

Definitions

Note carefully the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the word in the blank space(s) in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms given at the end of each entry.

- 1. brevity**
(brev' ə tē)
(*n.*) shortness
The speech was notable more for its _____ than for its clarity.
SYNONYMS: conciseness, terseness, pithiness
ANTONYMS: verbosity, long-windedness, prolixity
- 2. comport**
(kəm pōrt')
(*v.*) to conduct or bear oneself, behave; to be in agreement
As the students left the building, the principal reminded them to _____ themselves as emissaries of the school.
SYNONYMS: deport oneself, agree, concur
- 3. concise**
(kən sīs')
(*adj.*) expressing much in a few words
As a rule of thumb, editors and readers appreciate writing that is _____ and forceful.
SYNONYMS: brief, succinct, terse, pithy, to the point
ANTONYMS: wordy, verbose, long-winded, prolix
- 4. demure**
(di myūr')
(*adj.*) sober or serious in manner, modest
Despite her _____ appearance, she is a competitive speed skater, always ready for a challenge on ice.
SYNONYMS: shy, diffident, sedate, seemly, decorous
ANTONYMS: bold, forward, assertive, immodest
- 5. depreciation**
(di prē shē ā' shən)
(*n.*) a lessening in value; a belittling
The accountant calculated the _____ of the computer over a period of five years.
SYNONYMS: cheapening, lowering, devaluation
ANTONYMS: increase, appreciation, enhancement
- 6. deteriorate**
(di tir' ē ə rāt)
(*v.*) to lower in quality or value; to wear away
It is painful for anyone, particularly a doctor, to watch someone's health _____.
SYNONYMS: worsen, decline, degenerate, debase
ANTONYMS: improve, fix up, enhance

- 7. divulge**
(di vəlǰ')
(*v.*) to tell, reveal; to make public
On some occasions, scrupulous reporters cannot _____ their sources of information.
SYNONYMS: disclose, impart, spill the beans, "leak"
ANTONYMS: hide, conceal, cover up, secrete, keep under wraps
- 8. enlightened**
(en līt' ənd)
(*adj.*) free from ignorance and false ideas; possessing sound understanding
An _____ society is ruled by knowledge and reason rather than superstition and prejudice.
SYNONYMS: knowing, informed, aware, cultivated
ANTONYMS: ignorant, unaware, untaught, benighted
- 9. forestall**
(fōr stōl')
(*v.*) to prevent by acting first
Sometimes it is possible to _____ a cold by taking Vitamin C.
SYNONYMS: hinder, thwart, preclude, ward off
ANTONYMS: welcome, accept, allow, submit, abide by
- 10. garble**
(gär' bəl)
(*v.*) to distort in such a way as to make unintelligible
If you've played "telephone," you know how easy it is to inadvertently _____ a message.
SYNONYMS: jumble, scramble, confuse, misrepresent
ANTONYMS: clarify, elucidate, articulate
- 11. proponent**
(prō pō' nənt)
(*n.*) one who puts forward a proposal; one who supports a cause or belief
Lucretia Coffin Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were among the first _____ of women's suffrage in the United States.
SYNONYMS: supporter, advocate, exponent
ANTONYMS: opponent, critic, foe, adversary
- 12. quaver**
(kwā' vər)
(*v.*) to shake, tremble; to trill
My voice _____ whenever I try to reach the high notes.
SYNONYMS: quiver, vibrate, shiver, quake, palpitate
- 13. recoil**
(v., ri kōil';
n., rē' kōil)
(*v.*) to spring back, shrink; (*n.*) the act of springing back
In *The Speckled Band*, sleuth Sherlock Holmes points out that "violence does, in truth, _____ upon the violent."
When the engineer accidentally released the giant spring, its powerful _____ sent him sprawling.
SYNONYMS: (*v.*) flinch; (*n.*) kickback
ANTONYMS: (*v.*) advance, proceed, gain ground

- 14. recoup**
(ri küp')
- (v.) to make up for, regain
I plan to _____ my family's lost fortune by working hard, earning extra money, and investing wisely.
SYNONYMS: recover, retrieve
ANTONYMS: lose, default, forfeit, kiss goodbye
- 15. reek**
(rēk)
- (n.) an unpleasant smell; (v.) to give off unpleasant smells; to give a strong impression
The unmistakable _____ of spoiled food greeted us as we entered the long-abandoned cabin.
In *How the Other Half Lives* (1890), Jacob Riis describes tenements in urban neighborhoods that _____ of poverty.
SYNONYMS: (n.) stench; (v.) stink, smell
ANTONYMS: (n.) perfume, fragrance, bouquet
- 16. relentless**
(ri lent' ləs)
- (adj.) unyielding, harsh, without pity
The novel *Les Misérables* recounts ex-convict Jean Valjean's lifelong flight from a _____ police inspector.
SYNONYMS: stern, merciless, persistent, unremitting
ANTONYMS: merciful, accommodating, indulgent
- 17. rivulet**
(riv' yū lət)
- (n.) a small stream
While we could hear the running water, dense vegetation hid the _____ from view.
SYNONYMS: brook, creek, rill
- 18. squander**
(skwän' dər)
- (v.) to spend foolishly, waste
I think that it is criminal to _____ our natural resources.
SYNONYMS: mispend, dissipate
ANTONYMS: save, economize, hoard, squirrel away
- 19. staccato**
(stə kät' ō)
- (adj.) detached or disconnected in sound or style
We strained to listen, and we heard _____ hoofbeats striking the pavement.
SYNONYMS: abrupt, disjointed
ANTONYMS: continuous, flowing, unbroken
- 20. statute**
(stach' üt)
- (n.) a law
The student body is governed by the _____ of the university.
SYNONYMS: rule, ordinance, enactment