an excellent linguist.

linguistic

adjective /lɪŋ'gwɪstɪk/

connected with language or the scientific study of language

They decided to marry, regardless of their linguistic and cultural differences.

linoleum

noun /lɪ'nəʊliəm/

a type of strong material with a hard, shiny surface, used for covering floors

The architect advised the workers to cover the floor with linoleum.

liquidate

verb /'lɪkwɪdeɪt/

to close a business and sell everything it owns in order to pay debts

She has to liquidate her property in order to pay off her loans.

lithograph

verb /'lɪθəgrɑːf/

to trace on stone by the process of lithography so as to transfer the design to paper by printing

I was told to lithograph the design on the book cover.

lithography

noun /lɪ'θɒgrəfi/

the process of printing from a treated flat surface that repels the ink except where it is required for printing

The art exhibition included some amazing pieces that had been created using lithography.

lithosphere

noun /'lɪθəsfiə/

the layer of rock that forms the outer part of the Earth

The lithosphere is about sixty miles thick.

llama

noun /'lɑːmə/

a domesticated South American ruminant mammal related to the camel, raised for its soft, fleecy wool and used as a beast of burden

locust

noun /'ləʊkəst/

a kind of grasshopper that travels in large swarms and eats all the plants in an area

loiter

verb /'lɔɪtə[r]/

to stand or wait somewhere, especially with no obvious reason

The policeman told him not to loiter in the alley.



longevity

noun /lɒn'dʒevəti/

long life; the fact of lasting a long time

They wished the bride and groom good health and longevity.

loquacious

adjective /lə'kwetʃəs/

talkative

I find her loquacious nature very annoying.

lucid

adjective /'luːsɪd/

clearly expressed; easy to understand

Ellen has a lucid writing style.

lucifugous

adjective /luːsɪ'fʊɡəs/

shunning the light

The lucifugous mole burrowed his tunnel under our lawn.

lunacy

noun /'luːnəsi/

behaviour that is stupid or crazy

It is sheer lunacy to drive in bad weather.

lurid

adjective /'lʊərɪd/

too bright in colour, in a way that is not attractive

She was wearing a lurid orange and green blouse.

luxurious

adjective /lʌg'zʊəriəs/

very comfortable; containing expensive and enjoyable things

Queen Mary 2 is a luxurious liner.

lynx

noun /lɪŋks/

a wild animal of the cat family, with spots on its fur and a very short tail

M

15 to 17
age group**macabre****adjective** /mə'kɑ:brə/

unpleasant and strange because connected with death and frightening things

*The city morgue is a macabre place to visit.***machete****noun** /mə'ʃeti/

a broad heavy knife used as a cutting tool and as a weapon

*The farmer cut open a coconut with a single blow from his machete.***maestro****noun** /'maɪstrəʊ/

a master in any art, especially in music

*The opera was composed by the maestro himself.***maggot****noun** /'mægət/

the legless, soft-bodied, worm-like larva of any of various flies, often found in decaying matter

magisterial**adjective** /,mædʒɪ'stɪəriəl/

showing power or authority

*The head of the family behaved in a magisterial manner.***magistrate****noun** /'mædʒɪstreɪt/

a civil officer who administers the law

*The accused was ordered to come up before the magistrate.***magnanimous****adjective** /mæg'nænɪməs/

kind, generous and forgiving, especially towards an enemy or a rival

*His refusal to take revenge was considered a magnanimous gesture by many.***magnetostriction****noun** /mæg,nɪtəʊ'strɪkʃən/

a change in the dimensions of ferromagnetic materials when subjected to a magnetic field

*Rapid, alternating magnetostriction causes the iron cores of household transformers to hum or buzz***magnitude****noun** /'mæɡnɪtju:d/

largeness

*The sheer magnitude of the task seemed overwhelming.***maintenance****noun** /'meɪntənəns/

upkeep

*The school pays for heating and the maintenance of the buildings.***maisonette****noun** /,meɪzə'net/

a flat with rooms on two floors within a building, usually with a separate entrance

*She lives in a rented maisonette.***malaise****noun** /mə'leɪz/

a general feeling of discomfort, illness, or unease

*After the weekend there was a general feeling of malaise in the office.***malcontent****noun** /'mælkəntent/

a person who is not satisfied with a situation

*A malcontent was leading the conspiracy.***malign****adjective** /mə'laɪn/

harmful

*She had a strong and malign influence on her friend.***malignant****adjective** /mə'ɪɡnənt/

harmful

We were thankful that it was not a malignant tumour.

15 to 17
age group

M

malleability**noun** /'mæliə'biləti/

being easily influenced

*The fashion designer believes in flexibility and malleability in regards to her design philosophy.***mallet****noun** /'mælit/

a hammer with a large wooden head and a long handle

*The boy scout used his mallet to hit the peg into the ground.***mammoth****noun** /'mæməθ/

an animal like a large elephant covered with hair, that lived thousands of years ago and is now extinct

manacle**verb** /'mænəkl/

to fasten metal bands to a person's hands or feet, to stop them from escaping

*The police had to manacle the prisoner so he could not escape.***manageable****adjective** /'mænidʒəbl/

that can be managed, used or controlled

*The debt has been reduced to a manageable level.***mandatory****adjective** /'mændətəri/

required by law

*They had to pay a mandatory fee to register for the competition.***maniacal****adjective** /mə'niəkəl/

wild or violent

*His drove in a maniacal manner.***manifestation****noun** /,mæni'feɪʃn/

display; revelation

*The riots are a clear manifestation of the people's discontent.***manipulate****verb** /mə'nɪpjuleɪt/

to control or influence somebody or something

*She used her charm to manipulate people.***manure****noun** /mə'njuə[r]/

the waste matter from animals that is spread over or mixed with the soil to help plants grow

*Animal manure is good for growing healthy plants.***Maori****proper noun** /'maʊri/

a member of the aboriginal people of New Zealand

*The language of the Maori is officially recognised in New Zealand.***mare****noun** /meə[r]/

a female of the horse or other equine species

marionette**noun** /,mæriə'net/

a puppet manipulated from above by strings

*The toddlers watched in amazement as the marionette danced.***marsupial****noun** /mɑ:'su:piəl/

a mammal such as a kangaroo or wallaby of which the female has a pouch in front of her body in which its babies are carried

*A marsupial is a mammal found only in Australia.***martyr****noun** /'mɑ:tə[r]/

a person who suffers very much or is killed because of their religious or political beliefs

*He was officially announced a martyr ten years after his death.***marvellous****adjective** /'mɑ:vələs/

wonderful

This will be a marvellous opportunity for her.

M

15 to 17
age group**mascot****noun** /ˈmæskət/

an animal, toy that people believe will bring them good luck or that represents an organisation
The team's mascot is a black bear.

masquerade**noun** /ˌmæskəˈreɪd/

a way of behaving that hides the truth or a person's true feeling
Her sympathy is just a masquerade for her jealousy.

masseur**noun** /mæˈsɜː[r]/

a male whose job is giving people massages
She wanted to employ the best masseur in the city.

maternity**adjective** /mæˈtɜːnəti/

related to being a mother
She applied for maternity leave.

matinee**noun** /ˈmætiːneɪ/

an afternoon performance of a play or film
They all enjoyed the matinee.

matriarchal**adjective** /ˌmeɪtriˈɑːkl/

controlled by females
Some animals live in matriarchal groups.

matriculate**verb** /məˈtrɪkjuleɪt/

to be admitted to membership in a body or society, particularly in a college or university
When did you matriculate?

maul**verb** /mɔːl/

to attack and injure somebody by tearing their flesh
The helpless family watched the lion maul the keeper.

mauve**adjective** /məʊv/

pale purple in colour
The mauve walls in her room pleased her.

maverick**noun** /ˈmævərɪk/

a person with independent or unusual views
Politically, she is a real maverick.

mawkish**adjective** /ˈmɔːkɪʃ/

expressing or sharing emotion in a way that is exaggerated or embarrassing
The young man wrote mawkish poems about her.

mayhem**noun** /ˈmeɪhem/

confusion and fear
There was absolute mayhem when everyone tried to get out of the burning cinema at once.

meagre**adjective** /ˈmiːgə[r]/

small in quantity and poor in quality
He would often complain about the meagre salary that he received.

meander**verb** /miˈændə[r]/

to take a winding, crooked or involved course
Streams tend to meander through level ground.

mechanism**noun** /ˈmekənɪzəm/

the parts of a machine, taken collectively
There was a problem with the car's gear mechanism.

mediate**verb** /ˈmiːdiət/

to try to end a disagreement between two or more people or groups
The secretary general was asked to mediate in the dispute.

15 to 17
age group

M

mediocre**adjective** /ˌmiːdi'əʊkə[r]/

of only average standard

*We were disappointed because he gave a rather mediocre performance in the play.***mediocrity****noun** /ˌmiːdi'əʊkrəti/

the quality of being average or not very good

*His novels seldom rise above mediocrity.***melancholy****noun** /ˈmeləŋkəli/

a deep feeling of sadness

*He had an air of sorrow and melancholy about him.***melange****noun** /meɪ'lɑːnz/

a mixture or variety of different things

*This salad is a melange of fruits.***melodrama****noun** /ˈmelədrɑːmə/

a sensational and dramatic play with exaggerated characters and exciting events

*She wrote a gripping melodrama about mistaken identity.***membrane****noun** /ˈmembreɪn/

a thin skin or similar covering

*The canopy's waterproof membrane failed to keep out the rain.***memoir****noun** /ˈmemwɑː[r]/

an account written by somebody about their life and experiences

*His memoir contained both factual and fictional material.***mendacious****adjective** /ˈmen'deɪʃəs/

not telling the truth

*His friends learnt to discount his mendacious stories when they found out that he was a habitual liar.***mercantile****adjective** /ˈmɜːkəntaɪl/

(formal) connected with trade and commercial affairs

*This law is beneficial to mercantile interests.***meritorious****adjective** /ˌmerɪ'tɔːriəs/

deserving reward or praise

*She deserves a medal for her meritorious conduct.***mesmerise****verb** /ˈmezməraɪz/

to hypnotise

*The critic watched the singer mesmerise the audience with her voice.***meticulous****adjective** /mə'tɪkjələs/

paying careful attention to every detail

*Their room had been prepared with meticulous care.***metropolis****noun** /mə'trɒpəlɪs/

a large, important city

*Thousands of commuters travel daily from the metropolis to their homes in the suburbs.***microcosm****noun** /ˈmaɪkrəʊkɒzəm/

a thing, a place or a group that has all the features and qualities of something much larger

*Our small village is a microcosm of the larger world.***millionaire****noun** /ˌmɪljə'neə[r]/

a person whose assets are worth one million dollars/pounds or more

*The philanthropic millionaire donated a large sum of money to the local orphanage.***mincemeat****noun** /ˈmɪnsmiːt/

mixture of dried fruits, spices used especially for making pies

She made a pie using mincemeat.

M

15 to 17
age group**miniaturise****verb** /ˈmɪnətʃəraɪz/

to make much smaller

*He used to miniaturise models of ships and put them in bottles as ornaments.***minutiae****noun** /mɪˈnuːʃiə/

very small details

*Before signing a contract one should always study the minutiae.***misanthrope****noun** /ˈmɪsənθrəʊp/

one who avoids human society

*He was labelled a misanthrope because he preferred to remain secluded in his studio.***miscellaneous****adjective** /ˌmɪsəˈleɪniəs/

consisting of many different kinds of things that are not connected and do not easily form a group

*He has a miscellaneous collection of books.***misconstrue****verb** /ˌmɪskənˈstruː/

to mistake the meaning of

*The counsellor advised the couple not to misconstrue what he was about to say.***misdemeanour****noun** /ˌmɪsdɪˈmiːnə[r]/

an action that is bad or unacceptable, but not very serious

*As it was only a small misdemeanour, the child was not punished.***misogynist****noun** /mɪˈsɒdʒɪnɪst/

a man who hates women

*The misogynist refused to work with a female secretary.***misshapen****adjective** /ˌmɪsˈʃeɪpən/

with a shape that is not normal or natural

*We laughed when our mother showed us the misshapen potato that looked like a cat.***mnemonic****noun** /nɪˈmɒnɪk/

a word, sentence that helps you remember something

*He made up a mnemonic to remember the theorem.***mollusc****noun** /ˈmɒləsk/

marine invertebrates having a soft unsegmented body, and a protective calcareous shell

*Molluscs are eaten at seaside resort.***monarchist****noun** /ˈmɒnəkɪst/

a person who believes that a country should be ruled by a king or a queen

*He has always been a monarchist and enjoys watching the Queen's speech on television.***monocyte****noun** /ˈmɒnəʊsaɪt/

one of the main types of white blood cells

*Monocyte cells are part of the human body's immune system.***morganatic****adjective** /ˌmɔːgəˈnætɪk/

a marriage in which neither the spouse of lower rank, nor any children have any claim to the possessions or title of the spouse of higher rank

*Morganatic marriages used to be looked down upon by the aristocracy.***morose****adjective** /məˈrəʊs/

gloomy and unsocial

My brother wears a habitually morose expression.

15 to 17
age group

M

mortician**noun** /mɔː'tɪʃn/

a person whose job is to prepare bodies for funerals
The mortician prepared the corpse for burial.

mozzarella**noun** /ˌmɒtsə'relə/

a type of soft white Italian cheese with a mild flavour
She sprinkled a handful of mozzarella on the pizza before baking it.

mule**noun** /mju:l/

the sterile hybrid offspring of a male donkey and a female horse, characterised by long ears and a short mane

multilingual**adjective** /ˌmʌlti'liŋgwəl/

speaking or using several different languages
I went to the bookstore to purchase a multilingual phrase book.

multiplicity**noun** /ˌmʌlti'plɪsəti/

a great number and variety of something
He was appalled by the multiplicity of details he had to attend to before setting out on his mission.

munificent**adjective** /mju:'nɪfɪsnt/

very generous
A munificent gift was presented to the bride by her father.

murk**noun** /mɜ:k/

darkness caused by smoke, fog
The murk which hung over the house and garden was depressing.

mussel**noun** /ˈmʌsəl/

marine bivalve molluscs, especially the edible members, often found attached to rocky surfaces or the sides of ships

mutilate**verb** /'mju:tɪleɪt/

to damage very severely, especially by cutting or tearing off part of it
The torturer threatened to mutilate his victim.

mutinous**adjective** /'mju:tənəs/

refusing to obey the orders of somebody in authority
The captain had to use force to quieten his mutinous crew.

mutiny**noun** /'mju:təni/

the act of refusing to obey the orders of somebody in authority, especially of soldiers or sailors
The team manager nearly had a mutiny on his hands.

myopic**adjective** /maɪ'əʊpiəl/

lacking foresight or intellectual insight
He is very inexperienced and has a rather myopic outlook on life.

myotome**noun** /'maɪətəʊm/

the segment in a vertebrate embryo that differentiates into skeletal muscle such as in fishes
An amphibian's skeletal muscles arise from its myotome.

myth**noun** /mɪθ/

an old story containing ideas about ancient times or about supernatural beings
She used to read a Greek myth every night before going to bed.

myxomatosis**noun** /ˌmɪksəmə'təʊsɪs/

an infectious disease of rabbits that usually causes death
Her rabbits died of myxomatosis.

N

15 to 17
age group**narcissism****noun** /'nɑːsɪsɪzəm/

the habit of admiring yourself too much, especially your appearance
A superiority complex sometimes leads to narcissism.

narcissist**noun** /'nɑːsɪsɪst/

a self-centred person
A narcissist is his own best friend.

nascence**noun** /'næsn̩s/

birth
They celebrated the nascence of their first child with great joy.

nascent**adjective** /'næsn̩t/

beginning to exist; not yet fully developed
It is not prudent to invest in the nascent space tourism industry.

nasturtium**noun** /nə'stɜːʃəm/

a garden plant with round flat leaves and red, orange or yellow flowers that are sometimes eaten in salads
As an experiment, mother decided to put the flowers of the nasturtium in the salad.

natation**noun** /neɪ'teɪʃn/

swimming
Natation is one of the best exercises for the human body because it uses all the muscles.

nausea**noun** /'nɔːziə/

a feeling that you have when you want to vomit
His graphic account of the accident induced a feeling of nausea.

nautilus**noun** /'nɔːtɪləs/

a mollusc having a spiral, pearly-lined shell with a series of air-filled chambers

navigate**verb** /'nævɪgeɪt/

to find the correct direction in which to travel
The upper reaches of the river are too dangerous to navigate.

Neanderthal**adjective** /ni'ændəʊtəl/

used to describe a type of human being who used stone tools and lived in Europe during the early period of human history
The remains of a Neanderthal man were found in Germany.

nebula**noun** /'nebjələ/

a mass of dust or gas that can be seen in the night sky, often appearing very bright
The nebula was observed through the powerful telescope.

necessarily**adverb** /,nesə'serəli/

inevitably
Wealth does not necessarily make you happy.

necessitate**verb** /nə'sesɪteɪt/

compel
Your job may necessitate you working overtime at least twice a week.

necromancer**noun** /'nekrəʊmænsə[r]/

a person who claims to communicate by magic with people who are dead
The village people used to visit the necromancer to communicate with their deceased loved ones.

necromancy**noun** /'nekrəʊmænsɪ/

the practice of claiming to communicate by magic with the dead in order to learn about the future
Because he was able to perform feats of necromancy, the natives thought he was in league with the devil.

15 to 17
age group

N

nefarious**adjective** /nɪ'fɛəriəs/

wicked; not moral

*He was ostracised because of his past nefarious activities.***negligence****noun** /'neglɪdʒəns/

the failure to give somebody or something enough care or attention

*The accident was a result of the driver's negligence.***negligible****adjective** /'neglɪdʒəbl/of very little importance and not worth considering
*Even after much bargaining the shopkeeper only conceded a negligible amount.***negotiate****verb** /nɪ'gəʊʃieɪt/to try to reach an agreement by formal discussion
*The government will not negotiate with terrorists.***neigh****verb** /neɪ/when a horse neighs it makes a long, high sound
*She heard her horse neigh amongst all the other horses at the show.***neonatal****adjective** /,ni:əʊ'neɪt/of or relating to a child that has just been born
*The hospital's neonatal unit had many patients.***nescient****adjective** /neʃiənt/

lacking knowledge; ignorant

*This report is a product of nescient minds.***nestle****verb** /'nesl/

to sit or lie down in a warm or soft place

*We watched the puppies nestle close to their mother.***netiquette****noun** /'netɪkət/the correct or acceptable way of using the Internet
*It is advisable to exercise proper netiquette when surfing the web.***neurology****noun** /njʊə'rɒlədʒi/the scientific study of nerves and their diseases
*He has studied neurology.***neurosis****noun** /njʊə'rəʊsɪs/a mental illness in which a person suffers strong feelings of fear and worry
*Due to my neurosis, I am unable to enjoy a carefree life.***neutral****adjective** /'nju:trəl/

not engaged on either side

*The two rivals will meet on neutral territory.***neutralise****verb** /'nju:trəlaɪz/

to stop something from having any effect

*In order to neutralise an acidic solution, an alkali must be added to it.***niche****noun** /ni:ʃ/a comfortable or suitable role, job, way of life
*He eventually found his niche in sport's journalism.***nicotine****noun** /'nɪkəti:n/an alkaloid which is the active principle of tobacco
*Nicotine is an intensely poisonous substance.***nocturnal****adjective** /nɒk'tɜ:nl/

active at night

The farmer got himself a watchdog to prevent the nocturnal raids on his chicken coops.

N

15 to 17
age group**nodule****noun** /'nɒdju:l/

a small round lump or swelling, especially on a plant
The plant had a strange nodule on its stem.

noisome**adjective** /'nɔɪsəm/

extremely unpleasant or offensive
*She left the chicken farm quickly as she found the
 noisome smells disturbing.*

nomadic**adjective** /'nəʊ'mædɪk/

moving from place to place for subsistence
He lived a nomadic lifestyle.

nominal**adjective** /'nɒmɪnəl/

very small
She charged only a nominal fee for her work.

nonchalance**noun** /'nɒnʃələns/

cool indifference
*You had to admire his air of nonchalance as he faced
 difficulties both at work and at home.*

nonentity**noun** /'nɒ'nentəti/

a person without any special qualities, who has not
 achieved anything important
*Mariam sincerely apologised to Tariq for calling him a
 nonentity in a moment of anger.*

nonsensical**adjective** /'nɒn'sensɪkl/

without sense
His nonsensical argument bored everyone.

nostalgia**noun** /'nɒ'stældʒə/

a feeling of sadness mixed with pleasure and
 affection when you think of happy times in the past
*The first settlers found so much work to do that they
 had little time for nostalgia.*

notorious**adjective** /'nəʊ'tɔːriəs/

generally known and talked about, usually in an
 unfavourable sense
The police are on a hunt for the notorious criminal.

nougat**noun** /'nuːɡɑː/

a sweet made from sugar or honey, nuts and egg
 white
Bits of nougat got stuck between her teeth.

novice**noun** /'nɒvɪs/

one who is new in any business or profession
She is a complete novice as a reporter.

noxious**adjective** /'nɒksɪəs/

poisonous or harmful
*Containers that hold noxious gases must be handled
 with great care.*

nuance**noun** /'njuːɑːns/

a very slight difference that is not usually very
 obvious
*He watched her face intently to catch every nuance of
 expression.*

nuclear**adjective** /'njuːkliə[r]/

of or pertaining to a nucleus
*Nuclear powered aircraft carriers can stay at sea for
 years at a time.*

nucleotide**noun** /'njuːkliətaɪd/

any of a group of molecules that, when linked
 together, form the building blocks of DNA
*Nucleotides are the basic buildingblocks of nucleic
 acids.*

nucleus

noun /ˈnjuːkliəs/

the central part of something around which other parts are situated

The fortress was the nucleus of the ancient city.

nugatory

adjective /ˈnjuːgətəri/

having no purpose or value

His contribution to the discussion was nugatory.

nuisance

noun /ˈnjuːsɪns/

that which annoys or gives trouble and vexation

Stop making a nuisance of yourself and do something useful instead.

numerous

adjective /ˈnjuːmərəs/

consisting of a great number of units or individual objects

He has helped me on numerous occasions.

nurture

verb /ˈnɜːtʃə[r]/

to nourish or nurse

It's important to nurture a good working relationship.



15 to 17 age group

oaf

noun /əʊf/

a stupid, awkward person

He called the unfortunate waiter a clumsy oaf.

oaken

adjective /'əʊkən/

made of or consisting of oak or of the wood of oak

The old couple could not buy the oaken table as it was very expensive.

obdurate

adjective /'ɒbdjərət/

refusing to change your mind or your actions in any way

His obdurate refusal to listen to our complaints infuriated us.

obeisance

noun /əʊ'beɪns/

the act of bending your head or the upper part of your body in order to show respect for somebody or something

He made an obeisance as the king and queen entered the room.

obelisk

noun /'ɒbəlɪsk/

a tall pointed stone column with four sides, put up in memory of a person or event

We saw an obelisk in the square as a memorial of the war.

obfuscate

verb /'ɒbfʌskeɪt/

to make something more difficult to understand

Do not obfuscate the issues by dragging in irrelevant arguments.

obituary

noun /ə'bitʃuəri/

a notice of the death of a person, accompanied by a biographical sketch

He wrote an obituary for the local newspaper on his grandmother's death.

objectification

noun /əb,dʒektɪfɪ'keɪʃn/

the act of treating people as if they are objects without rights or feelings of their own

Most of the advertisements on T.V. indulge in the objectification of women.

objurgation

noun /'ɒbdʒʊrgeɪʃn/

a severe rebuke; scolding

The threat of an objurgation did not deter the students from carrying out their end of term pranks.

obligatory

adjective /ə'bliɡətəri/

binding in law or conscience

We must offer our obligatory prayers every day.

oblique

adjective /ə'bli:k/

indirect

She made an oblique reference to my past.

obliterate

verb /ə'blɪtəreɪt/

to remove all signs of something, by destroying or covering it completely

The horrified boy watched the tidal wave obliterate his fishing village.

oblivion

noun /ə'blɪvɪən/

the state in which somebody or something has been forgotten and is no longer famous or important

Her work fell into oblivion after her death.

obloquy

noun /'ɒbləkwi/

strong public criticism; loss of honour and respect

I have endured years of contempt and obloquy.

obnoxious

adjective /əb'ɒksjəs/

very unpleasant, offensive

He has the most obnoxious manners.

**oboe****noun** /əʊbəʊ/

a high-pitched woodwind instrument
He plays the oboe very well.

obscure**adjective** /əb'skjʊə[r]/

hidden or unknown
The hymn was written by an obscure Greek composer.

obsequious**adjective** /əb'si:kwiəs/

trying too hard to please somebody
The waiter in the expensive hotel greeted us with an obsequious smile.

observation**noun** /,ɒbzə'veɪʃn/

the act of observing or taking notice
The patient was kept under observation for weeks.

obsession**noun** /əb'seʃn/

the state in which a person's mind is completely filled with thoughts of one particular thing or person in a way that is not normal
His obsession with computers began six months ago.

obsolete**adjective** /'ɒbsəli:t/

no longer in use
Many obsolete words were found in the old text.

obstetrician**noun** /,ɒbstə'triʃn/

doctor skilled in obstetrics
Dr. Saad is a very well known obstetrician.

obstinate**adjective** /'ɒbstɪnət/

refusing to change, usually implying unreasonableness
The obstinate old man refused to go to the hospital.

obtrude**verb** /əb'tru:d/

to thrust impertinently
He was trying to obtrude his opinions on others.

obtuse**adjective** /əb'tju:s/

slow or unwilling to understand something
He fails to keep up with the rest of the class due to his obtuse nature.

obviate**verb** /'ɒbvieɪt/

to remove
The new evidence will obviate the need for any further enquiries.

occasion**noun** /ə'keɪʒn/

a particular time when something happens
On one occasion, she called me in the middle of the night.

occult**noun** /ə'kʌlt/

magic powers and things that cannot be explained by reason or science
He has an unhealthy interest in witchcraft and the occult.

oceanic**adjective** /,əʊʃi'ænik/

of or pertaining to the ocean
The study of oceanic plant life can be very interesting for young children.

ochre**noun** /'əʊkə[r]/

a type of red or yellow earth used in some paints and dyes
He has painted the walls of his room yellow ochre.

octogenarian**noun** /,ɒktədʒə'neəriən/

a person between 80 and 89 years of age
My grandfather is an octogenarian.



15 to 17
age group

octopus

noun /'ɒktəpəs/
carnivorous marine mollusc that has a rounded soft body, eight tentacles, a large distinct head, and a strong beak-like mouth

odorous

adjective /'əʊdəərəs/
having or emitting a scent
Apples have an odorous quality.

odour

noun /'əʊdə[r]/
a smell
The room was filled with the stale odour of cigarette smoke.

odyssey

noun /'ɒdəsi/
a long journey full of experiences
The refugee arrived in Australia after a terrifying odyssey of six months.

oesophagus

noun /i'səʊfəgəs/
the tube through which food passes from the mouth to the stomach
His oesophagus was damaged in the car accident.

offensive

adjective /ə'fensɪv/
causing displeasure or resentment
His offensive attitude put everyone off.

officious

adjective /ə'fɪʃəs/
too ready or willing to give orders
I am tired of being pushed around by officious civil servants.

oleaginous

adjective /,əʊli'ædʒɪnəs/
oily
Some organic substances have oleaginous properties.

olfactory

adjective /ɒl'fæktəri/
of or connected with the sense of smell
Her olfactory senses are very sharp as she can smell anything from a distance.

ominous

adjective /'ɒmɪnəs/
suggesting that something bad is going to happen in the future
The ominous dark clouds suggested that a storm was brewing in the Atlantic.

omnifarious

adjective /,ɒmnə'feəriəs/
of all kinds
We went to the nursery to conduct a research on omnifarious plants.

omnipotent

adjective /ɒm'nɪpətənt/
having unlimited power
The monarch thought of himself as an omnipotent entity.

omnipresent

adjective /,ɒmnɪ'preznt/
present in all places at the same time
The war brought with it the omnipresent sound of sirens.

omniscient

adjective /ɒm'nɪsɪənt/
knowing everything
The Wall Street Journal has an omniscient data gathering network.

onerous

adjective /'əʊnərəs/
needing great effort; causing trouble or worry
To chaperone the three active children was an onerous task.

15 to 17
age group**onomatopoeia****noun** /ɒnəˌmætəˈpiːə/

the formation of words in imitation of sounds
He chose onomatopoeia as the style of writing for his poem.

onslaught**noun** /ɒnslɔ:t/

a strong or violent attack
The town survives the onslaught of tourists every summer.

opalescent**adjective** /ɒpəˈlesnt/

changing colour like an opal
The sailor was fascinated by the opalescent ocean.

ophthalmic**adjective** /ɒfˈθælmɪk/

connected with the eye
She is going to have ophthalmic surgery.

ophthalmology**noun** /ɒfθælˈmɒlədʒi/

the scientific study of the eye
He is specialising in ophthalmology.

opponent**noun** /əˈpəʊnənt/

a person who is against another person in a game, a struggle or an argument
He easily defeated his opponent in Saturday's game.

opportunist**noun** /ɒpəˈtju:nɪst/

making use of an opportunity, especially to get an advantage for yourself
I know he will vote for the more influential candidate as he is such an opportunist.

opposition**noun** /ɒpəˈzɪʃn/

resistance
The army met with fierce opposition in every town.

oppressive**adjective** /əˈpresɪv/

unreasonably burdensome; unjustly severe, rigorous, or harsh
The oppressive laws of the state can result in a civil war.

opprobrious**adjective** /əˈprɒbrɪəs/

(of language) expressing scorn or criticism
Her opprobrious remark about the president was uncalled for.

optimism**noun** /ɒptɪmɪzəm/

a feeling that good things will happen
There is a new feeling of optimism in the country.

opulent**adjective** /ˈɒpjələnt/

rich; wealthy
They enjoyed an opulent life style.

oratorio**noun** /ɒrəˈtɔ:riəʊ/

a long piece of music for singers and an orchestra, usually based on a story from the Bible
Our local choir decided to present an oratorio for their annual recital.

orchestra**noun** /ˈɔ:kɪstrə/

a large group of people playing various musical instruments together
She plays a flute in the school orchestra.

orchestrate**verb** /ˈɔ:kɪstreɪt/

to organise a complicated plan or event very carefully or secretly
John tried to orchestrate a surprise party for his best friend.



15 to 17 age group

orchid

noun /'ɔ:kɪd/

a plant with brightly coloured flowers of unusual shapes

The gardener planted an orchid.

orthography

noun /ɔ:'θɒɡrəfi/

conventionally correct spelling; also, mode of spelling

The two languages are essentially the same, but their orthography is different.

oscillate

verb /'ɒsɪleɪt/

to vary from one extreme to another, and back again

Her moods oscillate between depression and elation.

ossify

verb /'ɒsɪfaɪ/

cause to become hard and bony

The disease will ossify the tissue.

ostensible

adjective /ɒ'stensəbl/

seeming or stated to be real or true, when this is perhaps not the case

Although the ostensible purpose of the expedition was to discover new lands, the explorers were really interested in expanding trade.

ostentatious

adjective /ɒ'sten'teɪʃəs/

expensive or noticeable in a way that is intended to impress people

She hosted an ostentatious wedding reception to celebrate her daughter's marriage.

osteoporosis

noun /ɒ'stiəʊpə'rəʊsɪs/

(medical) a condition in which the bones become weak and are easily broken

Her mother was suffering from osteoporosis.

ostracise

verb /'ɒstrəsaɪz/

to refuse to let somebody be a member of a social group

His colleagues decided to ostracise him for refusing to support the strike.

otiose

adjective /'əʊtɪəʊs/

having no useful purpose

He had to sit through an otiose round of meetings.

oust

verb /aʊst/

to force somebody out of a job or position of power, especially in order to take their place

His rival worked behind the scenes to oust the chairman from his position.

outrageous

adjective /aʊt'reɪdʒəs/

exceeding the limits of right, reason, or decency

He says the most outrageous things sometimes.

overture

noun /'əʊvətʃʊə[r]/

a suggestion or an action by which somebody tries to make friends, start a business relationship, have discussions with somebody else

He began making an overture to the leading merchant bank.

overweening

adjective /ɒvə'wi:nɪŋ/

showing too much confidence or pride

His overweening pride in his accomplishments was not justified.

15 to 17
age group

P

pacific**adjective** /pə'sɪfɪk/

of or pertaining to peace

*They are a very pacific party and do not believe in violence.***pacifist****noun** /pə'sɪfɪst/

a person who believes that war is always wrong, and who refuses to fight in a war

*A pacifist protests against war.***paddock****noun** /pædək/

a small field where horses are kept or exercised

*The child was staring at the paddock in order to see the horses.***paediatrician****noun** /pi:diə'triʃn/

a doctor who studies and treats the diseases of children

*They consulted a paediatrician when the baby refused to eat.***pageant****noun** /pædʒənt/

a public entertainment in which people dress in historical costumes and give performances of scenes from history

*My friend was dressed as a princess in our city's pageant.***pageantry****noun** /pædʒəntri/

scenic shows or spectacles, taken collectively; spectacular quality; splendour

*The pageantry of royal occasions gathers people from various areas.***pahoehoe****noun** /pə'həʊhəʊi/

a type of lava having a smooth, swirled surface

*Pahoehoe is the second most abundant type of lava flow.***Palaeolithic****adjective** /pæliə'hɪθɪk/

from or connected with the early part of the Stone Age

*Neanderthals in the Palaeolithic era lived a savage life.***palatable****adjective** /pələ'teɪbəl/

having a pleasant or acceptable taste

*The chef was instructed to prepare a palatable meal for the dignitaries.***palindrome****noun** /pælɪndrəʊm/

a word or phrase that reads the same backwards as forwards, e.g. madam

*The series of palindromes in the dictionary confused me.***pallid****adjective** /pælıd/

pale

*Reena's pallid complexion was the result of high fever.***panacea****noun** /pænə'si:ə/

something that will solve all the problems of a particular situation

*He claimed to have a panacea for the company's problems.***panache****noun** /pə'næʃ/

a stylish way of doing something

*She wears her clothes with great panache.***pancreas****noun** /pæŋkriəs/

an organ near the stomach that produces insulin and a liquid that helps the body to digest food

The pancreas secretes insulin to regulate the blood sugar level in the body.

P

15 to 17
age group**pandemonium****noun** /ˌpændəˈmɔːniəm/

a situation in which there is a lot of noise, activity and confusion

*Pandemonium broke out when the terrible news was announced.***pantomime****noun** /ˈpæntəmɪm/

(in Britain) a type of play based on a fairy tale usually performed at Christmas

*We took the family to the pantomime last Christmas, to see 'Puss in Boots'.***papyrus****noun** /ˈpæpɪrəs/

a tall rush like plant, formerly growing in Egypt

*The papyrus was used as paper, for recording facts and figures, in ancient Egypt.***paradigm****noun** /ˈpærədəɪm/

a typical example or pattern of something

*The war was a paradigm of the worst side of human nature.***paradox****noun** /ˈpærədɒks/

a person, thing or situation that has two opposite features and therefore seems strange

*It is a paradox that comedians often lead unhappy personal lives.***paragon****noun** /ˈpærəɡən/

a person who is a perfect example of a particular quality

*I make no claim to be a paragon.***parallelism****noun** /ˈpærələlɪzəm/

the state of being similar; a similar feature

*I think he exaggerates the parallelism between the two cases.***paralytic****adjective** /ˌpærəˈlɪtɪk/

unable to move

*She has been suffering from a paralytic illness since she had the accident.***paramount****adjective** /ˈpærəmaʊnt/

having the highest rank or jurisdiction; superior to all others

*This matter is of paramount importance.***paranoia****noun** /ˌpærəˈnoɪə/

a mental illness in which a person believes that other people are trying to harm them

*His acute paranoia made itself evident, as he claimed that more and more people were trying to kill him.***parapet****noun** /ˈpærəpɪt/

a low protective wall along the edge of a balcony, bridge, roof

*I leaned over the parapet and waved goodbye.***paraphernalia****noun** /ˌpærəfəˈneɪliə/

a large number of objects or personal possessions, especially the equipment that you need for a particular activity or sport

*There is a huge pile of paraphernalia in the garage waiting to be sorted out.***parasite****noun** /ˈpærəsart/

a small animal or plant that lives on or inside another animal or plant and gets its food from it

*A mosquito is a blood sucking parasite.***paregoric****noun** /ˈpærɪˈɡɔːrɪk/

medicine that eases pain

The doctor prescribed a paregoric to alleviate the worst of his suffering.

parental**adjective** /pə'rentl/

of or pertaining to a parent or parents
Parental guidance is needed for adolescents who are going through a difficult phase.

pariah**noun** /pə'raɪə/

a social outcast
Huckleberry Finn was a pariah because he was the son of the town drunkard.

parlance**noun** /'pɑ:ləns/

a particular way of using words or expressing yourself
Legal parlance confuses me; I need a lawyer to help me understand.

parliament**noun** /'pɑ:ləmənt/

the group of people who are elected to make and change the laws of a country
He has been a member of parliament for many years.

parlous**adjective** /'pɑ:ləs/

very bad and uncertain
The parlous state of security in this country needs immediate attention.

parochial**adjective** /pə'rɔʊkiəl/

confined to a limited area
His parochial outlook meant he was out of touch with the wider world.

parole**noun** /pə'rəʊl/

the release of a prisoner before the end of a sentence
He is hoping to get parole.

paroxysm**noun** /'pærəksɪzəm/

a sudden strong feeling or expression of an emotion that cannot be controlled
He went into a paroxysm of rage.

parquet**noun** /'pɑ:ket/

a floor covering made of flat pieces of wood fixed together in a pattern
They had a lovely house with a beautiful flooring in parquet.

partiality**noun** /'pɑ:ʃi:æləti/

the unfair support of one person, team, idea
As one of the judges of a competition, I must avoid any partiality when I come to make my decision.

participle**noun** /'pɑ:tɪsɪpl/

a word formed from a verb
The present participle of sing is singing.

partisan**adjective** /'pɑ:tɪ'zæn/

showing too much support for one person, group or idea
The partisan referee was disqualified for favouring one team over another.

parvenu**noun** /'pɑ:vənju:/

a person from a low social or economic position who has suddenly become rich or powerful
The parvenu was invited everywhere because of his political connections, but he never felt truly welcome.

pathology**noun** /pə'θɒlədʒi/

the science which treats diseases, their nature, causes, progress, symptoms
The diagnosis of diseases led to the science of pathology.

P

15 to 17
age group**pathos**

noun /'peɪθɒs/
quality that produces feelings of sadness and sympathy
The film captured the pathos of their plight.

patrimony

noun /'pætrɪməni/
property that is inherited when a father dies
As predicted by his critics, he wasted his patrimony within two years of his father's death.

patronage

noun /'pætrənɪdʒ/
favour, encouragement, or aid afforded to a person or a work
Without the patronage of several large firms, the festival would not have taken place.

paucity

noun /'pɔːsəti/
a small amount of something; less than enough of something
The paucity of their savings kept them from returning to their homeland.

pauper

noun /'pɔːpə[r]/
a person who is very poor
He died a pauper, with not even enough money to pay for his grave.

peasant

noun /'peznt/
a countryman
The peasant protested against the harsh policies of the king.

peculiar

adjective /pɪ'kjuːliə[r]/
odd or strange especially in a rather unpleasant way
I have a peculiar feeling that I have been here before.

pecuniary

adjective /pɪ'kjuːniəri/
relating to or connected with money
I did not expect a pecuniary reward for my work in this project.

pedestrian

noun /pə'destrɪən/
a person walking in the street
A pedestrian was injured when the car skidded.

pediment

noun /'pedɪmənt/
the part in the shape of a triangle above the entrance of a building in the ancient Greek style
The pediment of the building was decorated with figures from Greek mythology.

penchant

noun /'pentʃənt/
special enjoyment of or tendency towards something
She has a penchant for Mexican food.

pendulum

noun /'pendjələm/
a long straight part with a weight at the end that moves regularly from side to side to control the movement of a clock
She watched the clock pendulum as if in a daze.

penguin

noun /'peŋgwɪn/
stout flightless marine birds of cool regions of the southern hemisphere, with black and white feathers

peninsula

noun /pə'nɪnsjələ/
a piece of land that is almost surrounded by water but narrowly joined to a larger part of land
The Arabian Peninsula is one of the richest areas of the world.

15 to 17
age group

P

penurious**adjective** /pə'njuəriəs/

very poor

*Her attempt to commit suicide was a result of her penurious circumstances.***peppercorn****noun** /'pepəkɔ:n/

a dried berry of the black pepper

*Food cooked with a sprinkle of peppercorn is considered to be healthy and nutritious.***perceive****verb** /pə'si:v/

to notice or become aware of something

*I did not perceive a change in his behaviour.***perception****noun** /pə'sepʃn/

the way you notice things

*She showed great perception in her assessment of the family situation.***percussion****noun** /pə'kʌʃn/

musical instruments that you play by hitting them with your hand or with a stick

*The track features Joey Langton on percussion.***peregrinate****verb** /'perigrineɪt/

to travel around, through, or over, especially on foot

*He chose to peregrinate across India.***peregrination****noun** /,perəgrɪ'neɪʃn/

a journey, especially a long, slow one

*His peregrination in India taught him to be tolerant of other cultures.***perennial****adjective** /pə'reniəl/

continuing for a very long time

*Pizza is a perennial favourite with the young.***perfidious****adjective** /pə'fɪdiəs/

treacherous, disloyal

*Caesar was shocked at Brutus' perfidious behaviour.***perfidiously****adverb** /pə'fɪdiəsli/

deceitfully

*He was perfidiously playing one side against the other.***perforate****verb** /'pɜ:fəreɪt/

to put a hole or holes through something

*The sound of an explosion can perforate one's eardrums.***performance****noun** /pə'fɔ:məns/

the act of performing

*Sara's award winning performance in the play received a standing ovation.***peripatetic****adjective** /,perɪpə'tetɪk/

going from place to place, for example in order to work

*I do not think that she will ever adapt to the peripatetic nature of military life.***peripheral****adjective** /pə'rɪfərəl/

of minor importance

*Companies are increasingly keen to contract out peripheral activities.***periphery****noun** /pə'rɪfəri/

the outer edge of a particular area

In such a condition it is difficult for patients to see objects at the periphery of their vision.

P

15 to 17
age group**peritonitis****noun** /perɪtə'naɪtɪs/

a serious condition in which the inside wall of the body becomes swollen and infected

*The doctor told the family that she was suffering from peritonitis.***perjure****verb** /'pɜːdʒə[r]/

to tell a lie in a court of law after you have sworn to tell the truth

*To perjure oneself is to defeat the ends of justice.***perjury****noun** /'pɜːdʒəri/

the crime of telling a lie in a court of law

*The judge found him guilty of perjury.***permissible****adjective** /pə'mɪsəbəl/

allowable

*Factory workers were asked to keep only permissible levels of nitrate in the water.***permissive****adjective** /pə'mɪsɪv/

liberal

*Claire's children took her permissive attitude for granted.***perpendicular****adjective** /pɜːpən'dɪkjələ[r]/

at right angles to the plane of the horizon

*She slid down the rail of the perpendicular staircase.***perpetual****adjective** /pə'petʃuəl/

continuing forever or for an unlimited time

*How can I work with these perpetual interruptions?***perquisite****noun** /'pɜːkwɪzɪt/

incidental benefit

*A car was a perquisite for his job.***persecute****verb** /'pɜːsɪkjʊt/

to treat someone in a cruel and unfair way, especially because of their race, religion or political beliefs

*Why does the media persecute him like this?***persevere****verb** /,pɜːsɪ'vɪə[r]/

to continue trying to do or achieve something despite difficulties

*If you persevere I am sure you will succeed.***personage****noun** /'pɜːsənɪdʒ/

a person especially a famous or important one

*A royal personage attended his wedding.***personnel****noun** /,pɜːsə'neɪ/

the body of persons employed in some public service, as the army, navy

*Army personnel are not allowed to leave the base.***perspicacious****adjective** /,pɜːspɪ'keɪʃəs/

able to understand quickly

*He was a most perspicacious student.***perspicacity****noun** /,pɜːspɪ'kæsəti/

insight; quality of being astute

*The brilliant lawyer was known for his perspicacity.***perspicuity****noun** /pɜːspɪ'kɪti/

clearness of expression; freedom from ambiguity

*The perspicuity of his writing style appeals to most of his readers.***perspiration****noun** /,pɜːspə'reɪʃn/

sweat

Beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead.

15 to 17
age group

P

pertinacious**adjective** /ˌpɜːtɪˈneɪʃəs/

determined to achieve a particular aim in spite of difficulties or opposition

*He is bound to succeed because of his pertinacious nature.***pertinent****adjective** /ˈpɜːtɪnənt/

belonging or related to the subject or matter in hand

*She had asked some pertinent questions.***pervasive****adjective** /pəˈveɪsɪv/

existing in all parts of a place or a thing

*Despite airing them for several hours, she could not rid her clothes of the pervasive odour of mothballs.***perverse****adjective** /pəˈvɜːs/

turned away from what is right; wilfully erring

*She takes perverse pleasure in upsetting her parents.***perversion****noun** /pəˈvɜːʃn/

change something good or right to something that is bad or wrong

*What happened in the court today was a perversion of justice.***perversity****noun** /pəˈvɜːsɪti/

stubborn maintenance of a wrong cause

*I cannot understand the perversity of Nalani's decision to not cooperate.***pessimism****noun** /ˈpɛsɪmɪzəm/

a feeling that bad things will happen and that something will not be successful

*There is a mood of pessimism in the company about future job prospects.***petition****noun** /pəˈtɪʃn/

a formal written request, especially one signed by many people appealing to somebody in authority

*The victimised employees filed a petition against their manager.***petulant****adjective** /ˈpetjələnt/

bad tempered and unreasonable

*Her family no longer puts up with her petulant behaviour.***pewter****noun** /ˈpjʊtə[r]/

a grey metal made by mixing tin with lead, used especially in the past for making cups, dishes

*A fine collection of old pewter was sold at the auction.***phantom****noun** /ˈfæntəm/

an apparition

*He believed he was haunted by his dead father's phantom.***pharaoh****noun** /ˈfeərəʊ/

a ruler of ancient Egypt

*The pharaoh ordered his people to worship him.***pharmacology****noun** /ˌfɑːməˈkɒlədʒi/

knowledge of drugs or medicines; the art of preparing medicines

*Alexander specialised in pharmacology.***phenomenal****adjective** /fəˈnɒmɪnəl/

extraordinary; wonderful

The rocket travels at phenomenal speed.

P

15 to 17
age group**philanthropy****noun** /fi'lænθərəpi/

the practice of helping the poor and those in need, especially by giving money

*Philanthropy is something that all of us should practice to the best of our ability.***philistine****noun** /'fɪlɪstɪn/

a person who does not like or understand art, literature, music

*I am not going to invite Ali to my photographic exhibition; he is such a philistine.***philologist****noun** /fi'lɒlədʒɪst/

a person who studies the structure, historical development, and relationships of a language or languages

*J R R Tolkien, the author of the Lord of the Rings was also a philologist.***phlegmatic****adjective** /fleg'mætɪk/

calm; not easily disturbed

*The nurse was a cheerful and phlegmatic person.***phosphate****noun** /'fɒsfet/

a salt of phosphoric acid

*Nitrate and phosphate are used as fertilisers.***photogenic****adjective** /'fəʊtəʊ'dʒenɪk/

looking attractive in photographs

*She has such a photogenic face.***physician****noun** /fi'zɪʃn/

a doctor of general medicine

*He is a very competent physician.***physique****noun** /fi'zi:k/

the size and shape of a person's body

*He does not have the physique for such heavy work.***picaresque****adjective** /'pɪkə'resk/

connected with literature that describes the adventures of a person who is sometimes dishonest but easy to like

*'Tom Jones' has been hailed as one of the best picaresque novels in English literature.***picturesque****adjective** /'pɪktʃə'resk/

suitable to be the subject of a striking picture

*She couldn't take her eyes off the photograph of the picturesque cottage.***piety****noun** /'paɪəti/

devotion to religion

*His piety has never been questioned.***pigeon****noun** /'pɪdʒɪn/

birds having plump bodies, small heads, and short legs

pigmentation**noun** /'pɪgmən'teɪʃn/

the natural colouring of plants or animals

*She has a skin disorder that affects the pigmentation in her skin.***pinnacle****noun** /'pɪnəkl/

the highest, most important or successful part of something

*He has reached the pinnacle of his career.***piquant****adjective** /'pi:kənt/

having a pleasantly strong or spicy taste

*The piquant sauce improved the taste of the meal.***piranha****noun** /pɪ'rɑ:nə/

a small South American freshwater fish that attacks and eats live animals

15 to 17
age group

P

pirate**noun** /ˈpaɪrət/

a person on a ship who attacks other ships at sea in order to steal from them
The notorious pirate robbed all the passengers on the ocean liner.

pistachio**noun** /prɪˈstæʃiəʊ/

the small green nut of an Asian tree
The prices of all dry fruits, including pistachio, almond and cashew, have increased substantially.

pita**noun** /ˈpi:tə/

a type of flat bread in the shape of an oval that can be split open and filled
She served pita with chicken at dinner.

pixie**noun** /ˈpɪksi/

(in stories) a creature like a small person with pointed ears, who has magic powers
In Ireland, homeowners leave milk out in order to entice a pixie to take up residence.

placebo**noun** /pləˈsi:bəʊ/

a dummy medicine given to patients who do not need medicine but think that they do
The doctor gave his patient a placebo and was amused to hear that he had made a complete recovery.

plagiarise**verb** /ˈpleɪdʒəraɪz/

to copy another's ideas, words and work and pretend that they are your own
A boy in our class used to regularly plagiarise other students' work, until he was caught red-handed.

plagiarism**noun** /ˈpleɪdʒərɪzəm/

the act or practice of plagiarising, cheating, copying without permission
Those who get caught in the act of plagiarism will be expelled from the school.

plaintiff**noun** /ˈpleɪntɪf/

person who brings a suit in a court of law
The plaintiff claimed that the land was allotted to him by the government.

plaque**noun** /plæk/

a flat piece of stone, metal usually with a name and dates on, attached to a wall in memory of a person or an event
A bronze plaque hung outside the house where the poet was born.

plaster**noun** /ˈplɑːstə[r]/

a white powder that is mixed with water and becomes very hard when it dries, used especially for holding broken bones in place
She broke her leg two weeks ago, and it is still in plaster.

plausible**adjective** /ˈplɔːzəbl/

likely to be true
The only plausible explanation is that he had forgotten.

plebiscite**noun** /ˈplebɪsɪt/

a vote by universal political election
The question of which state the area should belong to was decided by plebiscite.

pleiades**noun** /ˈplɪədiːz/

a well-known cluster of stars in the constellation Taurus, also known as 'Seven Sisters'
The pleiades is easily visible to the naked eye in the night sky.

plenipotentiary**noun** /ˌplenɪpəˈtenʃəri/

a person who has full powers to take action, make decisions on behalf of their government
The commissioner acting as a plenipotentiary did whatever was necessary to stop the riots.

P

15 to 17
age group**plethora****noun** /ˈpleθərə/

a quantity greater than what is needed or can be used

*The report contained a plethora of detail.***plight****noun** /plaɪt/

a serious and difficult situation or condition

*They were in a desperate plight, having lost all their possessions in the fire.***pneumoconiosis****noun** /ˌnjuːməʊkəʊniˈəʊsɪs/

a chronic lung disease caused by the habitual inhalation of irritants

*Without proper protection factory and chemical workers run the risk of developing pneumoconiosis***pneumonia****noun** /njuːˈməʊniə/

inflammation of the lungs

*He is down with pneumonia.***podzol****noun** /ˈpɒdzɒl/

an infertile acidic soil having an ash-like subsurface layer and a lower dark stratum

*Podzols are typically found in temperate coniferous woodlands.***poignant****adjective** /ˈpɔɪnjənt/

arousing sympathy

*Her face was a poignant reminder of the passing of time.***polemic****noun** /pəˈlemɪk/

a speech or piece of writing that presents a very strong argument

*Her speech was memorable for being polemic.***poliomyelitis****noun** /ˌpɒlɪəʊmaɪəˈlaɪtɪs/

an infectious viral disease that affects the central nervous system and cause paralysis

*Poliomyelitis can be prevented through vaccination.***politician****noun** /ˌpɒləˈtɪʃn/

one versed or experienced in the activity of government

*Ahmed is a seasoned politician.***pollution****noun** /pəˈluːʃn/

defilement; uncleanness; impurity

*I wish the government would do something to reduce the level of environmental pollution.***pomegranate****noun** /ˈpɒmɪgrænt/

a round fruit with thick smooth skin and red flesh full of large seeds

*Pomegranate is my favourite fruit.***pomposity****noun** /pɒmˈpɒsəti/

self-important behaviour

*Although the speaker had good things to say, we had to laugh at his pomposity.***pompous****adjective** /ˈpɒmpəs/

self important; pretentious

*His speech was delivered in a pompous manner.***ponderous****adjective** /ˈpɒndərəs/

moving slowly and heavily

*She watched the cow's ponderous progress.***porcelain****noun** /ˈpɔːsəlɪn/

fine china

My mother had a large collection of antique porcelain.

15 to 17
age group

P

porcupine

noun /'pɔːkjʊpaɪn/
rodents having long, sharp, erectile quills interspersed with coarse hair

porpoise

noun /'pɔːpəʊs/
gregarious toothed whale of oceanic waters, having a blunt snout and a triangular dorsal fin

possession

noun /pə'zeshən/
something one owns
My most precious possession is the bracelet that my grandmother wore on her wedding day.

possessive

adjective /pə'zesɪv/
not liking to lend or share things with others
Most people found his possessive nature very off putting.

posthumous

adjective /'pɒstjʊməs/
happening after a person has died
The grieving widow received her husband's posthumous award for bravery.

postscript

noun /'pəʊstskɪpt/
an extra message that you add at the end of a letter after your signature
She scribbled a quick postscript about her visit to Najma.

posture

noun /'pɒstʃə[r]/
the position in which you hold your body when standing or sitting
She has a very good posture.

poultice

noun /'pəʊltɪs/
a soft substance spread on a cloth, sometimes heated, and put on the skin to reduce pain or swelling
The doctor advised him to apply a poultice to his swollen arm.

pounce

verb /paʊns/
a sudden attack
We saw a tiger in the jungle ready to pounce.

practice

noun /'præktɪs/
frequently repeated or customary action
It was his practice to rise early each morning.

pragmatic

adjective /'præg'mætɪk/
solving problems in a practical and sensible way, rather than by having fixed ideas or theories
The head of the company believed in a pragmatic approach to problems and his company prospered.

pragmatist

noun /'præg'mætɪst/
practical person
Being a pragmatist, he is the best person to call in an emergency.

precarious

adjective /'preɪ'keəriəs/
not safe or certain
She makes a precarious living as a novelist.

precedent

noun /'presɪdənt/
similar action or event that happened earlier
The trial could set an important precedent for dealing with large numbers of similar cases.

preciosity

noun /,preʃi'bsɪti/
over refinement in behaviour; not natural
His preciosity is really absurd in modern times.

P

15 to 17
age group**precious**

adjective /ˈpreʃəs/
of great price; costly
Diamond is a precious stone.

precipice

noun /ˈpresəpɪs/
a very steep side of a high mountain or cliff
Indiana Jones found himself dangling from the edge of the precipice.

precise

adjective /prɪˈsɪs/
exact and accurate
Can you give a more precise definition of the word?

preclude

verb /prɪˈkluːd/
to prevent
His appearance for the England A team does not preclude him from playing for Ireland.

precocious

adjective /prɪˈkəʊʃəs/
prematurely developed
He is an extremely precocious child and can read very well.

precursor

noun /prɪˈkɜːsə[r]/
a person or a thing that comes before somebody or something similar and that leads to or influences its development
Colonial opposition to unfair taxation by the British was a precursor of the American Revolution.

predicament

noun /prɪˈdɪkəmənt/
an unfortunate or trying position
I am afraid we are in a bit of a predicament.

preferential

adjective /ˌprefəˈrenʃl/
unfairly favourable
Why should his son get preferential treatment at work?

preliminary

adjective /prɪˈlɪmɪnəri/
happening before a more important action or event
After a few preliminary remarks, he announced the winners.

preparation

noun /ˌprepəˈreɪʃn/
the act or process of getting ready for something or making something ready
You cannot pass the exam without preparation.

preposterous

adjective /prɪˈpɒstərəs/
completely unreasonable
The insurance company refuses to pay for his preposterous claim.

prescription

noun /prɪˈskrɪpʃn/
the act of prescribing, also, that which is prescribed
The prescription of drugs is a doctor's responsibility.

presentiment

noun /prɪˈzentɪmənt/
a feeling that something is going to happen, especially something unpleasant
I had a presentiment this morning that my car was not going to start.

presidential

adjective /ˌprezɪˈdenʃl/
pertaining to the president
The campaign for the presidential elections is at its peak these days.

prestigious

adjective /preˈstɪdʒəs/
having a good reputation
One of the world's most prestigious orchestras is playing today.

15 to 17
age group

P

pretentious**adjective** /pri'tenʃəs/

trying to appear important, intelligent in order to impress other people

*Everybody disliked her for her pretentious nature.***preternatural****adjective** /,pri:tə'nætʃrəl/

beyond that which is normal in nature

*Autumn has arrived with preternatural speed.***prevail****verb** /pri'veɪl/

to exist or be very common at a particular time or in a particular place

*Those beliefs still prevail among certain social groups.***prevalent****adjective** /'prevələnt/

commonly existing or occurring

*Most of our prevalent beliefs are inherited from our religion.***prevaricate****verb** /pri'værikeit/

to speak or act evasively

*It is a well known fact that politicians will prevaricate at news conferences.***primitive****adjective** /'prɪmətɪv/

very simple

*We were disappointed by the primitive facilities provided at the camp.***primogeniture****noun** /,praɪməʊ'dʒenɪtʃə[r]/

the fact of being the first child born in a family

*His primogeniture makes him the heir to his father's title.***principle****noun** /'prɪnsəpl/

a basic general truth that is the foundation of something

*Discussing all these details will get us nowhere; we must get back to the basic principle.***prion****noun** /'prɪ:ɒn/

a very small unit of protein that is believed to be the cause of brain diseases

*The biology teacher explained to us what a prion was.***privacy****noun** /'prɪvəsi/

seclusion

*He preferred to read in the privacy of his study.***privation****noun** /praɪ'veɪʃn/

a lack of the basic things that people need for living

*In his youth he had seen much hunger and privation in Africa.***privy****adjective** /'prɪvi/

sharing in the secret of something

*He was a member of the privy council.***procedure****noun** /prə'si:dʒə[r]/

the act or manner of proceeding or moving forward

*The injection was a simple medical procedure.***process****noun** /'prəuses/

the act of proceeding; continued forward movement

*Unloading the cargo is a slow process.***proclaim****verb** /prə'kleɪm/

to make known by public announcement

They dare not proclaim their intentions loudly.

P

15 to 17
age group**procrastination**

noun /prəʊkræstɪ'neɪʃn/
deferring taking action
His boss is tired of his constant procrastination on deadlines.

procure

verb /prə'kjʊə[r]/
to acquire or provide for one's self or for another
Can you procure a copy of the reports for me?

prodigious

adjective /prə'dɪdʒəs/
very large or powerful and causing surprise or admiration
Young Mozart's prodigious talents are talked about to this day.

profess

verb /prə'fes/
to own or admit freely
I don't profess to be an expert on the subject.

proficient

adjective /prə'fɪʃnt/
expert; skilled
The proficient architect presented them with several ideas for their house.

profundity

noun /prə'fʌndəti/
depth
His ideas lacked profundity and analytical precision.

profusion

noun /prə'fju:ʒn/
a very large quantity of something
Seldom have I seen such a profusion of flowers in one place.

progenitor

noun /prəʊ'dʒenɪtə[r]/
a person or a thing from which somebody/something develops or is produced
He was a progenitor of a distinguished family.

prognathous

adjective /prɒ'gnəθəs/
having projecting lower jaw or chin
His prognathous face made him appear quite formidable.

prognosis

noun /prɒ'gnəʊsɪs/
an opinion, based on medical experience, of a likely development of a disease or illness
If the doctor's prognosis is correct, the patient will be in a coma for at least twenty-four hours.

progression

noun /prə'greʃn/
the act of moving forward; a proceeding in a course
Her achievements are through normal professional progression.

projector

noun /prə'dʒektə[r]/
an apparatus for projecting photographs or films onto a screen
The projector is broken.

proletariat

noun /,prəʊlə'teəriət/
the lowest class of a society
The proletariat welcomed the early ideas of communism in Russia.

proliferation

noun /prə,lɪfə'reɪʃn/
sudden increase in the number or amount of something
This medicine prevents cancer cell proliferation.

prolific

adjective /prə'lɪfɪk/
abundantly productive
She was a prolific writer and wrote as many as three books a year.

15 to 17
age group

P

prologue**noun** /ˈprələʊɡ/

the preface or introduction to a document, poem, or performance

*The signing of the agreement was a prologue to better relations between the two countries.***prominent****adjective** /ˈprɒmɪnənt/

standing out, or projecting, beyond the line of something

*The house is on a prominent position in the town square.***promulgate****verb** /ˈprɒmlɪɡeɪt/

to spread an idea or a belief

*The director decided that he would have to promulgate a new policy within the company.***prone****adjective** /prəʊn/

likely to suffer from

*She has acne prone sensitive skin.***propaganda****noun** /ˌprɒpəˈgændə/

ideas or statements that are intended as publicity for a particular cause and are often false

*The play is sheer political propaganda.***propagate****verb** /ˈprɒpəgeɪt/

to spread something

*If we are to live in harmony, we must propagate the idea of peace.***prophecy****noun** /ˈprɒfəsi/

a declaration of something to come; a prediction

*He seemed to have the gift of prophecy.***propitious****adjective** /prəˈpiʃəs/

likely to produce a successful result

*It was not a propitious time to start a new business.***proportionate****adjective** /prəˈpɔːʃənət/

corresponding in degree or amount

*Increasing production costs resulted in a proportionate price increase for the consumer.***proprietor****noun** /prəˈpraɪətə[r]/

an owner

*Please address all the complaints to the proprietor.***propulsion****adjective** /prəˈpʌʃn/

the force that drives something forward

*The scientists at NASA are examining alternative spacecraft propulsion concepts.***proscenium****noun** /prəˈsiːniəm/

the part where the actors performed; the stage

*He prefers working in a traditional theatre with a proscenium.***prosecution****noun** /ˌprɒsɪˈkjuːʃn/

the act or process of prosecuting

*The prosecution lacks sufficient evidence.***prosperous****adjective** /ˈprɒspərəs/

tending to prosperity

*America is one of the most prosperous countries in the world.***protector****noun** /prəˈtektə[r]/

one who, or that which, defends or shields from injury

*He wore an ear protector against machine noise.***protestation****noun** /ˌprɒtəˈsteɪʃn/

a solemn declaration, especially of dissent

She repeated her protestation of innocence.

P

15 to 17
age group**protrude****verb** /prə'tru:d/

to thrust forward or outwards

*The wart on his face had swelled and began to protrude.***proverbial****adjective** /prə'vɜ:biəl/

commonly known

*They were known for their proverbial hospitality.***provisions****noun** /prə'vɪʒnz/

supplies of food and drink for a journey

*The expedition set out with enough provisions for two weeks.***prowess****noun** /'praʊəs/

outstanding skill

*We admire his prowess as an oarsman.***proximity****noun** /prɒk'sɪməti/

immediate nearness

*The restaurant benefits from its proximity to several cinemas.***prudent****adjective** /'pru:dnt/

sensible and careful in making judgements and decisions

*Being a prudent person, Maria began preparing for her exams well in advance.***pseudonym****noun** /'su:dənɪm/

a fictitious name assumed by an author

*He writes under a pseudonym.***psychedelic****adjective** /,saɪkə'delɪk/

having bright colours

*Her walls were covered with psychedelic posters.***punctilious****adjective** /pʌŋk'tɪliəs/

attentive to detail

*She is a punctilious hostess.***puncture****noun** /'pʌŋktʃə[r]/

a small hole made by a sharp thing

*The car tyre had a puncture.***pursuit****noun** /pə'sju:t/

the act of following or going after

*People travel round the country in pursuit of work.***pusillanimous****adjective** /,pju:sɪ'lænɪməs/

cowardly; faint hearted

*It is pusillanimous act to leave a friend behind to face danger alone.***putative****adjective** /'pju:tətɪv/

supposed

*The court was shown the putative weapon used in the murder.***pygmy****adjective** /'pɪgmɪ/

smaller than other similar kinds

*The pygmy tribes are facing extinction.***pyromaniac****noun** /,paɪrəʊ'meɪniæk/

a person who enjoys making or watching fires

*The detectives searched the area for the pyromaniac who had set the building on fire.***pythagorean****adjective** /pɪ'thəgə'ri:ən/

related to a mathematical order, named after its inventor

The pythagorean theorem was my favourite topic at school.

15 to 17
age group

P

python

noun /ˈpaɪθən/

a large tropical snake that kills animals for food by winding its long body around them and crushing them

Q

15 to 17
age group**quadriceps****noun** /'kwɒdrɪseps/

the great extensor muscle of the knee
The athlete injured his quadriceps.

quadripartite**adjective** /kwɒdrə'pɑ:tɪt/

divided into four parts
The quadripartite painting was quite unusual.

quaff**verb** /kwɒf/

to drink a large amount of something quickly
I saw him quaff a whole jug of lemonade when he came back from the gym.

qualm**noun** /kwɑ:m/

a feeling of doubt or worry about whether what you are doing is right
He had been working very hard therefore he had no qualm about taking a day off.

quandary**noun** /'kwɒndəri/

a state of difficulty or perplexity
Hassan was in a quandary about whether or not he should go to Lahore.

quarrelsome**adjective** /'kwɒrəlsəm/

apt or disposed to quarrel
He had been a wild boy and a quarrelsome young man.

quartet**noun** /kwɒ:'tɛt/

a group of four musicians or singers who play or sing together
A string quartet was playing when I entered the ballroom.

quartz**noun** /kwɔ:ts/

a hard mineral, often in crystal form, that is used to make very accurate clocks and watches
He had collected hundreds of specimens of quartz from around the world.

queasy**adjective** /'kwɪ:zi/

feeling slightly sick; wanting to vomit
He had a queasy stomach and kept throwing up.

quell**verb** /kwel/

to stop something such as violent behaviour or protests
The police used fire hoses and tear gas to quell the rioters.

quern**noun** /kwɜ:n/

a mill for grinding grain, the upper stone of which is turned by hand
The flour was ground by the quern.

querulous**adjective** /'kwɛrələs/

complaining
The old man asked the same question, over and over again, in a querulous voice.

questionnaire**noun** /,kwɛstʃə'neɪ[r]/

a written list of questions that are answered by a number of people so that information can be collected from the answers
He happily filled out the questionnaire at the airport.

queue**noun** /kju:/

a line of people, cars waiting for something or to do something
There is always a long queue at the post office.

15 to 17
age group

Q

quibble

verb /'kwɪbl/

to argue about a small matter

I was told not to quibble about who got the last slice of pizza.

quiche

noun /ki:ʃ/

an open pie filled with a mixture of eggs and milk with meat, vegetables, cheese

My mother made me a delicious quiche for lunch.

quiescent

adjective /kwi'esnt/

being in a state of repose; at rest; still

Sometimes one longs for a quiescent mind.

quill

noun /kwɪl/

one of the large feathers of a bird's wing used as a pen

He dipped the quill in ink, and wrote his final words.

quintessence

noun /kwɪn'tesns/

the perfect example of something

He is the quintessence of an old-fashioned Englishman.

quintessential

adjective /'kwɪntɪ'senʃl/

purest

I have a calendar with photographs of quintessential English scenery.

quirk

noun /kwɜ:k/

an aspect of somebody's personality or behaviour that is a little strange

His insistence on eating a banana from the wrong end is an endearing quirk.

quizzical

adjective /'kwɪzɪkl/

questioning

She gave me a quizzical glance at my sarcastic reply to the professor.

quota

noun /'kwɒtə/

a proportional part or share

I'm going home now, I've done my quota of work for the day.

R

15 to 17
age group**rabbi****noun** /'ræbaɪ/

a Jewish title of respect or honour for a teacher or doctor of the law

*The rabbi delivered the sermon and everyone listened attentively.***rabid****adjective** /'ræbɪd/

raging; madly violent in nature or behaviour

*He is full of rabid hatred for social injustice.***racetrack****noun** /'reɪstræk/

a track for races between vehicles or runners

*The field resembled a racetrack because of all the parallel lines drawn on it.***radar****noun** /'reɪdɑː[r]/

a system of finding out the position and movement of solid objects especially aircrafts and ships

*The general sent out a rescue mission after one of the planes disappeared off the radar.***rally****verb** /'ræli/

to gather again; to reunite

*The prime minister has managed to rally public opinion.***rampant****adjective** /'ræmpənt/

existing or spreading in an uncontrolled way

*Most of Africa is plagued with rampant unemployment.***ramrod****noun** /'ræmrɒd/

a rod for ramming down the charge of a muzzle-loading firearm

*During spring cleaning she found an old ramrod in the attic.***ranch****noun** /rɑːntʃ/

a large farm, where cattle is bred

*He has a ranch in the country.***rancid****adjective** /'rænsɪd/

if food containing fat is rancid, it tastes or smells unpleasant because it is no longer fresh

*I got rid of the rancid butter stored in the refrigerator.***rancour****noun** /'ræŋkə[r]/

bitterness, spitefulness

*She eventually learned to accept criticism without rancour.***rapport****noun** /ræ'pɔː[r]/

a friendly relationship in which people understand each other well

*There was little rapport between the two women.***rapt****adjective** /ræpt/

so absorbed in one particular thing that you are not aware of anything else

*They listened to the music with rapt attention.***ratchet****noun** /'rætʃɪt/

a wheel or bar with teeth along the edge and a metal piece that fits between the teeth, allowing movement in one direction only

*His watch wasn't working because a ratchet had broken loose.***rationale****noun** /,ræʃə'neɪl/

statement of reasons

What is the rationale behind this decision?

15 to 17
age group

R

raucous**adjective** /'rɔːkəs/

sounding loud and harsh

*Raucous laughter could be heard from the club down the street.***ravenous****adjective** /'rævənəs/

extremely hungry

*Ali hogged all the food like a ravenous beast.***ravine****noun** /rə'viːn/

a deep, narrow gorge or valley

*The ravine was so deep and dark that we could not see the bottom.***ravioli****noun** /rævi'əʊli/

pasta in the shape of small squares filled with meat, cheese usually served with a sauce

*In Italy, most regions have their own versions of ravioli.***realm****noun** /reɪlm/

an area of activity, interest or knowledge

*His passions lie within the realm of ancient history.***reams****noun** /riːms/

a ream is five hundred sheets of paper, hence a large quantity of writing

*A hundred reams were ordered by the college administration.***rebellion****noun** /rɪ'beljən/

open renunciation of the authority to which one owes obedience

*Government forces have failed to contain the rebellion.***rebellious****adjective** /rɪ'beljəs/

unwilling to obey rules or accept normal standards of behaviour, dress

*He has always had a rebellious streak.***rebuke****verb** /rɪ'bjʊːk/

speak severely to a person who has done wrong

*Teachers are encouraged to rebuke students less, and seek a more positive approach to discipline.***recalcitrant****adjective** /rɪ'kælsɪtrənt/

unwilling to obey rules or instructions

*His recalcitrant attitude should be carefully dealt with.***recapitulate****verb** /rɪ:kə'pɪtʃuleɪt/

repeat or give a summary of what has already been stated

*We were able to recapitulate the story later, and it was much enjoyed by our friends.***recede****verb** /rɪ'siːd/

move gradually away from somebody or away from a previous position

*It is sad, but memories of childhood tend to recede as time goes by.***receive****verb** /rɪ'siːv/

to take something that is offered

*He said the idea would receive serious consideration.***recipient****noun** /rɪ'sɪpiənt/

a person or thing that receives something

*The doctor is a recipient of many awards.***reciprocal****adjective** /rɪ'sɪprəkl/

mutual

The two nations signed a reciprocal trade agreement.

R

15 to 17
age group**recital****noun** /rɪ'saɪtl/

the act of reciting; the repetition of the words of another

*I had to listen to a long recital of all his misfortunes.***recitative****noun** /ˌrɛsɪtə'tɪv /

a passage in an opera or oratorio that is sung in the rhythm of ordinary speech with many words on the same note

*The recitative in the third act was the best part of the whole opera.***reconciliation****noun** /ˌrɛkənsɪli'eɪʃn/

an end to a disagreement and the start of a good relationship again

*He has been asked to bring about a reconciliation between the two sides.***recrimination****noun** /rɪˌkrɪmɪ'neɪʃn/

counter exchanges

*We spent the rest of the evening in mutual recrimination.***rectitude****noun** /ˈrɛktɪtjuːd/

correct and honest behaviour

*He was a man known and appreciated for his rectitude.***redemption****noun** /rɪ'dempʃn/

state of being saved from evil

*She prayed regularly for her redemption.***refraction****noun** /rɪ'frækʃn/

the change of direction of a ray of light when it goes through at an angle

*When you look at a stick inserted in water, it looks bent because of the refraction of light.***regeneration****noun** /rɪˌdʒɛnə'reɪʃn/

the regrowth and redevelopment of something that has been damaged or destroyed

*We desperately need to work on the regeneration of the once forested areas.***reggae****noun** /'regeɪ/

a type of West Indian popular music with a strong rhythm

*Bob Marley is considered the father of reggae.***rehabilitate****verb** /rɪˌæ'bɪlɪteɪ/

to help somebody to have a normal, useful life again after they have been very ill or in prison for a long time

*The organisation aims to rehabilitate recovering heroin addicts.***reindeer****noun** /'reɪndɪə[r]/

a large deer of the Arctic and northern regions having branched antlers

reiterate**verb** /rɪ'ɪtəreɪ/

to repeat something already said,

*I had to reiterate the message several times, until I was sure that they had understood it.***rejuvenate****verb** /rɪ'dʒu:vəneɪt/

to make somebody or something feel or look younger

*The magician claimed that his potion would rejuvenate the aged.***relic****noun** /'relɪk/

an object, a tradition that has survived from a previous era

The blackened, crumbling building by the new station, is the only surviving relic of the war in this city.

15 to 17
age group

R

reminiscence**noun** /rɪˈmɪnɪsns/

memory from one's past life

*The old lady loved to amuse us with reminiscences of her youth.***remonstrate****verb** /rɪˈmɒnstreɪt/to protest or complain about something or somebody
*I must remonstrate about the lack of police protection in this area.***remunerative****adjective** /rɪˈmjʊ:nərətɪv/

paying a lot of money

*It was remunerative work but it involved long hours and a great deal of travel.***renunciation****noun** /rɪˌnʌnsiˈeɪʃn/

giving something up

*Do not sign this renunciation of your rights until you have consulted a lawyer.***repercussion****noun** /rɪˌpəˈkʌʃn/

an indirect and usually bad result of an action or event

*Analysts felt the downfall in the stock market was a repercussion of the terrorist attacks.***repertoire****noun** /rɪˈpɜːtwɑː[r]/

all the plays, songs, pieces of music that a performer knows and can perform

*The opera company decided to include Madame Butterfly in its repertoire.***replica****noun** /rɪˈplɪkə/

a very good or an exact copy of something

*We decided to hang the replica of the painting in the school auditorium.***reprimand****verb** /rɪˈprɪmɑːnd/

to tell somebody officially that you do not approve of them or their actions

*I am glad to say that the principal will not need to reprimand me this term over my exam results.***reptile****noun** /rɪˈptʌɪl/

any animal that has cold blood and skin covered in scales, and that lays eggs

*A lizard is a reptile.***repugnance****noun** /rɪˈpʌɡnəns/

a strong feeling of disgust

*She looked at the dead snake with repugnance.***rescind****verb** /rɪˈsɪnd/

to officially state that a law, decision is no longer valid

*The government was forced to rescind the harsh anti-terrorist law, which was victimising innocent citizens.***restitution****noun** /rɪˈrestɪtjuːʃn/

payment, usually money, for some harm or wrong that somebody has suffered

*The man had to make restitution for the damage that he had done to his neighbour's wall.***resuscitate****verb** /rɪˈsʌsɪteɪt/

to make somebody start breathing again or become conscious again after they have almost died

*The lifeguard was successful in his efforts to resuscitate the unconscious child.***retaliate****verb** /rɪˈtæliet/

to do something harmful to somebody because they have harmed you first

The knowledge that the smaller boy would retaliate immediately deterred the bully from picking on him.

R

15 to 17
age group**reticence**

noun /ˈretɪsns/
uncommunicativeness
She did not mind her husband's reticence.

retrieve

verb /rɪˈtri:v/
to bring or get something back
She bent to retrieve the comb from under her seat.

retroactive

adjective /ˌrɛtrəʊˈæktɪv/
taking effect from a particular date in the past rather than from the present date
The public was pleased with the retroactive ruling of the court.

retrospective

adjective /ˌrɛtrəˈspektɪv/
looking to the past
This is a retrospective exhibition of the painter's work.

reverberate

verb /rɪˈvɜ:bəreɪt/
echo
Repercussions of the case continue to reverberate through the financial world.

revere

verb /rɪˈvɪə[r]/
to feel great respect or admiration for somebody
We should revere Mother Nature and do our best to stop global warming.

reverie

noun /ˈrevəri/
a state of thinking about pleasant things almost as though you are dreaming
He was awakened from his reverie by the teacher's question.

rheumatism

noun /ˈru:mətɪzəm/
a disease that makes the muscles and joints painful, stiff and swollen
She was advised not to walk on cold floors as she was suffering from rheumatism.

rhinoceros

noun /raɪˈnɒsərəs/
large, thick-skinned, herbivorous mammal of Africa and Asia, having one or two upright horns on the snout

rhizome

noun /ˈraɪzəʊm/
the thick stem of some plants that grows along or under the ground and has roots and stems growing from it
Our botany teacher taught us the characteristics of a rhizome.

rhyolite

noun /ˈraɪəlaɪt/
a volcanic rock of granitic composition
Rhyolite mainly occurs in continental and submarine volcanoes.

rickettsia

noun /rɪˈkɛtsɪə/
a type of bacteria that can multiply only by invading other living cells
Rickettsia are transmitted to humans by lice, fleas, ticks, and mites.

ricochet

verb /ˈrɪkəʃeɪ/
rebound off a surface
It's funny how bullets never seem to ricochet in action films.

ridiculous

adjective /rɪˈdɪkjələs/
very silly or unreasonable
His ridiculous hairstyle made him the laughing stock of the entire school.

15 to 17
age group

R

righteous**adjective** /ˈraɪtʃəs/

morally right and good

*He is a righteous person who never breaks a law knowingly.***rigorous****adjective** /ˈrɪɡərəs/

careful and with a lot of attention to detail

*The company conducts rigorous testing of consumer products.***riotous****adjective** /ˈraɪətəs/

noisy or violent especially in a public place

*The organisers of the march were charged with assault and riotous assembly.***ritualistic****adjective** /ˈrɪtʃuəlɪstɪk/

performed as part of a ceremony

*She was well acquainted with the ritualistic nature of the graduation ceremony.***rivulet****noun** /ˈrɪvjələt/

a very small river; a small stream of water or other liquid

*A rivulet of sweat ran down her back.***rogue****noun** /rəʊg/

a person who behaves badly, but in a harmless way

*He's a bit of a rogue, but very charming.***romanticise****verb** /rəʊˈmæntɪsaɪz/

to make something seem more attractive or interesting than it really is

*I like her novel because it refuses to romanticise the grim realities of war.***rotogravure****noun** /ˌrəʊtəʊgrəˈvjuə/

a printing system, using a rotary press, that runs at high speeds

*Rotogravure is used for long print runs of magazines and stamps.***rudimentary****adjective** /ˌruːdɪˈmentri/

basic

*His dancing was limited to a few rudimentary steps.***rumbustious****adjective** /rʌmˈbʌstɪʃəs/

(informal) full of energy in a cheerful and noisy way

*Her rumbustious disposition helped her in making lots of friends.***ruminate****verb** /ˈruːmɪneɪt/

to think deeply about something

He would often ruminate over why bad things happen to good people.

S

15 to 17
age group**sabbatical****noun** /sə'bætɪkl/

a period of time when somebody, especially a teacher at a university, is allowed to stop their normal work in order to study or travel

He has taken a sabbatical for one year to live and do research in Jordan.

sachet**noun** /'sæʃet/

a closed plastic or paper packet that contains a very small amount of a powder or liquid

When we opened our take-away burgers, we realised that they had only given us one sachet of sauce.

sacrificial**adjective** /,sækrɪ'fiʃl/

given up in order to obtain something of greater value
Muslims offer a sacrificial animal to Allah on Eid-ul-Azha.

sacrilegious**adjective** /'sækrɪ'lɪdʒəs/

violating sacred things

A number of churches were looted and sacrilegious acts committed.

sacrosanct**adjective** /'sækrəʊsæŋkt/

that is considered too sacred or important to change or question

Their father's dying wishes were considered sacrosanct by all the family.

sadistic**adjective** /sə'dɪstɪk/

taking pleasure in hurting others

If we are to improve conditions in this prison, we must first get rid of the sadistic warden.

saffron**adjective** /'sæfrən/

a bright yellow colour

On our way to the temple, we saw Buddhist monks in saffron robes.

sagacious**adjective** /sə'geɪʃəs/

shrewd; wise

I was impressed by her sagacious decision.

salient**adjective** /'seɪliənt/

most important or noticeable

She pointed out the salient features of the new design.

salmon**noun** /'sæmən/

large food and game fish having delicate pinkish flesh and swimming from salt to fresh water to spawn

salubrious**adjective** /sə'lu:briəs/

clean and healthy; pleasant to live in

The growing pollution in the city has caused many people to move to a more salubrious area.

salutary**adjective** /'sæljətəri/

having a good effect on someone/something, though often seeming unpleasant

The accident is a salutary reminder of the dangers of climbing.

sanatorium**noun** /,sænə'tɔ:riəm/

a hospital where patients who have a lasting illness or who are getting better after an illness are treated

My uncle is being kept in a sanatorium until he recovers.

sanctimonious**adjective** /,sæŋktɪ'məʊniəs/

appearing to be saintly

Her sanctimonious attitude towards her colleagues at work has prevented her from making friends.

15 to 17
age group

S

sanctuary**noun** /ˈsæŋktʃuəri/

a sacred place; a consecrated spot

*The priest entered the sanctuary and said his prayers.***sanguine****adjective** /ˈsæŋɡwɪn/

cheerful and confident about the future

*He takes a more sanguine view of the future than most analysts.***sapphire****noun** /ˈsæfaɪə[r]/

a clear, bright-blue precious stone

*He gave her a ring of sapphire for her birthday.***saprophytes****noun** /ˈsaprəʊfaɪt/

a plant, fungus, or microorganism that lives on dead or decaying organic matter

*Saprophytes recycle organic material in the soil..***sarcasm****noun** /ˈsɑ:kæzəm/

a taunt; a gibe; a cutting jest

*She had a hint of sarcasm in her voice.***sardonic****adjective** /sɑ:ˈdɒnɪk/

scornful; mockingly bitter

*There was a sardonic vein running through her otherwise humorous article.***sarsaparilla****noun** /ˌsɑ:spəˈrɪlə/

a dried substance that is used to flavour drinks and medicines, obtained from a plant also called sarsaparilla

*I have yet to try a drink made with sarsaparilla.***sartorial****adjective** /sɑ:ˈtɔ:riəl/

relating to clothes, especially men's clothes, and the way they are made or worn

*He was as famous for his sartorial elegance as for his acting.***satellite****noun** /ˈsætəlɪt/

an electronic device that is sent into space and moves around the Earth or another planet

*The spy satellite was finally launched by the government.***saturate****verb** /ˈsætʃəreɪt/

to make something completely wet

*It is never a good thing to saturate a plant.***satyr****noun** /ˈsætə[r]/

(in ancient Greek stories) a god of the woods, with a man's face and body and a goat's legs and horns

*You will find mention of a satyr in the children's book: 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.'***saviour****noun** /ˈseɪvjə[r]/

a person who rescues somebody or something from a dangerous or difficult situation

*The new manager has been hailed as the saviour of the club.***sawyer****noun** /ˈsɔ:ɪər/

one whose occupation is to saw timber into planks or boards, or to saw wood for fuel

*He earns his living as a sawyer.***saxophone****noun** /ˈsæksəfəʊn/

a wind instrument of brass, containing a reed, and partaking of the qualities both of a brass instrument and of a clarinet

Brass is normally used to make the body of a saxophone.

S

15 to 17
age group**scabrous****adjective** /'skeɪbrəs/

rough to the touch, like a file; having small raised dots, scales, or points

*The lizard has scabrous skin.***scant****adjective** /'skænt/

scarcely sufficient; less than is wanted for the purpose

*I paid scant attention to what she was saying.***scapula****noun** /'skæpjʊlə/

the shoulder blade

*Adam fractured his scapula while playing football.***scarab****noun** /'skærəb/

large black beetle regarded as sacred by the ancient Egyptians

scenery**noun** /'si:nəri/

the natural features of an area, such as mountains, valleys, rivers and forests

*She stopped to admire the scenery.***sceptic****noun** /'skeptɪk/

one who is yet undecided and doubtful as to what is true

*Even though I explained it to him several times, he still remained an unconvinced sceptic.***sceptre****noun** /'septə[r]/

a decorated rod carried by a king or queen at ceremonies as a symbol of their power

*You can see the queen's sceptre and orb if you visit the Tower of London.***schematic****adjective** /ski:'mætrɪk/

according to a fixed plan or pattern

*The play has a very schematic plot.***schism****noun** /'skɪzəm/

strong disagreement within an organisation, especially a religious one, that makes its members divide into different groups

*Let us not widen the schism by further arguments.***schist****noun** /ʃɪst/

type of rock formed of layers of different minerals, that breaks naturally into thin flat pieces

*The piece of schist that I found in Baluchistan was so sharp that I could have cut a piece of meat with it.***scholastic****adjective** /skə'læstɪk/

connected with schools and education

*We are extremely proud of Maya who has worked hard for every one of her scholastic achievements.***scorch****verb** /skɔ:tʃ/

to burn superficially

*The leaves will scorch if you water them in the sun.***scorpion****noun** /'skɔ:pɪən/

small creature with a venomous sting

scour**verb** /'skauə[r]/

to clean something by rubbing its surface hard with rough material

*I had to scour the pans.***scowl****verb** /skaʊl/

to wrinkle the brows, as in frowning or displeasure

*He looked up at me and began to scowl.***screed****noun** /skri:d/

a long piece of writing, especially one that is not very interesting

It took me three hours to read through the screed that Aisha had sent me.

15 to 17
age group

S

scroll

noun /skrəʊl/
a writing formed into a roll
I tied a ribbon around the scroll.

scruple

noun /ˈskruːpl/
a feeling that stops you from doing something that you think may be morally wrong
He is totally without scruple; he borrowed money and then refused to pay it back.

scrupulosity

noun /ˌskrupjuˈləsiti/
thoroughness
Sania told the doctor that Ali was tormenting himself with his infinite scrupulosity.

scrupulous

adjective /ˈskruːpjələs/
extremely thorough
Readers commend the author for his scrupulous attention to detail.

scrutinise

verb /ˈskruːtənaɪz/
to look at or examine somebody or something closely
It is important to scrutinise articles for any typing errors.

scuff

verb /skʌf/
to make a mark on the smooth surface of something when you rub it against something rough
Constant wheelchair use will scuff almost any floor surface.

sculptor

noun /ˈskʌlptə[r]/
one whose occupation is to carve statues, or works of sculpture
Ali is a renowned sculptor.

scurrilous

adjective /ˈskʌrələs/
very rude and insulting and intended to damage somebody's reputation
He wrote a scurrilous piece about me in the local press.

scurry

verb /ˈskʌri/
to run with short quick steps; to move rapidly
I watched the rabbit scurry away into its burrow.

scythe

noun /saɪð/
a tool with a long handle and a slightly curved blade, used for cutting long grass and wheat
Peasants still have to cut grass with a scythe.

secant

adjective /ˈsɪkənt/
cutting; dividing into two parts
She drew a perfect secant line on the cake.

secession

noun /sɪˈseʃn/
formal withdrawal of membership of a group
Before the American Civil War, the southern states declared their secession from the union.

secrecy

noun /ˈsiːkrəsi/
the state or quality of being hidden
The whole affair is still shrouded in secrecy.

secretion

noun /sɪˈkriːʃn/
the process by which liquid substances are produced by parts of the body or plants
We were taught about the secretion of bile by the liver.

sectarian

adjective /sekˈtəriən/
connected with the differences that exist between groups of people who have different religious views
Sectarian violence is bad for society.

S

15 to 17
age group**sedate****adjective** /sɪ'deɪt/

calm; composed; staid

*We followed the youngsters at a more sedate pace.***sedimentary****adjective** /ˌsɛdɪ'mɛntri/

having or pertaining to sediment; containing matter that has subsided

*While walking beside the lake, I came across some sedimentary rocks.***sedulous****adjective** /ˈsɛdʒələs/

showing dedication and diligence

*She pays sedulous attention to detail.***seismicity****noun** /ˈsəɪzɪmɪsɪti/

the frequency of earthquakes in a region

*I do not want to live in San Francisco, due to the high seismicity of the area.***seismograph****noun** /ˈsaɪzməgrɑːf/

an apparatus for registering and measuring earthquakes

*The government has placed a seismograph in the earthquake prone area.***semanticist****noun** /sɪ'məntɪsɪst/

one who is a specialist in the study of meanings of words and phrases

*The school invited a semanticist to conduct a workshop for the English Language teachers.***semaphore****noun** /ˈseməfɔː[r]/

an apparatus for giving signals by the disposition of lanterns, flags, oscillating arms

*The soldiers communicated amongst each other using semaphore in the battlefield.***seminary****noun** /ˈseminəri/

a college where priests, ministers or rabbis are trained

*My brother joined the seminary because he wants to become a priest.***sensory****adjective** /ˈsensəri/

connected with your physical senses

*He was diagnosed with an illness which would affect his sensory organs.***sensuous****adjective** /ˈsensjuəs/

giving pleasure to your senses

*I'm drawn to the poetic, sensuous qualities of her paintings.***sequacious****adjective** /sɪˈkweɪʃəs/

lacking independence or originality of thought

*Her sequacious routine sounds very boring.***sequoia****noun** /sɪˈkwɔɪə/

a very tall North American tree

*The giant sequoia is said to be the oldest and most massive of all living things.***serendipity****noun** /ˌserənˈdɪpəti/

the fact of something interesting or pleasant happening by chance

*Many scientific discoveries were made by a stroke of serendipity.***serene****adjective** /səˈriːn/

calm and peaceful

Serene music was playing in the background as they had their dinner on a yacht.

15 to 17
age group

S

sewerage**noun** /ˈsuːəɹɪdʒ/

the system by which waste water is carried away from houses and factories

*The sewerage was totally blocked during the rainy season.***shaggy****adjective** /ˈʃæɡi/

rough with long hair or wool

*He has a shaggy mane of hair.***shatter****verb** /ˈʃætə[r]/

to break at once into many pieces

*I heard the glass shatter as it fell.***shibboleth****noun** /ˈʃɪbəlθ/

an old idea, principle or phrase that is no longer accepted by many people as important or appropriate to modern life

*Elderly politicians are still clinging to more than one shibboleth of party doctrine.***shield****noun** /ʃiːld/

a person or thing used to protect somebody or something, especially by forming a barrier

*The gunman used the hostages as a human shield.***shovel****verb** /ˈʃʌv/

to lift and move earth, stones, coal with a shovel

*They went out in freezing conditions to shovel snow.***shrapnel****noun** /ˈʃræpnəl/

small pieces of metal that are thrown outwards from an exploding bomb

*The doctor removed the tiny piece of shrapnel from my shoulder with great difficulty.***shriek****verb** /ʃriːk/

to utter a loud, sharp, shrill sound or cry

*Please don't shriek at me!***shudder****verb** /ˈʃʌdə[r]/

to shake because you are cold or frightened or because of a strong feeling

*I shudder every time I remember losing my passport in Moscow.***shuffle****verb** /ˈʃʌfl/

to move without lifting the feet fully

*The audience began to shuffle their feet impatiently.***sibilant****adjective** /ˈsɪbɪlənt/

making a hissing sound

*The room was filled with the sibilant sound of whispering.***silhouette****noun** /ˌsɪluːet/

the outlines of an object filled in with a black colour

*I saw the silhouette of a man against the evening sky.***silviculture****noun** /ˈsɪlvɪkʌltʃə/

the growing and cultivation of trees

*Silviculture should be practised in order to maintain the balance in our ecosystem.***simulate****verb** /ˈsɪmjəleɪt/

to pretend to a particular feeling or quality

*I tried to simulate surprise at the news.***sinister****adjective** /ˈsɪnɪstə[r]/

seeming evil or dangerous

The sinister man lurking outside the house turned out to be the gas meter reader.

S

15 to 17
age group**sinuous****adjective** /ˈsɪnjuəs/

turning while moving, in an elegant way; having many curves

*We watched the sinuous movements of the dolphins from our boat.***sirius****noun** /ˈsɪriəs/

the brightest star in the sky

*Sirius is also known as the 'Dog star'.***slander****verb** /ˈslɑːndə[r]/

to speak in a manner that will injure the reputation of another

*It is wrong to slander, even if in revenge for a previous offence.***slaughter****noun** /ˈslɑːtə[r]/

the act of killing

*I was shocked at the wide spread slaughter of innocent civilians.***sleuth****noun** /ˈsluːθ/

a person who investigates crimes

*I hired an amateur sleuth to work on the case.***slouch****noun** /slautʃ/

a way of standing or sitting in which your shoulders are not straight, so that you look tired or lazy

*His slouch made him look shorter than he actually was.***sludge****noun** /slʌdʒ/

soft mud; slush

*There was some sludge at the bottom of the tank.***smack****verb** /smæk/

a sharp blow given by hand

*I told him to finish his food or else I would smack him.***smear****verb** /smɪə[r]/

to spread an oily or soft substance over a surface in a rough or careless way

*The children began to smear mud on the wall.***snippet****noun** /ˈsnɪpɪt/

a small part or piece

*She only heard a snippet of the conversation between them through the door.***snobbery****noun** /ˈsnɒbəri/

the attitudes and behaviour of people who despise others for being socially inferior

*There is still a great deal of snobbery in our society.***snuffle****verb** /ˈsnʌfl/

to breathe noisily through the nose so as to make a broken sound

*Every few minutes she would snuffle and blow her nose noisily.***sobriety****noun** /səˈbrɪəti/

the state of being moderate and well balanced; not being under the influence of alcohol

*He was a man noted for sobriety.***sojourn****noun** /ˈsɒdʒən/

living in a place as a temporary resident

*She was planning a summer sojourn abroad.***solfatara****noun** /ˌsɒlfəˈtɑːrə/

a volcanic crater emitting sulfurous and other gases

*The area close to solfatara is not fit for vegetation.***solicitude****noun** /səˈlɪsɪtjuːd/

concerned for others' well-being

I was touched by his solicitude for the boy.

15 to 17
age group

S

solstice**noun** /'sɒlstɪs/

either of the two times of the year at which the Sun reaches its highest or lowest point in the sky at midday, marked by the longest and shortest days
The children eagerly awaited the summer solstice.

sombre**adjective** /'sɒmbə[r]/

dark, dull or gloomy
I hate wearing sombre colours, especially in summer.

sophistication**noun** /səˌfɪstɪˈkeɪʃn/

experience in worldly matters
His air of sophistication set him apart from the other candidates.

soprano**adjective** /səˈprɑːnəʊ/

musical instrument or voice with the highest range of notes in its group
We heard the magical sound of a soprano saxophone.

sordid**adjective** /'sɔːdɪd/

filthy; foul; dirty
I don't want to know all the sordid details.

sovereignty**noun** /'sɒvrənti/

complete power to govern a country
The country claimed sovereignty over the island.

spaghetti**noun** /spəˈɡeti/

a kind of macaroni made in long tubes of small diameter
She enjoys cooking spaghetti with meat sauce.

spasmodic**adjective** /spæzˈmɒdɪk/

occurring in fits and starts; jerky
In the summer, he is accustomed to having spasmodic asthma attacks.

spatter**verb** /'spætə/

cover with drops or spots
Be careful, the car radiator might spatter boiling water on you.

species**noun** /'spiːʃiːz/

the groups into which animals, plants that are able to breed with each other and produce healthy young are divided
This is a conservation area for endangered species.

spectator**noun** /spekˈteɪtə[r]/

one who is personally present at, and sees, any event or activity
He went to the match as a spectator.

sphinx**noun** /sfɪŋks/

in ancient Egyptian art, a stone image, having a human head, or the head of a ram or of a hawk, upon the body of a lion
No man was able to solve the riddle of the sphinx.

spiral**adjective** /'spɑɪrəl/

winding or circling around a centre
The birds circled in a slow spiral formation above the house.

spleen**noun** /spliːn/

a small organ near the stomach that controls the quality of the blood cells
Aisha was suffering from a ruptured spleen.

splicing**verb** /splaɪsɪŋ/

joining or connecting two ends (e.g. of a rope) by interweaving the strands at the ends
Cloning and gene splicing are highly advanced, if not outright dangerous, practices of biology.

S

15 to 17
age group**splutter****verb** /ˈsplʌtə[r]/to speak hastily and confusedly
*Whenever he gets excited, he starts to splutter.***spontaneity****noun** /ˌspɒntəˈneɪti/impulsiveness; absence of premeditation
*The audience loved the spontaneity of the performance by the leading actress.***sprawl****verb** /sprɔ:l/to lie with the limbs stretched out ungracefully
*She likes to sprawl out on the sofa and watch TV.***spurge****verb** /spɜ:dʒ/to emit foam; to froth
*The mixture began to spurge when heated.***spurn****verb** /spɜ:n/to reject or refuse somebody or something, especially in a proud way
*Her first instinct was to spurn his advances, even though she felt incredibly sorry for him.***sputum****noun** /ˈspju:təm/liquid from the throat or lungs, especially when it is coughed up because of disease
*There was blood in his sputum.***squad****noun** /skwɒd/a small group of people assembled for drill, inspection, or other purposes
*The bomb squad arrived shortly after we called the police.***squadron****noun** /ˈskwɒdrən/a group of military aircraft or ships forming a section of a military force
*An entire air force squadron has been deployed to safeguard the nuclear facility.***squall****noun** /skwɔ:l/a sudden violent gust of wind often attended with rain or snow
*An unexpected squall left us abandoned.***squander****verb** /ˈskwɒndə[r]/to waste money, time in a stupid or careless way
*He was tempted to squander his first salary on a DVD player.***squawk****noun** /skwɔ:k/a loud harsh cry
*A loud squawk was heard when the cat attacked the crow.***squeak****verb** /skwi:k/to make a sharp, high sound
*My new shoes squeak.***squeamish****adjective** /ˈskwi:mɪʃ/easily upset, or made to feel sick by unpleasant sights or situations
*I wouldn't recommend this movie to squeamish people.***squid****noun** /skwid/

marine cephalopod molluscs having an elongated body, ten arms surrounding the mouth, a vestigial internal shell, and a pair of fins

15 to 17
age group

S

squint**verb** /skwɪnt/

to look at something with your eyes partly shut in order to keep out bright light or to see better
Hamza tried to squint but still wasn't able to read the letters.

squirrel**noun** /ˈskwɪrəl/

arboreal rodent having a long flexible bushy tail

squirt**verb** /skwɜːt/

to force liquid, gas in a thin fast stream through a narrow opening
The snake can squirt poison from a distance of a metre.

stagnant**adjective** /ˈstægnənt/

of water or air, not moving and therefore smelling unpleasant
Stagnant water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

stalemate**noun** /ˈsteɪlmeɪt/

a disagreement or a situation in a competition in which neither side is able to win or make any progress
The negotiations ended in a stalemate.

stallion**noun** /ˈstæliən/

a fully grown male horse, especially one that is used for breeding

stationary**adjective** /ˈsteɪʃənəri/

not moving
The car collided with a stationary vehicle.

statistician**noun** /ˌstætɪˈstɪʃɪn/

a person who studies or works with statistics
The statistician was requested to supply the government with figures on rural health care workers.

statuary**noun** /ˈstætʃuəri/

statues
He has an impressive collection of marble statuary in his drawing room.

stature**noun** /ˈstætʃə[r]/

the importance and respect that a person has because of their ability and achievements
She is an actress of considerable stature.

steeple**noun** /ˈstiːpl/

a tall pointed tower on the roof of a church, often with a spire on it
The steeple of the old church collapsed during the storm.

stellar**adjective** /ˈstelə[r]/

connected with the stars
He is studying stellar constellations.

stethoscope**noun** /ˈsteθəskəʊp/

an instrument used by doctors to listen to the chest, heart and lungs
The doctor listened to his heart using a stethoscope.

stevedore**noun** /ˈstiːvədəː[r]/

a person whose job is moving goods on and off ships
The stevedore nimbly avoided being hit by the crane.

stiffen**verb** /ˈstɪfn/

to make stiff; to make less pliant or flexible
She was told to stiffen the mixture by adding more flour.

S

15 to 17
age group**stigmatise****verb** /ˈstɪgmətaɪz/

to treat somebody in a way that makes them feel that they are very bad or unimportant

*As a teacher, I make an effort never to stigmatise a student as a failure.***stiletto****noun** /striˈletəʊ/

a kind of dagger with a slender, pointed blade

*The youth was arrested for carrying a stiletto.***stipulate****verb** /ˈstɪpjuleɪt/

to state clearly and firmly that something must be done, or how it must be done

*Before signing the contract, I informed the bank manager that I needed to stipulate one condition.***stirrup****noun** /ˈstɪrəp/

a shaped piece of metal, wood or leather attached by a strap to the saddle, used to assist a person in mounting a horse

*Put your foot in the stirrup.***stodgy****adjective** /ˈstɒdʒi/

(of food) heavy and making you feel full

*I try to avoid the stodgy pudding that my aunt makes.***stoic****adjective** /ˈstɔɪk/

able to suffer pain or trouble without complaining or showing feelings

*His stoic personality is a source of inspiration and strength for many.***strenuous****adjective** /ˈstrenjuəs/

energetic

*Every day he does an hour of strenuous exercise.***strident****adjective** /ˈstraɪdnt/

loud and harsh in sound

*I don't like the strident manner in which he scolds his servants.***stringy****adjective** /ˈstrɪŋi/

consisting of strings or small threads; fibrous

*The root had a stringy appearance.***strychnine****noun** /ˈstrɪkniːn/

a poisonous substance used in very small amounts as a medicine

*Many murderers in the past used strychnine as the poison of choice.***stucco****noun** /ˈstʌkəʊ/

plaster of any kind used as a coating for walls

*The stucco was damaged by the heavy rains.***stultifying****adjective** /ˈstʌltɪfaɪɪŋ/

rendering ineffective

*I have to get away from the stultifying boredom of this job.***stumpage****noun** /ˈstʌmpɪdʒ/

timber in standing trees, often sold without the land at a fixed price per tree or per stump

*Stumpage is hard to check and causes numerous ecological problems.***sturdy****adjective** /ˈstɜːdi/

robust or resolute

He is of a sturdy build and therefore perfect for the task.

15 to 17
age group

S

sturgeon**noun** /'stɜːdʒən/

large fish valued as a source of caviar

suave**adjective** /swɑːv/

gracious or agreeable in manner

*The manager pacified the customer with a suave apology for the error.***subcutaneous****adjective** /ˌsʌbkju'teɪniəs/

relating to or located below the skin

*The subcutaneous injection was rather painful.***subliminal****adjective** /ˌsʌb'lɪmɪnəl/

affecting your mind even when you are not aware of it

*The effect of subliminal advertising is more powerful than most people realise.***submersible****adjective** /səb'mɜːsəbl/

that can be used underwater

*A bathysphere is a large strong submersible sphere used for deep sea observations.***subsequent****adjective** /'sʌbsɪkwənt/

happening after something else

*In subsequent lessons, I intend to take the matter further.***subservient****adjective** /səb'sɜːviənt/

too willing to obey other people

*In a perfect world, no human being should be subservient to another.***subsidiary****adjective** /səb'sɪdiəri/

connected with something but less important than it

*The economics ministry has increasingly played a subsidiary role to the finance ministry.***substantiate****verb** /səb'stænjɪət/

to prove the truth of

*I intend to substantiate my statement by providing documents and a tape recording.***subversive****adjective** /səb'vɜːsɪv/

seeking to undermine an established system or authority

*The police discovered that subversive literature was being distributed at night by a network of volunteers.***succession****noun** /sək'seʃn/

a following of one after another

*The three explosions took place in quick succession.***succinct****adjective** /sək'sɪŋkt/

expressed briefly and clearly

*The students were asked to give succinct answers.***suffice****verb** /sə'faɪs/

to be enough, or sufficient

*One example will suffice to illustrate the point.***suffix****noun** /'sʌfɪks/

letters or syllables appended to the end of a word or a root to modify the meaning

*The teacher asked her to add a suffix to the word.***sultry****adjective** /'sʌltri/

very hot, burning and oppressive

*The kids were not allowed to play outside during sultry weather.***sundry****adjective** /'sʌndri/

various; not important enough to be named separately

You have to take sundry items when you move into a hostel.

S

15 to 17
age group**supercilious****adjective** /ˌsuːpəˈsɪliəs/

showing an air of superiority towards others
He resented his colleague's supercilious attitude.

superficial**adjective** /ˌsuːpəˈfɪʃl/

only affecting the surface
He only suffered some superficial injuries in the accident.

superintendent**noun** /ˌsuːpərɪnˈtendənt/

a person with authority to manage and control
The superintendent of the nightshift is responsible for the security of the building.

supplant**verb** /səˈplɑːnt/

supersede and replace
The ambitious deputy schemed to supplant the party's leader.

supplementary**adjective** /ˌsʌplɪˈmentri/

additional
The paper had three supplementary answer sheets.

supposition**noun** /ˌsʌpəˈzɪʃn/

assumption that has no proof
The police are working on the supposition that he was murdered.

supremacy**noun** /suːˈpreməsi/

highest or supreme authority or power
It is hard to challenge Japan's supremacy in the field of electronics.

surfeit**noun** /ˈsɜːfɪt/

excess in eating and drinking
A surfeit of rich and heavy food will definitely upset your stomach.

surmise**noun** /səˈmaɪz/

a guess based on some facts that you know already
This is pure surmise on my part.

surmount**verb** /səˈmaʊnt/

to overcome
Each time you surmount a difficulty, you gain something by the experience.

surreptitious**adjective** /ˌsʌrəpˈtɪʃəs/

secret
News of their surreptitious agreement eventually leaked out.

surrogate**adjective** /ˈsʌrəɡət/

substitute
She looked upon them as a surrogate family when her real parents were killed.

surveillance**noun** /sɜːˈveɪləns/

careful observation
The police are keeping the suspects under constant surveillance.

susceptibility**noun** /səˌseptəˈbɪləti/

the state of being very likely to be influenced
His weakness is his susceptibility to flattery.

suspicious**adjective** /səˈspɪʃəs/

making you feel that something is wrong or dishonest
He has his father's suspicious nature.

sustenance**noun** /ˈsʌstənəns/

the food and drink that people, animals and plants need to live and stay healthy
Rice is the daily sustenance in vast regions of the world.

15 to 17
age group

S

swarthy**adjective** /'swɔːðɪ/

dark skinned

*She looked pale standing beside her swarthy brother.***swathe****verb** /sweɪð/

to wrap in layers of bandages, paper, or cloth

*It was necessary to swathe his hand in bandages to stop the bleeding.***sweaty****adjective** /'sweti/

moist with sweat

*He washed his sweaty hands with soap and warm water.***swelter****verb** /'sweltə[r]/

to be overcome and faint with heat

*He did not want to swelter so he refused to go outside under the blazing sun.***sweltering****adjective** /'sweltə[r]ɪŋ/

oppressively hot

*The sweltering heat can be unbearable for visitors.***swirl****verb** /swɜːrɪ/

to whirl, or cause to whirl, as in an eddy

*The draining of the swimming pool caused the water to swirl.***sycophancy****noun** /'sɪkəfənsɪ/

praising important and powerful people insincerely, especially in order to get something from them

*As the new director, I was warned about the sycophancy of certain employees.***syllabus****noun** /'sɪləbəs/

a programme of study

*We need to design a new syllabus for the third year.***symposium****noun** /sɪm'pəʊziəm/

a meeting or conference to discuss something

*He attended a symposium on environmental issues.***synchronous****adjective** /'sɪŋkrənəs/

happening or existing at the same time

*My twin sister and I have had synchronous experiences at many points in our lives.***synecology****noun** /,sɪnɪ'kɒlədʒi/

the ecological study of whole plant or animal communities

*Synecology is a science of observation, rather than experimentation.***syzygy****noun** /'sɪzɪdʒi/

an alignment of three celestial objects, as the sun, the earth and either the moon or planet

Syzygy in the sun-earth-moon system occurs at the time of full moon and new moon.

T

15 to 17
age group**tableau****noun** /'tæbləʊ/

a scene showing, for example, events and people from history

*She prepared a splendid tableau for her art history class.***tabulate****verb** /'tæbjuleɪt/

to form into a table or tables

*The teacher told us to tabulate the results.***tacit****adjective** /'tæsɪt/

silent

*The grim expression on his face was a tacit admission of failure.***taciturn****adjective** /'tæsɪtʃən/

uncommunicative

*The host found her taciturn attitude to be very rude.***tactile****adjective** /'tæktail/

of or pertaining to the organs or sense of touch

*Fabrics which appeal to the sense of touch are said to have a tactile quality.***talisman****noun** /'tælızmən/

an object that is thought to have magic powers and to bring good luck

*I used to carry a pebble as a talisman to help me pass exams.***tambourine****noun** /,tæmbə'reɪn/

a percussion instrument

*They danced to the beat of the tambourine.***tangential****adjective** /tæn'dʒenʃl/

having only a slight or indirect connection with something

*The negotiator avoided the main point and only spoke about tangential issues.***tangerine****noun** /,tændʒə'reɪn/

a kind of orange, much like the mandarin, but of deeper colour and higher flavour

*She added a tangerine to the fruit salad.***tankard****noun** /'tæŋkəd/

a large drinking vessel, especially one with a cover

*He was holding a tankard in his hands.***tantamount****adjective** /'tæntəmaʊnt/

having the same effect as something else; equivalent

*If he resigned it would be tantamount to admitting that he was guilty.***tapeworm****noun** /'teɪpwɜ:m/

ribbon-like, often very long flatworms that are parasitic in the intestines of vertebrates, including humans

taproot**noun** /'tæpru:t/

the root of a plant which penetrates the earth directly downward to a considerable depth without dividing

*If you damage the taproot, the plant will die.***tariff****noun** /'tærɪf/

a tax that is paid on goods coming into or going out of a country or zone

Our company can import these items, but a heavy tariff will be placed on them.

15 to 17
age group

T

tautology**noun** /tə:'tɒlədʒi/

a statement in which you say the same thing twice in different words, when this is unnecessary
His speech was twice as long as necessary, due to his excessive use of tautology.

tavern**noun** /'tævən/

a public house which provides rooms and meals
Due to bad weather, they were forced to spend the night in the tavern.

tawdry**adjective** /'tɔ:dri/

intended to be bright and attractive but cheap and of low quality
I fail to understand why a wealthy person like Saira should wear such tawdry jewellery.

taxidermy**noun** /'tæksɪdʒ:mi/

the art of preserving, mounting and stuffing the skins of animals so as to represent their natural appearance
He earns his living by taxidermy.

technophile**noun** /'teknəʊfaɪl/

a person who is enthusiastic about new technology
My son is a true technophile and has to buy every new gadget as soon as possible.

tedium**noun** /'ti:diəm/

the quality of being boring
She longed for something to happen, to relieve the tedium of everyday life.

teeter**verb** /'ti:tə[r]/

to move unsteadily
I watched the child teeter as she tried to walk in her mother's high-heeled shoes.

teleology**noun** /,ti:li'ɒlədʒi/

the branch of philosophy that deals with ends or final causes
He was extremely interested in studying teleology.

tempera**noun** /'tempərə/

a mode or process of painting where the colouring is bound by egg yoke
She painted in tempera on the school walls.

tempestuous**adjective** /tem'pestʃuəs/

full of extreme emotions and excitement
She found out about his reckless and tempestuous disposition only after she married him.

temporary**adjective** /'tempərəri/

lasting for only a short time
The doctor told me that the medicine would only give me temporary relief from the pain.

tenacious**adjective** /tə'neɪʃəs/

persistent; keeping firm hold
He is the most tenacious politician of South Korea.

tenancy**noun** /'tenənsi/

a period of time during which you rent a house, land
His tenancy in that apartment has lasted twenty five years.

tenderfoot**noun** /'tendəfʊt/

a delicate person
She is a tenderfoot as she was brought up in a very protected environment.

tendon**noun** /'tendən/

a tough insensible cord, of fibrous connective tissue uniting a muscle with some other part
She had a strained tendon.

T

15 to 17
age group**tenement****noun** /ˈtenəmənt/

block of flats

*They live in a crumbling tenement.***tenet****noun** /ˈtenɪt/

one of the principles or beliefs that a theory or larger set of beliefs is based on

*Believing in one God is the central tenet of Islam.***tenuous****adjective** /ˈtenjuəs/

thin, slender, small

*There is a tenuous connection between what is written and what really happened.***tepid****adjective** /ˈtepɪd/

lukewarm

*His campaign received only tepid support.***tercentenary****noun** /ˈtɜːsɛnˈtɪːnəri/

the three-hundredth anniversary of something

*The head master held a garden party in the grounds to mark the tercentenary of the school.***terminable****adjective** /ˈtɜːmɪnəbəl/

able to be ended

*The contract clearly stated that he would be regarded as a terminable employee.***terminology****noun** /ˈtɜːmɪˈnɒlədʒi/

the set of technical words or expressions used in a particular subject

*I find scientific terminology very hard to understand.***ternary****adjective** /ˈtɜːnəri/

proceeding by threes; consisting of three

*In the air show, the aircraft flew in a ternary formation.***terracotta****noun** /ˌtɛrəˈkɒtə/

reddish brown clay that has been baked, used for making pots

*I went to the garden centre to buy a terracotta pot for my new plant, but they only had plastic.***terrestrial****adjective** /təˈrestriəl/

connected with the planet Earth

*Increased ultraviolet radiation may disrupt terrestrial ecosystems.***testimonial****noun** /ˌtɛstɪˈmɒniəl/

a writing or certificate which bears testimony in favour of one's character, good conduct, ability

*The court asked the witness to give a testimonial.***tetragonal****adjective** /təˈtræɡənəl/

of or relating to or shaped like a quadrilateral

*The rhombus, and the trapezium are tetragonal figures.***textual****adjective** /ˈtɛkstʃuəl/

pertaining to, or contained in, the text

*He was extremely critical of the textual contents of the book.***thatch****noun** /θætʃ/

dried straw, reeds used for making a roof

*The thatch was badly damaged in the storm.***theocracy****noun** /θiˈɒkrəsi/

a country that is governed by religious leaders

*The Vatican City is a theocracy.***theology****noun** /θiˈɒlədʒi/

the study of God or of religion

After his accident, he started studying theology.

15 to 17
age group

T

therapeutic**adjective** /ˌθerəˈpjʊːtɪk/

designed to help treat an illness

*I have long been a believer in the therapeutic qualities of herbs.***thermionics****noun** /θəːmɪˈɒnɪks/

the branch of science and technology concerned with thermionic emission

*Ahmed was an electronics engineer working in the area of thermionics.***thermography****noun** /θəːmɒgrəfi/

a process of writing or printing involving the use of heat

*Thermography is commonly used on wedding invitations, letterheads, business cards, greetings cards etc.***thermostat****noun** /ˈθɜːməstæt/

an automatic apparatus for regulating temperature

*The thermostat of the engine was faulty and therefore the car was overheating.***thesis****noun** /ˈθiːsɪs/

a proposition laid down or stated

*The thesis of this paper is very clear.***thistle****noun** /ˈθɪsəl/

a wild plant with prickly leaves and purple, yellow or white flowers

*A thistle had clung onto his pants, when he went for a hike.***thoroughbred****noun** /ˈθʌrəbrɛd/

an animal, especially a horse, of high quality; pure-blooded

*His beautiful mare is a thoroughbred.***thoroughfare****noun** /ˈθʌrəfeə[r]/

a public road or street used by traffic

*The main thoroughfare is even busy on Sundays.***threaten****verb** /ˈθreɪn/

to utter threats against; to menace

*The gangsters tried to threaten him.***threshold****noun** /ˈθreʃhəʊld/

ground at the bottom of a doorway

*The shy girl stood at the threshold of the room, uncertain as to what she should do.***throes****noun** /θrəʊz/

violent pains, especially at the moment of death

*The creature was convulsed in its death throes.***thrombosis****noun** /θrɒmˈbəʊsɪs/

the obstruction of a blood vessel by a clot formed at the site of obstruction

*His heart attack was due to thrombosis.***thunderclap****noun** /ˈθʌndəklæp/

a sharp burst of thunder

*She was terrified by the thunderclap.***thyme****noun** /taɪm/

a plant with small leaves that has a sweet smell and is used in cooking as a herb

*Ancient Greeks burnt thyme as incense in their temples.***thyroid****noun** /ˈθaɪrɔɪd/

a gland at the front of the neck that produces hormones which control the way the body grows and functions

Certain medications can cause damage to the thyroid.

T

15 to 17
age group**titular****adjective** /'tɪtʃʊlə[r]/

existing only in name

*The president is the titular head of the company, but the real power lies with the chairman.***toad****noun** /təʊd/

tailless amphibian related to and resembling a frog

toggle**noun** /'tɒɡl/

a crosspiece on the end of a line or chain, or fixed in a belt or strap for attaching a weapon by a loop or ring

*Her necklace had a silver toggle.***tolerant****adjective** /'tɒlərənt/

accepting without protest the opinions or acts of others

*He has a very tolerant attitude towards other religions.***topography****noun** /tə'pɒɡrəfi/

the physical features of an area of land, especially the position of its rivers, mountains

*From the air, it is possible to see the entire topography of a region.***tortoise****noun** /'tɔ:təs/

terrestrial turtles, characteristically having thick club-like hind limbs and a high, rounded carapace

tortuous**adjective** /'tɔ:tʃuəs/

bent in different directions; twisted

*We had to endure a tortuous mountain track on our way to the hill station.***traceable****adjective** /'treɪsəbl/

capable of being traced

*He wanted to track down all traceable calls.***tracery****noun** /'treɪsəri/a decorative pattern of lines and curves in stone
*Mogul craftsmen were highly skilled at producing beautiful tracery in marble.***tracheid****noun** /'treɪkɪd/

a type of water conducting cell in the xylem which lacks perforations in the cell wall

*A tracheid is found in all vascular plants.***tracheophyte****noun** /'treɪkɪə'faɪt/

a plant that has a conducting system of xylem and phloem elements

*Tracheophyte is the dominant type of land plant, and includes trees and flowering plants.***traitorous****adjective** /'treɪtərəs/

guilty of treason; treacherous

*His traitorous behaviour will get him into a lot of trouble.***trajectory****noun** /trə'dʒektəri/

the curved path of something that has been fired, hit or thrown into the air

*She was able to see the trajectory of her golf ball much better with her new contact lens.***tranquil****adjective** /'træŋkwɪl/

peaceful

*I always wanted to lead a tranquil life in the country.***tranquillity****noun** /træŋ'kwɪləti/

calmness

After battling the traffic to reach Shalimar Gardens, I just wanted to sit under a tree and enjoy the tranquillity of the ancient place.

15 to 17
age group

T

transcend**verb** /træn'send/

to rise above; to surmount

*Her paintings are a means to transcend the human experience.***transcribe****verb** /træn'skraɪb/

to change from one written form to another

*After you transcribe your notes onto the computer, please email a copy to Mr. Hasan.***transference****noun** /trænsfərəns/

redirection to a new place

*The transference of such a large amount of money was unusual.***transfusion****noun** /træns'fju:ʒn/

the movement of a liquid from one vessel into another

*The injured driver needed a blood transfusion.***transgression****noun** /trænz'greʃn/

a breach of a law; a sin or a crime

*As her transgression was a minor one, the principal did not suspend her from school.***translucent****adjective** /træns'lu:snt/

allowing light to shine through but not transparent

*I bought a beautiful, translucent, glass vase at the exhibition yesterday.***transmissivity****noun** /,trænzmi'siviti/the degree to which a medium allows something, in particular electromagnetic radiation, to pass through it
*The transparency and transmissivity of the atmosphere is uniform over the globe.***triassic****adjective** /traɪ'asɪk/

relating to the earliest period of the Mesozoic Era marked by the appearance of dinosaurs

*The average climatic conditions of the Triassic Period were on the hot and dry side.***tribunal****noun** /traɪ'bju:nl/

a type of court with the authority to deal with a particular problem or disagreement

*A tribunal was set up to address the problem of tax evasion.***trifling****adjective** /'traɪflɪŋ/

small and unimportant

*I had to request my secretary not to bother me with trifling matters.***troglydote****noun** /'trɒglədaɪt/

a person living in a cave, especially in prehistoric times

*The troglodyte covered the walls of the cave with drawings of different animals.***tropopause****noun** /'trɒpəʊə:z/

the boundary, or transitional layer, between the troposphere and the stratosphere

*Going upward from the surface, the tropopause is where air ceases to cool with height, and becomes almost completely dry.***truncheon****noun** /'trʌntʃən/

a short thick stick that police officers carry as a weapon

*The policeman waved his truncheon in a warning manner at the advancing youth.***tuberculosis****noun** /tju:,bɜ:kju'ləʊsɪs/

a serious, infectious disease in which swellings appear on the lungs and other parts of the body

He had tuberculosis and had to be quarantined.

T

15 to 17
age group**tumult****noun** /'tju:mʌlt/

a confused situation in which there is usually a lot of noise and excitement

There was such a tumult around the notice board that I could not see the exam results.

turbulence**noun** /'tɜ:bjələns/

disturbance

The country has been in a state of turbulence since the news report last night.

turbulent**adjective** /'tɜ:bjələnt/

disturbed

His country has a turbulent history, but things seem more settled now.

turquoise**noun** /'tɜ:kwɔɪz/

a blue or greenish-blue precious stone

She asked the jeweller to put a turquoise in her ring.

tusche**noun** /'tuʊʃə/

a greasy black composition, in liquid form or to be mixed with a liquid, used as ink for lithographic drawings

Tusche mixed with water flows more freely and dries more slowly.

tussock**noun** /'tʌsək/

a small area of grass that is longer and thicker than the grass around it

When I was a child, I thought that the tussock in the garden was a magical place.

typography**noun** /taɪ'pɒgrəfi/

the art or work of preparing books for printing, especially of designing how text will appear when it is printed

He learnt the art of typography in his apprenticeship at the printers.

tyrannical**adjective** /tɪ'rænikl/

using power or authority over people in an unfair and cruel way

His tyrannical rule did not last for long.

tyranny**noun** /'tɪrəni/

unfair or cruel use of power or authority

The students had no protection against the tyranny of their class bully.

15 to 17
age group

U

ubiquitous**adjective** /ju:'bɪkwɪtəs/

existing or being everywhere, or in all places, at the same time

*The movie star was tired of being followed by ubiquitous paparazzi all the time.***ulcer****noun** /'ʌlsə[r]/

a sore discharging pus

*I have an ulcer in my mouth.***ultimatum****noun** /'ʌltɪ'meɪtəm/

a final demand

*The government gave an ultimatum to the terrorists to give up, or they would retaliate forcefully.***unanimity****noun** /'ju:nə'nɪməti/

complete agreement

*There was remarkable unanimity between the members of the parliament.***unerring****adjective** /ʌn'ɜːrɪŋ/

always right or accurate

*She had an unerring instinct for good business deals.***unicorn****noun** /'ju:nɪkɔːn/

a fabled animal represented as a horse with a single straight spiralled horn projecting from its forehead

unilateral**adjective** /ju:nɪ'lætərəl/

being on one side only

*It was a unilateral decision.***uninhibited****adjective** /'ʌnɪn'hɪbɪtɪd/

behaving or expressing yourself freely without worrying about what other people think

*The other guests were shocked by her uninhibited laughter during dinner.***unkempt****adjective** /'ʌn'kempt/

not well cared for; not neat or tidy

*Her wild unkempt hair was difficult to comb.***unrequited****adjective** /'ʌnrɪ'kwaɪtɪd/

(of love) not returned by the person you love

*Unrequited love was what drove him to take a job in central Africa.***unwavering****adjective** /ʌn'weɪvərɪŋ/

not changing or becoming weaker in any way

*His unwavering support for his wife during her long illness showed how much he truly loved her.***unwieldy****adjective** /ʌn'wiːldi/

difficult to move or control because of its size, shape or weight

*The postman was struggling with the unwieldy parcel.***upbraid****verb** /ʌp'breɪd/

to criticise someone or because of something that they have said or done

*She should not upbraid him because he doesn't take criticism very well.***upheaval****noun** /ʌp'hi:vəl/

a big change that causes a lot of confusion and worry

*The upheaval of moving to a new house takes months to recover from.***upsurge****noun** /'ʌpsɜːdʒ/

sudden great increase

The recent upsurge in crime has caused some serious troubles.

U

15 to 17
age group

urchin

noun /'ɜ:tʃɪn/

a young child who is poor and dirty, often one who has no home

The dirty little street urchin was begging for food.

utilitarian

adjective /ju:tɪlɪ'teəriən/

designed to be practically useful rather than attractive

It was an exhibition displaying utilitarian sanitary items.

utilitarianism

noun /ju:tɪlɪ'teəriənɪzəm/

the belief that the right course of action is the one that will produce the greatest happiness for the highest number of people

The problem with a theory like utilitarianism, is that it takes free choice out of the equation.

utopia

noun /ju:'təʊpiə/

an imaginary place or state where everything is perfect

Utopia does not exist in reality, it is merely a figment of our imagination.

utterance

noun /'ʌtərəns/

spoken words

She hardly ever gives utterance to her thoughts.

15 to 17
age group

V

vaccine**noun** /'væksɪn/

a substance that is put into the blood and that protects the body from a disease
The discovery of the polio vaccine has saved millions of lives throughout the world.

vacuum**noun** /'vækjuəm/

emptiness of space
The fall of the old regime left a power vacuum which the nationalists tried to fill.

vainglorious**adjective** /'veɪn'glɔːriəs/

too proud of your own abilities and achievements
He was a vainglorious and arrogant individual who never made any friends.

valency**noun** /'veɪlənsɪ/

a property of atoms or groups, equal to the number of atoms of hydrogen
The scientist used a formula to determine the valency of the compound.

valet**noun** /'væleɪ/

originally a manservant, now usually a person who parks your car for you at a hotel or restaurant
The hotel manager asked the valet to park the car.

vanquish**verb** /'væŋkwɪʃ/

to defeat completely
I enjoyed watching the young Spaniard vanquish his opponent in the final of the tennis tournament.

variability**noun** /'veəriə'bɪlətɪ/

tendency to change
The degree of variability in the exchange rate is expected to decrease.

variegated**adjective** /'veəriəgeɪtɪd/

having differently coloured spots or marks
The plant has attractive, variegated leaves.

vault**noun** /vɔːlt/

an arched structure of masonry, forming a ceiling or canopy
She kept her jewellery in a vault at the bank.

vegetarian**noun** /'vedʒə'teəriən/

a person who does not eat meat or fish
He was surprised to find out that his wife was a vegetarian.

vehement**adjective** /'viːəmənt/

showing very strong feelings, especially anger
A vehement critic declared the exhibition as being mere child's play.

veinous**adjective** /'veɪnəs/

having prominent veins
His veinous arm was wounded badly.

velleity**noun** /'veləntɪ/

a wish or inclination not strong enough to lead to action
The notion intrigued me, but it remained a velleity.

vendetta**noun** /ven'detə/

a violent dispute between two groups in which people are murdered in revenge for previous murders
Romeo and Juliet lost their lives on account of the vendetta between their two families.

venetian**adjective** /və'niːʃn/

of or pertaining to Venice in Italy
The building was reminiscent of Venetian architecture.

V

15 to 17
age group**vengeful****adjective** /ˈvendʒfl/

wanting to take revenge

*Her vengeful attitude will cause us great suffering.***ventriloquism****noun** /venˈtrɪləkwɪzəm/

the act of speaking in such a manner that the voice appears to come from some other source

*He could not master the art of ventriloquism.***veracious****adjective** /vəˈreɪʃəs/

truthful

*It was hard not to believe her veracious explanation.***verbatim****adverb** /vɜːˈbɛrɪm/

exactly as spoken or written; word for word

*He reported the speech verbatim.***verisimilitude****noun** /ˌvɛrɪsɪˈmɪlɪtjuːd/

the quality of seeming to be true or real

*To add verisimilitude, the stage is covered with sand for the desert scenes.***versatile****adjective** /ˈvɜːsətəl/

adaptable

*He's a versatile actor who has played a wide variety of roles.***vertigo****noun** /ˈvɜːtɪgəʊ/

dizziness and loss of balance caused by looking down from a high place

*He did not realise that he had vertigo until he went up to the roof of the building and looked down.***vestibule****noun** /ˈvestɪbjʊːl/

an entrance hall

*The vestibule of the hotel was magnificent.***veterinary****adjective** /ˈvetrənəri/

connected with caring for the health of animals

*She is a student of veterinary medicine.***vicarious****adjective** /vɪˈkeəriəs/

performed, accomplished, or undergone by or on behalf of another

*He got a vicarious thrill out of watching his son score the winning goal.***vicinity****noun** /vəˈsɪnəti/

the surrounding district

*There is no hospital in the immediate vicinity.***vicissitude****noun** /vɪˈsɪsɪtjuːd/

change of circumstances

*He considered injuring his leg only a vicissitude which he would soon get over with.***victorious****adjective** /vɪkˈtɔːriəs/

of or pertaining to victory

*The victorious army returned home.***villainous****adjective** /ˈvɪləniəs/

very wicked; very unpleasant

*The detectives were unable to catch the villainous robbers.***vindicate****verb** /ˈvɪndɪkeɪt/

to clear of suspicion

*New evidence was needed to vindicate him completely.***viper****noun** /ˈvaɪpə[r]/

venomous snake having a single pair of long, hollow fangs and a thick, heavy body

15 to 17
age group

V

virtuous**adjective** /'vɜ:tʃuəs/

morally correct

*She lived an entirely virtuous life.***virulent****adjective** /'vɪrələnt/

extremely dangerous or harmful and quick to take effect

*She has recovered from a particularly virulent form of typhoid.***viscounty****noun** /'vaɪkaʊntsi/

the rank or position of a viscount

*His viscounty made him a sought-after bachelor.***vituperation****noun** /vɪ'tju:pə'reɪʃn/

cruel and angry criticism

*I do not enjoy reading his book reviews; every sentence is steeped in vituperation.***vivacious****adjective** /vɪ'veɪʃəs/

animated, lively, spirited

*He had three pretty, vivacious daughters.***vixen****noun** /'vɪksn/

a female fox

*The vixen had three lively cubs.***vociferous****adjective** /və'sɪfərəs/

noisy and insistent

*The vociferous protests of the workers have given me a headache.***volatile****adjective** /'vɒlətaɪl/

liable to change suddenly

*He was worried about her volatile personality.***voluminous****adjective** /və'lʊmɪnəs/

very large; bulky

*I sank down into a voluminous armchair.***voracious****adjective** /və'reɪʃəs/

greedy; insatiable

*His obesity was indicative of a voracious appetite.***voyager****noun** /'vɔɪdʒə/

one of a series of US space probes that obtained scientific information

*The very first Voyager showed us an up-close view of our Solar System.***vulcanization****noun** /'vʌlkənəɪ'zeɪʃən/

procedure of treating rubber with sulphur and heat, for greater elasticity and durability

*Vulcanization is a complicated process.***vulnerable****adjective** /'vʌlnərəbəl/

able to be physically or emotionally hurt or damaged

*The sudden resignation of the finance director put the company in a very vulnerable position.***vulture****noun** /'vʌltʃə[r]/

large bird of prey characteristically having dark plumage and a featherless head and neck and generally feeding on carrion

W

15 to 17
age group**waltz****noun** /wɔ:ls/

a graceful dance in which two people dance together
The waltz is easy to learn if you have a sense of rhythm.

wanton**adjective** /'wɒntən/

childishly cruel or unruly
The teacher was disappointed by his wanton behaviour.

warmonger**noun** /'wɔ:mɒŋgə[r]/

a person, especially a politician or leader, who wants to start a war
He was advised not to pay heed to the fiery speeches of the warmonger.

warrantable**adjective** /'wɒrəntəbl/

able to be guaranteed
He made sure to buy a warrantable CD player.

wastrel**noun** /'weɪstrəl/

an idle, worthless, or disreputable person
Her husband was known as a wastrel.

waterborne**adjective** /'wɔ:təbɔ:n/

spread or carried by water
Waterborne diseases are not rare.

watercress**noun** /'wɔ:təkres/

a water plant with small, round, green leaves and thin stems. It has a strong taste and is often eaten raw in salads
I added watercress to the salad.

wattmeter**noun** /'wɒtmɪtə[r]/

meter for measuring an amount of electricity
The physics laboratory did not have a spare wattmeter, so the new student could not participate in the experiment.

waybill**noun** /'weɪbɪl/

a receipt from the carrier for the goods being shipped
He was not given a waybill for the cargo he sent by ship to England.

weaponry**noun** /'wepənri/

weapons (collectively)
The police force has very sophisticated weaponry.

wearisome**adjective** /'weərɪsəm/

boring, tiring
After a long, wearisome day at work, she was so tired that she slept for twelve hours.

weevil**noun** /'wi:vɪl/

beetle that characteristically has a downward-curving snout and is destructive to nuts, fruits, stems, and roots

werewolf**noun** /'weəwʊlf/

(in stories) a person who changes for periods of time into a wolf, especially when there is a full moon
We thought the film about a werewolf was going to be frightening, but it was really quite humorous.

westernisation**noun** /'westənəɪ'zeɪʃn/

the process of becoming more like the developed world
According to critics, globalisation is just another word for the westernisation of the entire world.

15 to 17
age group

W

wheedle

verb /'wi:dəl/

to persuade by flattery

The children managed to wheedle money out of their father to go to the amusement park.

whimper

verb /'wɪmpə[r]/

to cry or whine softly

When we heard the puppy whimper, we thought he might be hungry.

whimsical

adjective /'wɪmzɪkəl/

playfully quaint or fanciful, especially in an appealing and amusing way

Much of his writing has a whimsical quality to it.

whithersoever

adverb /'wɪðərsəʊ'evə[r]/

wherever

She was free to go whithersoever she chose.

wilderness

noun /'wɪldənəs/

an uncultivated and uninhabited area

Antarctica is the world's last great wilderness.

woebegone

adjective /'wəʊbɪɡən/

looking very sad

I pitied him when I saw his woebegone expression.

wonderment

noun /'wʌndəmənt/

a feeling of pleasant surprise or wonder

She looked at him in surprise and wonderment.

wreckage

noun /'rekɪdʒ/

the results or remains of a disaster

The wreckage of the plane crash was spread over miles.

wretch

noun /retʃ/

a person for whom you feel pity

That poor wretch has been begging at that spot ever since I can remember.

wrongdoing

noun /'rɒŋdu:ɪŋ/

evil or wicked behaviour or action

The company denies any wrongdoing.

X

15 to 17
age group

xenophobia

noun /ˌzɛnəˈfəʊbiə/

a strong feeling of dislike or fear of people from other countries

The government has decided to launch a campaign against racism and xenophobia.

xylophone

noun /ˈzɑɪləfəʊn/

a musical instrument

He played the xylophone in the school band.

yardstick

noun /ˈjɑːdstɪk/

a stick three feet, or a yard, in length, used as a measure of cloth

We need a yardstick to measure the garden.

yeoman

noun /ˈjəʊmən/

a farmer who owned and worked his own land

The wealthy yeoman wanted to move to the city.

yield

verb /jiːld/

to produce or provide something, for example a profit, result or crop

High-rate deposit accounts yield good returns.

yoghurt

noun /ˈjɒɡət/

a thick slightly sour liquid food, made from milk

Fresh yoghurt is used in various foods.

Z**15 to 17**
age group**zeal****noun** /zi:l/

great energy or enthusiasm connected with something that you feel strongly about
He showed much zeal for his cause.

zealot**noun** /'zelət/

a person who is extremely enthusiastic about something, especially religion or politics
He is a real zealot; he will not take a day's rest until his party wins the election.

zealous**adjective** /'zeləs/

showing great energy and enthusiasm for something, especially because you feel strongly about it
He was a zealous anti-smoker.

zephyr**noun** /'zefə[r]/

a soft, gentle wind
The heat of summer nights is made bearable when a zephyr blows.

zinnia**noun** /'zɪniə/

a plant with large brightly coloured flowers
Her garden had a breathtaking variety of zinnia.