

Vocabulary Set 1

Gaffe

(n) a socially awkward or tactless act; blunder
syn: faux pas, gaucherie, slip, solecism

Everyone in my school cafeteria laughed at me as I slipped with a tray full of food – I was so embarrassed by the gaffe.

Glut

(n) surplus; an overabundance; (v) supply with an excess
syn: surplus, excess, surfeit, superfluity; overload, overfill

After his surgery, Jake was no longer capable of eating the glut of food that he used to.

In the fall, graduate programs are glutted with applications.

Precocious

(adj.) showing unusually early development
syn: forward, mature, gifted, talented

Those with precocious puberty develop secondary sexual characteristics at an earlier age than most.

Despite being a 9-year-old, Jake was a precocious baking master, able to create some of the most delicious cupcakes.

Transient

(adj) lasting only a short time, fleeting; (n.) one who stays only a short time
syn: temporary, short-lived, short-term, ephemeral, impermanent

I was incapacitated by a transient illness; thankfully, it only lasted a few days.

Row

(n) an angry dispute

syn: quarrel, run-in, words, wrangle

The movie star lost many admirers after his public row with his girlfriend; an appropriate consequence for all of his yelling and cursing.

Adjudicate

(v) to serve as a judge; to arrive at a judgment or conclusion

syn: decide, resolve, settle, judge

Only after years of experience tasting dessert is one eligible to adjudicate at dessert contests.

Modicum

(n) a small or moderate amount

syn: particle, speck, fragment, scrap, grain

The thief was trialed and found guilty; the jury couldn't see a modicum of innocence in him.

Beatific

(adj) blissfully happy; rendering or making blessed

syn: rapturous, joyful, ecstatic, seraphic, blissful, serene

After our first date I was beatific; however, after two more dates, I was anything but happy.

Fleece

(v) to deceive

syn: cheat, gazump, pluck, plume, rob

My uncle was fleeced by a fraud email claiming to be an insurance company. They stole his identity!

Rankle

(v) to cause anger, irritation, or bitterness; gnaw into

syn: annoy, upset, anger, irritate, offend, affront, displease, provoke

The impatience of other drivers would rankle him, and sometimes he would have to pull to the side of the road and cool off for a few minutes before beginning to drive again.

Eke

(v) to live off meager resources, to scrape by

syn: be thrifty with, be frugal with, be sparing with, use economically

After the ship wrecked and the crew were abandoned on a desolate island, they learned to eke out their survival by foraging berries.

Capitulate

(v) surrender

syn: yield, concede defeat, give up, submit

After a series of unsuccessful battles, the soldiers had to capitulate to the enemy.

Equanimity

(n) mental calmness, composure; refusal to panic

syn: calm, level-headedness, confidence, aplomb

Instead of panicking like the other crew members, the captain handled the stress of a sinking ship with equanimity and sailed it to safety before it was too late.

Distill

(v) purify; extract the essential elements of; refine

syn: refine, filter, concentrate, condense

Stranded on an island, Tom was innovative and able to create a system that used sunlight to distill fresh water from salt water.

Puissance

(n) power, might

syn: strength, vigor, influence

After years of studying, a doctor has the puissance to save lives.

Contiguous

(adj) side by side, touching; near; adjacent in time

syn: abutting, very close, adjacent

The USA consists of 48 contiguous and 2 nonadjacent states.

Libertine

(n) one without moral restraint; a dissolute person; (adj) unrestrained by morality or convention

syn: freethinking, profligate, corrupt

Many high school students turn libertine once accepted to college; with the pressure of earning good grades off, their senior year becomes one giant, wild party.

Froward

(adj) difficult to deal with; contrary

syn: stubborn, wayward, disobedient

Saturday school and other disciplinary actions are tools used to deal with froward students.