Vocabulary List 3

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Absolute Adjective 8. "Unconditional; free from any conditions, limitations, and relations." The following quote reminds us that we must always ensure that the government's power is limited and not absolute: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Acute Adjective 1. "Urgent." 2. "Sensitive." 3. "Short, quick, brief." Acute has several definitions. An acute emergency is an urgent emergency. If your hearing and vision are acute, then your hearing and vision are very sensitive or very good. If you are in acute care at the hospital, you are in short term care, not chronic care.

Adhere Verb 1. "To stick fast or cleave, as a glutinous substance does; to become joined or united" 2. "To be attached or devoted, either by personal union or belief, principle, opinion etc." 3. "To be consistent or coherent; to be in accordance; to agree." Tape adheres to paper. If you follow the rules, you adhere to the rules.

Allay Verb "To make quiet or put at rest; to pacify or appease; to quell; to calm. " The President's speech was intended to allay the public's fear about a potential war.

Allocate Verb 1. "To set aside for a purpose" 2. "To distribute according to a plan, generally followed by the adposition "to" " We allocated half of the building for painting cars. The Federal Emergency Management Agency allocates funds to states during disasters.

Amass Verb 1. "To collect into a mass or heap" 2. "To gather a great quantity of; to accumulate." If you amass a fortune, you have accumulated a lot of wealth.

Anarchy Noun "The state of a society being without authorities or an authoritative governing body." If there are no police to enforce the law, anarchy will follow.

Apoplectic Adjective 2. "Marked by extreme anger or fury." If someone punches my beloved wife, I will become apoplectic.

Apprehensive Adjective "Anticipating something with anxiety or fear." I am very apprehensive about telling my boss that I lost $1000 out of my register; I fear he will fire me.

Atrophy Verb "To wither or waste away." If you are in a wheel chair for a long time, your leg muscles will likely atrophy; you will need physical therapy to rebuild the muscles.

Audacity Noun "Insolent boldness, especially when imprudent or unconventional." He had the audacity to ask me for a favor two minutes after insulting my wife.

Aversion Noun "Opposition or repugnance of mind; fixed dislike." I have an aversion to peas; I don’t like peas.

Belabor Verb 4. "To discuss something repeatedly; to harp on." If someone agrees with your point, don't continue to belabor the point.

Bloviate Verb "To speak or discourse at length in a pompous or boastful manner." The bloviating politician talked a lot, but he didn't say many significant things.

Bureaucracy Noun 3. "The body of officers and administrators, especially of a government." 4. "Any administration characterized by excessive red tape and routine." Since John works for the Department of Justice, John is a bureaucrat. Good ideas often get bogged down in bureaucracy and thus are not implemented.

Burgeoning Adjective "That buds, grows or expands; developing" The city's burgeoning population grew 10% last year.

Catalyst Noun 2. "Someone or something that encourages progress or change." Earnings announcements are great catalysts for stock prices; the earnings release usually causes the stock price to move up or down, sometimes significantly.

Complacent Adjective "Uncritically satisfied with oneself or one's achievements; smug" Setting new goals on a regular basis is a way to prevent yourself from becoming complacent.

Complement Verb "To complete, to bring to perfection, to make whole." Mustard complements a hot dog very well; a hot dog without mustard just doesn’t taste as good.

Conjecture Noun 1. "A statement or an idea which is unproven, but is thought to be true; a guess." 2. "A supposition based upon incomplete evidence; a hypothesis." Until more information is available, the cause of the accident is purely conjecture.

Credible Adjective "Believable or plausible." I didn't find her story to be credible; she may be able to jump high, but I don't believe she can jump over a two story building.

Credulous Adjective "Excessively ready to believe things; gullible." Not many people are credulous enough to believe in unicorns, but some people will believe anything.

Cryptic Adjective "Having hidden meaning." Her cryptic emails had a hidden meaning.

Culpable Adjective "Meriting condemnation, censure or blame, especially as something wrong, harmful or injurious; blameworthy." Joe is culpable for the car accident; the accident was his fault.

Cursory Adjective "Hasty; superficial; careless" A cursory review of a legal contract is not wise; you should take your time when reading a legal document.

Curtail Verb 2. "To shorten or abridge the duration of something; to truncate." Curtail your sales pitch if the potential buyer appears to be in a hurry.

Decorum Noun "Appropriate social behavior; propriety" The standards of decorum expected at a football game and at a play are quite different.

Depraved Adjective "Perverted or extremely wrong in a moral sense." The murderer must have been in a depraved state of mind to commit such a heinous act.

Dignity Noun "A quality or state worthy of esteem and respect." Doing a good job at work is a source of dignity for many; the success at work increases their self-respect.

Digress Verb "To step or turn aside; to deviate; to swerve; especially, to turn aside from the main subject of attention, or course of argument, in writing or speaking." While telling the story of his wedding day, Bob digressed and starting talking about his love for fishing.

Discriminate Verb 1. "To make distinctions." 2. "To make decisions based on prejudice." (as an adjective) A discriminating shopper will make the best purchase based on the facts. (as a verb) It is illegal for employers to discriminate against employees based on race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, and age.

Divert Verb 1."To turn aside from a course." 2. "To distract." 3. "To entertain or amuse (by diverting the attention)" Workers divert traffic by setting up detours. Magicians often divert the crowd's attention while they perform a trick. Movies are a diversion from the trials of real life.

Eccentric Adjective 4. "(of a person) Deviating from the norm; behaving unexpectedly or differently." Every family has an eccentric relative who acts a little different.

Elusive Adjective "Evading capture, comprehension or remembrance." The elusive running back scored easily; his ability to avoid tacklers was amazing.

Ensuing Adjective "Refers to the actions, consequences, and repercussions which result from some prior stimulus or event." We scored to take the lead, but the other team scored on the ensuing kickoff to re-take the lead.

Flippant Adjective 3. "Showing disrespect through a casual attitude, levity, and a lack of due seriousness." Making fun of an elderly person falling would be considered flippant by most anyone. Keep your flippant remarks to yourself!

Futile Adjective "Incapable of producing results; useless; not successful; not worth attempting." Jim tried to lift the heavy car by himself, but his efforts were futile.

Garner Verb 3. "To earn; to get; to accumulate or acquire by some effort or due to some fact; to reap." We need to garner more information before we can make a final decision.

Garrulous Adjective "Excessively or tiresomely talkative." Jen is garrulous; she talks all the time and never shuts up.

Genre Noun "A kind; a stylistic category or sort, especially of literature or other artworks." I love a good comedy, but my favorite movie genre is horror.

Gregarious Adjective "Describing one who enjoys being in crowds and socializing." John is gregarious; he is outgoing and social.

Heinous Adjective "Totally reprehensible." Synonyms: abominable, horrible A heinous crime is a reprehensible and horrible crime.

Heresy Noun 1. "(religion) A doctrine held by a member of a religion at variance with established religious beliefs, especially dissension from Roman Catholic dogma." 2. "A controversial or unorthodox opinion held by a member of a group, as in politics, philosophy or science." Many scientists, including Galileo, were accused of heresy during the 16th & 17th centuries; they were called heretics.

Hypothesis Noun "An assumption taken to be true for the purpose of argument or investigation." Jen's hypothesis is that if everyone has a job, crime will drop by 90%. That is a hypothetical situation that I would love to see come to fruition.

Illuminate Verb 1. "To shine light on something." 3. "To clarify or make something understandable." You can illuminate a baseball field at night with flood lights. (as an adjective) Your illuminating presentation gave me a much better understanding of why you feel the way you do.

Imminent Adjective "About to happen, occur, or take place very soon, especially of something which won't last long." If you are in imminent danger at work, you should leave the danger zone immediately.

Impartial Adjective "Treating all parties, rivals, or disputants equally; not partial; not biased; fair." The only good judge is an impartial judge.

Incorrigible Adjective 2. "Incurably depraved; not reformable." John is incorrigible; we could spend a year trying to correct his behavior and we would fail.

Indifferent Adjective 3. "Having no preference or bias, being impartial." I'm indifferent between the two restaurants; you can choose where we eat.

Inevitable Adjective "Impossible to avoid or prevent." If you talk on your cell phone while you drive your car, a bad accident is inevitable.

Instigate Verb "To goad or urge forward; to set on; to provoke; to incite." John tried to instigate a fight with Bill by calling Bill's brother a terrible name; fortunately, Bill just ignored John.

Irrational Adjective "Not rational; unfounded or nonsensical." A constant fear that the Canadian government is secretly trying to steal your lunch money is an irrational fear; it makes no sense.

Irrevocable Adjective "Unable to be retracted or reversed; final." An irrevocable trust cannot be terminated or modified without the permission of the beneficiary.

Lament Verb "To express grief; to weep or wail; to mourn." Jill lamented the death of her son at the funeral; her weeping made everyone else cry.

Misanthrope Noun "One who hates all mankind; one who hates the human race." Philanthropists love mankind and try to help others while misanthropes hate mankind, misogynists hate women, and misandrists hate men.

Nostalgic Adjective "Of, having, or relating to nostalgia." Nostalgia definition 2. "A bittersweet yearning for the things of the past." Nostalgic memories of childhood holiday celebrations can evoke feelings of warmth and emptiness.

Novel Adjective "New, original, especially in an interesting way" If you have a novel idea, you have a new and interesting idea.

Novice Noun "A beginner; one who is not very familiar or experienced in a particular subject." I'm a novice at fishing; I just started fishing last weekend.

Obfuscate Verb 2. "To deliberately make more confusing in order to conceal the truth." Murderers often try to obfuscate the evidence at the crime scene in order to confuse the police.

Oblivious Adjective "Lacking awareness; unmindful; unaware, unconscious of." He seemed oblivious to the other patrons in the theater, talking loudly on his cellphone during the show.

Obsequious Adjective 2. "Excessively eager and attentive to please or to obey all instructions; fawning, subservient, servile." The new intern was obsequious; he would do anything to make his boss feel special.

Omnipotent Adjective "Having unlimited power, force or authority." An omnipotent God is an all-powerful God.

Omniscient Adjective "Having total knowledge." Stories are often told from the omniscient point-of-view; the narrator knows everything about the characters and events.

Pejorative Adjective "Disparaging, belittling or derogatory." The word barbarian is a pejorative term used to describe people from other cultures considered to be less than civilized.

Precedent Noun "An act in the past which may be used as an example to help decide the outcome of similar instances in the future.' The Supreme Court’s decisions establish the precedent by which future cases are resolved in all U.S. courts.

Predecessor Noun "One who precedes; one who has preceded another in any state, position, office, etc.; one whom another follows or comes after, in any office or position." George W. Bush was the 43rd President of the United States, and his predecessor was Bill Clinton, the 42nd President. Bill Clinton preceded George W. Bush.

Presumptuous Adjective "Going beyond what is right, proper, or appropriate because of an excess of self-confidence or arrogance." It's a little presumptuous of you to assume that you are invited to the wedding, especially since I just met you last week.

Procure Verb "To acquire or obtain." The parts manager at the body shop is in charge of procuring parts, paint, and materials.

Profound Adjective 2. "Very deep; very serious" 4. "Characterized by intensity; deeply felt; pervading" If your love for your wife is profound, it is intense. A profoundly religious person is deeply religious.

Profusely Adverb "In great quantity or abundance; in a profuse manner" If you sweat profusely, you sweat a great quantity of sweat.

Prolific Adjective 2. "Similarly producing results or works in abundance" In basketball, a prolific scorer is one that scores a lot of points.

Relegate Verb "Exile, banish, remove, or send away." After throwing three interceptions in the game, the quarterback was relegated to sitting on the bench.

Remorse Noun "A feeling of regret or sadness for doing wrong or sinning." When sentencing the convicted thief, the judge may be more lenient if the thief shows remorse by apologizing to the offended.

Rescind Verb "To repeal, annul, or declare void; to take (something such as a rule or contract) out of effect." I got cold feet, so I rescinded the offer to purchase the house before the offer was accepted.

Reverberate Verb 2. "To have a lasting effect" The events of 9/11 still reverberate today.

Secular Adjective "Not specifically religious." The pastor's favorite secular interest is watching the Baltimore Ravens play football on television.

Sparse Adjective 1. "Having widely spaced intervals." 2. "Not dense; meager." The population 100 miles outside the city is sparse; the population density is much lower outside the city.

Stagnant Adjective "Lacking freshness, motion, flow, progress, or change; stale; motionless; still." Stagnant water is water that sits still.

Static Adjective "Unchanging; that cannot or does not change." A static IP address is unchanging while a dynamic IP address always is changing.

Staunch Adjective "Loyal, trustworthy, reliable, outstanding" If you are a staunch supporter of a political candidate, you are a very loyal supporter of that candidate.

Superficial Adjective 1. "Shallow, lacking substance." 3. "Of or pertaining to the surface." If you will date someone because they are good looking, even though you don’t like their personality, you might be superficial. A small dent in your car is superficial damage.

Susceptible Adjective 5. "Vulnerable; (temporarily) defenseless" Lack of sleep can make you susceptible to the common cold, so get plenty of sleep.

Taciturn Adjective "Silent; temperamentally untalkative; disinclined to speak." Jen is taciturn while her sister is talkative; they are opposites.

Tangent Noun 3. "A topic nearly unrelated to the main topic, but having a point in common with it." Stick to the main topic of conversation and quit going off on tangents.

Tardy Adjective "Late; overdue or delayed." If you are tardy for work, you are late for work.

Temper Verb "To moderate or control." Temper your language around young children. Don't be a bad influence.

Tenuous Adjective "Thin in substance or consistency." A tenuous, romantic relationship is weak and could end at any time. A tenuous argument is a weak argument lacking substance.

Terse Adjective 3. "Abruptly or brusquely short." Jill responded with a terse "no."

Therapy Noun "Attempted remediation of a health problem following a diagnosis, usually synonymous with treatment." After the car accident, I needed to go to physical therapy to learn how to walk again.

Thwart Verb "To prevent; to halt; to cause to fail; to foil; to frustrate." Homeland Security has thwarted thousands of terrorist attacks over the years. They are good at preventing terrorist attacks.

Tirade Noun "A long, angry or violent speech; a diatribe." When someone rear-ended Joe in his car, Joe launched into a two minute tirade regarding how the offender should pay attention when driving and never text while driving.

Tranquil Adjective 1. "Free from emotional or mental disturbance." 2. "Calm; without motion or sound." To feel tranquil is to feel peaceful. A tranquil lake is a lake with no motion or sound like you would see in a famous nature photograph.

Transcribe Verb 1. "To convert a representation of language, typically speech but also sign language, etc., to another representation." 2. "(Dictation) To make such a conversion from live or recorded speech to text." Congressional sessions have a transcriber in attendance who transcribes a transcript of all the verbal comments to serve as a record of what was said.

Transient Adjective 2. "Remaining for only a brief time." Washington, D.C.is one of America's most transient cities. Residents often move to DC as part of an incoming administration and leave DC when the administration leaves office.

Trinket Noun "A thing of little value; a trifle; a toy." At carnivals you usually win trinkets, usually nothing of much value.

Truant Adjective "Absent without permission, especially from school." If you are absent from school without permission, you are truant.

Vestige Noun "A faint mark or visible sign left by something which is lost, or has perished, or is no longer present; remains." Cave paintings are the last vestiges of some ancient civilizations.

Vitriolic Adjective "Bitterly scathing, caustic."  Vitriolic criticism is very harsh criticism.

Voluminous Adjective "Of great volume, or bulk; large." A voluminous writer is one who has written many books.

Volunteer Noun "One who enters into, or offers for, any service of his/her own free will, especially when done without pay." Bill wanted to give back to the community so he became a volunteer at the homeless shelter.