



HUMSPELLING



In Education







12 to 14

AGE GROUP



A

12 to 14
age group

abattoir

noun /'æbətwaɪ/

a place where animals are killed in order to provide meat

The cattle were led to the abattoir.

abbess

noun /'æbes/

a woman who is the superior of a convent of nuns
An abbess has full authority in a convent.

abduction

noun /əb'dʌkʃn, æb'dʌkʃn/

the action of forcibly taking someone away against their will

The abduction of the little boy came as a shock to his parents.

abeyance

noun /ə'beɪəns/

a state of temporary disuse or suspension

The deal was held in abeyance until her arrival.

abhorrent

adjective /əb'hɒrənt/

disgusting or hateful

Spitting in public is an abhorrent practice.

ablaze

adjective /ə'bleɪz/

burning quickly and strongly

Cars and buses were set ablaze during the riot.

ablution

noun /ə'bluːʃn/

a ceremonial washing or cleansing of the body as an act of religion

He performed his ablution before entering the mosque.

abnegation

noun /,æbnɪ'geɪʃn/

the action of renouncing or rejecting something

Religious beliefs should not require the abnegation of science.

abnormality

noun /,æbnɔ:'mælɪti/

a feature or event which is not usual

There was an abnormality in the test results.

abolition

noun /,æbə'liʃn/

the ending of a system, law, or custom

Australia will vote on the abolition of the monarchy.

aboriginal

noun /æbə'ɪdʒɪnəl/

inhabiting or existing in a land from the earliest times or from before the arrival of colonists

Her studies of the primitive art forms of aboriginal Australians were widely reported.

abrasion

noun /ə'breɪʒn/

the process of scraping or wearing something away
Abrasion is used to remove old paint.

abridged

adjective /ə'brɪdʒd/

describing a book, film, or speech that has been shortened without losing the sense

I am reading an abridged edition of Shakespeare's plays.

abscond

verb /əb'skɒnd, æb'skɒnd/

to leave hurriedly and secretly, typically to escape from custody or avoid arrest

The accountant planned to abscond with the money.

abseil

verb /'æbseɪl/

to lower oneself down a steep rock face using ropes
Climbers were planning to abseil down the cliff.

absenteeism

noun /,æbsən'tiːnzəm/

the practice of regularly staying away from work or school without good reason

The principal will take strict action to deal with absenteeism.

absolve

verb /əb'zɒlv/

to release a person from sin, guilt, a promise, or duty
I absolve you of all responsibility in the matter.

absorbent

adjective /əb'sɔ:bənt, əb'zɔ:bənt/

able to soak up liquid easily
The absorbent tablecloth soaked up the spilt water.

abstentious

adjective /əb'stenʃəs/

characterized by self-restraint
She had to observe an abstentious diet after her abdominal surgery.

abundance

noun /ə'bʌndəns/

a very large quantity
The abundance of tourists in this region does wonders for the local economy.

academician

noun /ə,kædə'mɪʃn, ˌækədə'mɪʃn/

a member of an academy
The highly reputed academician put forward a new theory which won him the Nobel Prize.

acanthus

noun /ə'kænθəs/

a herbaceous plant or shrub with bold flower spikes and spiny decorative leaves
The acanthus is grown as an ornamental plant.

acaudate

adjective /eɪ'kɔ:deɪt/

having no tail
Koalas are acaudate animals.

accede

verb /æk'si:d, ək'si:d/

to agree to a proposal, demand, or request
The government decided not to accede to the terrorists' demands.

accelerando

adverb /æ,tʃelə'rændəʊ, æk,sələ'rændəʊ/

a musical direction meaning to play with a gradual increase of speed
He was asked to play the music accelerando.

accession

noun /æk'seʃən/

the attainment or acquisition of a position of rank or power
The accession of the new king was marked by much celebration.

accessory

noun /æk'sesəri/

a thing which can be added to something else in order to make it more useful, versatile, or attractive
Each accessory adds to the price of the car.

accord

noun /ə'kɔ:d/

an agreement
The two governments signed a peace accord last year.

accoucheur

noun /ˌæku:'ʃɜ:/

a male midwife
The accoucheur assisted the doctor during the delivery process.

acerola

noun /æsə'rəʊlə/

a fruit also known as the Barbados cherry
Acerola has become widely known for its medicinal and nutritional benefits.

acetone

noun /'æsɪtəʊn/

a colourless volatile liquid with a strong smell
Acetone is used as a paint thinner.

ackee

noun /'æki/

a tropical West African tree which is cultivated for its fruit
The fruit of the ackee is poisonous until fully ripe.

A

12 to 14
age group

acme

noun /'ækmi/

the point at which something is at its best or most highly developed

Ali reached the acme of his career at a very young age.

acoustic

adjective /ə'kuːstɪk/

relating to sound or the sense of hearing

Ahmed is learning to play an acoustic guitar.

acquaint

verb /ə'kweɪnt/

to make aware of or familiar with

Please acquaint me with the facts of the case.

acquire

verb /ə'kwaɪə[r]/

to get, gain, or buy

I would like to acquire a new suit.

acquisition

noun /ækwaɪ'zɪʃən/

an asset or object bought or obtained, typically by a library or museum

The museum added a new acquisition to its Gandhara collection.

acridine

noun /'ækɾɪdiːn/

a colourless solid compound obtained from coal tar

Acridine is used in the manufacture of dyes and drugs.

acronym

noun /'ækɾənɪm/

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

AIDS is an acronym for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

acupressure

noun /'ækjʊ,prefə[r]/

a form of alternative therapy in which manual pressure is used to stimulate specific points on the body

Acupressure is used to relieve a variety of aches and pains.

acupuncture

noun /'ækjʊpʌŋktʃə[r]/

a Chinese method of treating pain and illness using special thin needles

He opted for acupuncture to treat his back pain.

adaptation

noun /ædæp'teɪʃən/

the action or process of changing to suit a new or different purpose

This film is an adaptation of a novel.

adaxial

adjective /æd'æksɪəl/

facing towards the stem of a plant

Prokelisia lay eggs into the adaxial surfaces of the leaves.

addictive

adjective /ə'dɪktɪv/

causing or likely to cause someone to become dependent on some habit

The number game Sudoku can become rather addictive.

adjudicate

verb /ə'dʒʊ:dɪkeɪt/

to make a formal judgement on a disputed matter

The tribunal's function is to adjudicate disputes between employers and employees.

adolescence

noun /ˌædə'lesns/

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

Children start thinking about their careers during adolescence.

adulation

noun /ædʒʊˈleɪʃn/

great admiration and praise
His adulation for Waseem Akram made him passionate about cricket.

adulterate

verb /əˈdʌltəreɪt/

to render something poorer in quality by adding another substance
I will not adulterate my essay by copying from others.

advection

noun /ədˈvekʃən/

the transfer of heat, cold, or humidity in the atmosphere by the horizontal movement of an air mass
Today's temperatures were higher due to the advection of warm air into the region.

adversity

noun /ədˈvɜːsɪti/

a difficult or unpleasant situation
She showed tremendous courage when faced with adversity.

advocate

noun /ˈædvəkeɪt/

one who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy
He is a staunch advocate of free speech.

adzuki

noun /ədˈzuːki/

a small, round dark-red edible bean
Locals order shaved ice with ice cream and adzuki, Japanese sweet beans.

aerobatics

plural noun /eəəʊˈbætɪks/

loops, rolls, and other feats of spectacular flying performed in one or more aircraft to entertain an audience on the ground
The air show featured spectacular aerobatics.

aerodynamics

plural noun /ˌeərəʊdaɪˈnæmɪks/

the study of the properties of moving air and the interaction between the air and solid bodies moving through it
Improved aerodynamics in the new race car model will increase its performance.

aerosol

noun /ˈeərəsɒl/

a substance enclosed under pressure and released as a fine spray
Spray paint is a type of aerosol.

aesthetic

adjective /iːˈθetɪk, esˈθetɪk/

concerned with beauty and art and the understanding of beautiful things
Her aesthetic sense was displayed in her beautifully decorated home.

aestival

adjective /ˈiːstɪvəl, ˈestɪvəl/

belonging to or appearing in summer
In the first study, aestival survival of the plant was tested at two moisture levels.

affiliation

noun /əˈfɪliˈeɪʃn/

a connection with an association or party
He was arrested due to his affiliation with the liberation movement.

affirmative

adjective /əˈfɜːmətɪv/

confirming or asserting something as true or valid
The affirmative response from the majority of questionnaire respondents confirmed her hypothesis.

afflatus

noun /əˈflætəs/

a divine creative impulse or inspiration
His music has the afflatus of genius and the purity of a child.

A

12 to 14
age group

affront

noun /ə'frʌnt/

an action or remark that causes outrage or offence
The accusation was an affront to his reputation.

aggrandizement

noun /ə'grændaɪzmənt/

to increase the power, status, or wealth of
His sole aim is personal aggrandizement.

aggrieved

adjective /ə'gri:vɪd/

feeling resentment at having been unfairly treated
The aggrieved citizens protested at their treatment.

agitate

verb /'ædʒɪteɪt/

to stir someone or something up
Low wages tend to agitate the workers.

aikido

noun /aɪ'ki:dəʊ/

a Japanese form of self-defence and martial art that uses locks, holds, throws, and the opponent's own movements
The honest truth is that I took up aikido for my own protection.

aioli

noun /aɪ'əʊli, eɪ'əʊli/

a thick sauce made of mayonnaise and garlic
She served the potato wedges with aioli.

aisle

noun /aɪl/

a passage between rows of seats or shelves
I found cans of tuna in the last aisle.

akinesia

noun /,eɪkɪ'ni:siə, ˌæki'ni:siə/

the loss or impairment of the power of voluntary movement
Akinesia caused his arms to become motionless.

alar

adjective /'eɪlə/

pertaining to, resembling, or having wings
Da Vinci's alar drawings are still being used as study models by art students.

albedo

noun /æl'bi:dəʊ/

the proportion of the incident light or radiation that is reflected by a surface
Polar ice has the highest albedo of any part of the planet.

albinism

noun /'ælbɪnɪzəm/

a congenital absence of normal pigmentation
Albinism is an inherited condition.

albumen

noun /'ælbjʊmɪn/

the white of an egg
Albumen is the nutritive and protective gelatinous substance that surrounds the yolk.

alchemy

noun /'ælkəmi/

the medieval forerunner of chemistry
She found it difficult to find books on alchemy.

Alexandrian

adjective /,æɪg'zændriən, ˌæɪg'zɑ:ndriən/

of or relating to Alexander the Great or Alexandria in Egypt
The head of state had an Alexandrian philosophy in running the affairs of the country.

alkali

noun /'ælkəlaɪ/

a compound with particular chemical properties including neutralizing acids
An alkali can be used to neutralize an acid spill.

allegation

noun /ˌæləˈɡeɪʃn/

a claim that someone has done something wrong or illegal

The allegation against him is potentially damaging.

allocution

noun /ˌæləˈkjuːʃən/

a formal speech giving advice or a warning

The expert repeated his allocution at the summit.

alluvium

noun /əˈlʃuːviəm/

a deposit of clay, silt, and sand left by flowing floodwater in a river valley or delta

The alluvium left by the flooding of the Nile made for fertile farm land.

altercation

noun /ˌɔːltəˈkeɪʃn/

a noisy disagreement

The police were notified of the altercation in the parking lot.

altruistic

adjective /æltruːˈɪstɪk/

showing a selfless concern for the well-being of others

Her altruistic nature was appreciated by everyone in the family.

aluminium

noun /æljʊˈmɪniəm, əˈluːmɪniəm/

the chemical element of atomic number 13, a light silvery-grey metal

This urn made of aluminium is light and shiny.

alumnus

noun /əˈlʌmnəs/

a former male student of a school, college or university

He is an alumnus of Edinburgh University.

alyssum

noun /əˈlɪsəm, ˈæɪsəm/

a herbaceous Eurasian plant which typically bears small white or yellow flowers

Many alyssum species are cultivated as ornamental plants.

amandine

adjective /ˈæməˌdiːn/

prepared or garnished with sliced almonds

I had an amandine biscotti with my coffee.

amanuensis

noun /əˌmænjoʊˈensis/

a literary or artistic assistant, in particular one who takes dictation or copies manuscripts

The author hired an amanuensis to type his manuscripts.

ambidextrous

adjective /ˌæmbɪˈdekstrəs/

able to use both the left and the right hand equally well

The tennis player's ambidextrous skills proved to be an advantage.

ambience

noun /ˈæmbɪəns/

the character and atmosphere of a place

The ambience of the hotel was friendly and welcoming.

amble

verb /ˈæmbəl/

to walk at a leisurely pace

We would amble down to the beach every morning.

ammonia

noun /əˈməʊniə/

a colourless strong-smelling chemical

Ammonia is often used in making cleaning substances.

A

12 to 14
age group

amole

noun /ə'məʊli/
any plant, or part of a plant, used as a detergent or soap
They used amole to wash their clothes while they were camping in the wilderness.

amphibious

adjective /æm'fɪbiəs/
living in or suited for both land and water
The frog's amphibious nature serves it well both in water and on land.

Amphipoda

proper noun /,æmfi'pɒdə/
an order of chiefly marine crustaceans
Most Amphipoda are marine animals.

anaerobic

adjective /,æneə'rəʊbɪk/
relating to or requiring an absence of free oxygen
Anaerobic bacteria do not need oxygen to survive.

analysis

noun /ə'næləsɪs/
careful examination of how something is structured
Your analysis of the situation is different from mine.

anapaest

noun /'ænəpi:t, 'ænəpest/
a metrical foot consisting of two short syllables followed by one long syllable
A limerick traditionally uses anapaest meter.

ancestry

noun /'ænsɛstri/
one's family or ethnic descent
His family ancestry has been traced back to the tenth century.

andantino

adjective /,ændæn'ti:nəl/
a musical movement or passage marked to be performed lighter and faster than andante
The andantino should not be performed too slowly.

andiron

noun /'ændəɪən/
a metal stand, typically one of a pair, for supporting wood burning in a fireplace
The andiron fell over when I added a log to the fire.

android

noun /'ændrɔɪd/
a robot with a human appearance
An android is an automaton made to resemble a human.

anecdote

noun /'ænikdəʊt/
a short, interesting story about a real incident or person
He amused us with an anecdote about his visit to Africa.

angst

noun /æŋst/
a feeling of anxiety and worry about a situation, or about your life
Rock and pop have a tradition of celebrating adolescent angst.

animosity

noun /,æni'mɒsɪti/
a strong, active hatred
There was obvious animosity between the two political parties.

anise

noun /'ænis/
a Mediterranean plant of the parsley family, cultivated for its aromatic seeds which are used in cooking and herbal medicine
Anise is similar to fennel, but has a stronger flavor.

ankylosis

noun /,æŋkɪ'ləʊsɪs/
the abnormal stiffening and immobility of a joint due to fusion of the bones
Pain relief and frequent passive movements prevent contractures and joint ankylosis.

anneal

verb /ə'ni:l/

to heat metal or glass and allow it to cool slowly, in order to remove internal stresses and toughen it
They had to anneal the metal to make it suitable for their purpose.

annihilate

verb /ə'ni:əleɪt/

to destroy or defeat completely
The army had enough weapons to annihilate the enemy.

anodyne

adjective /'ænədəɪn/

not likely to cause offence or disagreement and somewhat dull
We chose an anodyne topic for the conversation.

anonymity

noun /'ænə'nɪmɪti/

the state of remaining unknown
Names of people in the book were changed to preserve anonymity.

anorexia

noun /,æ'nɔ:reksɪə/

a prolonged eating disorder with a psychological cause
The patient received counselling to treat her anorexia.

anorthosite

noun /ə'no:θəsɪt/

a granular igneous rock composed largely of labradorite
Coarse-grained anorthosite is the predominant rock type in this area.

Anschluss

noun /'æŋʃlɒs/

the annexation of Austria by Germany in 1938
He joined the party on July 4, 1938, after the Anschluss.

antagonism

noun /æn'tæɡənɪzəm/

hostility or opposition
There is growing antagonism towards certain policies of the government.

anthracite

noun /'ænθrəsɪt/

a very hard type of coal that burns slowly without producing a lot of smoke or flames
The power plant mainly burns anthracite.

anthropologist

noun /,ænthrə'pɒlədʒɪst/

an expert in, or student of, the history and science of mankind
Margaret Mead was the first anthropologist to observe varying gender roles in different societies.

antioxidant

noun /æntɪ'ɒksɪdənt/

a substance that inhibits oxidation
Vitamin E is an antioxidant used in cosmetics to prevent ageing.

antirrhinum

noun /,æntɪ'raɪnəm/

a plant of a genus that includes the snapdragon
In winter and spring, annual plants like the pansy and antirrhinum are grown.

antithetical

adjective /,æntɪ'tetɪkəl/

directly opposed or contrasted
I avoid discussions with people whose religious beliefs are antithetical to mine.

apastron

noun /æ'pæstrən/

The point of maximum separation between two stars in a binary system
The stars, when at apastron, are twice their periastron.

A

12 to 14
age group

apathy

noun /'æpəθi/

a lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern

There is widespread apathy among the people towards the present government.

aperiodic

adjective /ˌeɪpɪərɪ'ɒdɪk/

not occurring at regular intervals

They were receiving aperiodic signals from the control tower.

apocalypse

noun /ə'pɒkəlɪps/

the complete and final destruction of the world

Many equate nuclear war with an apocalypse.

apparatus

noun /ˌæpə'reɪtəs, ˌæpə'rɑ:təs/

the equipment needed for a particular purpose

The apparatus needed for his physics experiment came out of a little box.

apparition

noun /ˌæpə'rɪʃn/

a ghost or an image of a person who is dead

She saw an apparition of her deceased mother.

applique

noun /ə'pli:kɪ/

ornamental needlework in which pieces of fabric are

sewn to a larger piece to form a picture or pattern

I will sew an applique bedcover using different coloured fabrics.

apprise

verb /ə'praɪz/

to inform or tell someone

I thought it right to apprise Chris of what he had missed.

aquamarine

noun /ˌækwəmə'rɪn/

a precious stone consisting of a light bluish-green variety of beryl

Aquamarine is my birthstone.

aquifer

noun /'ækwɪfə[r]/

a body of permeable rock which can contain or transmit groundwater

It is important to protect the aquifer from pollution.

arbitrate

verb /'ɑ:bitreɪt/

to settle a dispute by acting as judge

Mr. Smith was called to arbitrate between the management and the employees.

archipelago

noun /ˌɑ:kɪ'peləgəʊ/

a group of many islands

The Indonesian archipelago consists of hundreds of islands.

aria

noun /'ɑ:riə/

a song for one voice, especially in an opera or oratorio

The melodious aria mesmerised the audience at the opera.

aristocracy

noun /ˌærɪ'stɒkrəsi/

the highest social class, consisting of people with hereditary titles

Many of the French aristocracy were killed during the revolution.

Aristotelian

adjective /ˌærɪstə'ti:liən/

of or relating to Greek philosopher Aristotle or his philosophy

He did not do justice to the Aristotelian theory in his research paper.

arraign

verb /ə'reɪn/

to call or bring someone before a court to answer a criminal charge

The District Attorney will decide whether to arraign the suspect by tomorrow.

arson

noun /'ɑːsən/
the crime of deliberately setting fire to something
The building owner was charged with arson.

arthritis

noun /ɑː'θraɪtɪs/
a disease causing painful inflammation and stiffness of the joints
Arthritis can be painful and debilitating.

assail

verb /ə'seɪl/
to make a concerted or violent attack on
Certain newspapers assail the government to exert pressure and get favours.

assessment

noun /ə'sesmənt/
an opinion or judgement about something
What is your assessment of the situation?

asset

noun /'æset/
a person or thing that is valuable to someone
She will be an asset to the organization.

assiduity

noun /,æsɪ'djuːɪti/
constant or close attention to what one is doing
He was known for his assiduity at work.

assuage

verb /ə'sweɪdʒ/
to make an unpleasant feeling less severe
She managed to assuage the customer's anger.

asterisk

noun /'æstərɪsk/
a star-shaped character or symbol used to call attention to something
I have placed an asterisk next to the tasks I want you to do first.

astrometry

noun /ə'strɒmɪtri/
the scientific measurement of the positions, motions, and magnitudes of stars
Astrometry is a branch of astronomy.

astute

adjective /ə'stjuːt/
perceptive or shrewd
An astute businessman recognizes a good deal.

ataxia

noun /ə'tæksɪə/
the loss of full control of bodily movements
In children, cerebellar ataxia leads to difficulties in balancing and coordination.

atelier

noun /ə'telɪər/
a workshop or studio, especially one used by an artist or designer
The artist painted in his cluttered atelier.

audacious

adjective /ɔː'deɪʃəs/
recklessly bold or daring
The politician's audacious statements could have cost him the election.

audible

adjective /'ɔːdɪbəl/
loud enough to be heard
The teacher's voice was barely audible without the microphone.

audit

noun /'ɔːdɪt/
an official examination of business and financial records
An audit turned up evidence of tax evasion.

A

12 to 14
age group

aura

noun /'ɔːrə/

the distinctive atmosphere or quality that seems to surround and be generated by a person, thing, or place

She had an aura of authority in her department.

aureole

noun /'ɔːriəl/

a halo or circle of light, especially round the head or body of a portrayed religious figure

Medieval paintings depict characters with an aureole around their heads.

autarchy

noun /'ɔːtɑːki/

economic independence or self-sufficiency

Rural community autarchy is a Utopian dream.

auxiliary

adjective /ɔːg'zɪliəri/

providing additional help or support

We have installed an auxiliary generator in case of power cuts.

avail

verb /ə'veɪl/

to use or take advantage of an opportunity or resource

You should avail yourself of every available resource.

avalanche

noun /'ævələntʃ/

a mass of snow and ice falling rapidly down a mountainside

The avalanche in the Alps took many lives.

aventurine

noun /ə'ventʃərɪn/

a variety of quartz containing red or greenish particles of iron oxide or mica

The aventurine in her necklace shone in the sunlight.

avocado

noun /,ævə'kɑːdəʊ/

a pear-shaped fruit with pale green flesh and a large stone

Avocado is the main ingredient in guacamole.

avowed

adjective /ə'vaʊd/

denoting a belief or aim that has been asserted, admitted, or stated publicly

They came to power with the avowed aim of promoting religious tolerance.

axiom

noun /'æksɪəm/

a rule or principle that most people believe to be true

A religious axiom is rarely questioned by believers.

azimuth

noun /'æzɪməθ/

the direction of a celestial object from the observer

The astronomer calculated the azimuth of various stars.

Baalism

/ˈbɑːlɪzəm/

the worship of false gods or idols
The Hebrews considered Baalism as a false practice.

badinage

noun /ˈbædɪnɑːʒ/

humorous or witty conversation
We were all amused by the light-hearted badinage that they exchanged.

baguette

noun /bæˈɡet/

a long, narrow French loaf of bread
She enjoyed a baguette with Brie for breakfast.

balmoral

noun /bælˈmɒrəl/

a round brimless hat with a cockade or ribbons attached, worn by certain Scottish regiments
He is a specialist in the production of highland hats such as the glengarry and balmoral.

balsa

noun /ˈbɒlsə, ˈbɔːlsə/

a soft and lightweight wood
Balsa is a good substitute for cork.

balsam

noun /ˈbɔːlsəm/

an aromatic resinous substance, such as balm, exuded by various trees
The chemist used balsam to make the medicine.

banal

adjective /bəˈnɑːl/

not original or interesting
His banal remarks were inappropriate for the happy occasion.

bankruptcy

noun /ˈbæŋkrʌptsi/

the state of being legally declared as unable to pay one's debts
The lack of sales forced the company to declare bankruptcy.

bardolatry

noun /bɑːˈdɒlətri/

excessive admiration of Shakespeare
Frequent quoting of Shakespeare could be a symptom of bardolatry.

barite

noun /ˈbeəriːt/

a yellow, white or colourless crystalline mineral
Barite is used in the manufacture of paints.

barium

noun /ˈbeəriəm/

a soft silvery metallic element
Barium is used in making dyes and bleaches.

barnacle

noun /ˈbɑːnəl/

common sea creatures which encrust rocks and the piles of piers
I cut my foot on a barnacle.

barometer

noun /bəˈrɒmɪtə[r]/

an instrument used to forecast the weather by measuring atmospheric pressure
Noticing the change in the barometer reading, the weatherman quickly updated his forecast.

barque

noun /bɑːk/

a sailing ship, typically with three masts
The barque sailed smoothly over the ocean.

baryon

noun /ˈbæriɒn/

any elementary particle which can be transformed into a nucleon and lighter particles
The value and content of a baryon determines its classification.

Basque

adjective /bæsk/

relating to the cultural group of people living in the area around the border of France and Spain
The Basque people are one of the most culturally distinct groups in Europe.

B

12 to 14
age group

bathos

noun /'beɪθɒs/
an effect of anticlimax created by an unintentional lapse in mood from the sublime to the trivial or ridiculous
His epic poem has passages of almost embarrassing bathos.

batter

noun /'bætə[r]/
a mixture of eggs, milk, and flour used in cooking
The pancake batter was lumpy.

bayou

noun /'baɪjuː/
a marshy outlet of a lake or river in the southern United States.
Alligators are common in the bayou.

bedaub

verb /bɪ'dɔːb/
to smear or daub with a sticky substance
The toddler loves to bedaub herself with her mother's lipstick.

Bedouin

proper noun /'beduɪn/
a nomadic Arab of the desert
After travelling for days, the Bedouin reached an oasis.

bedraggled

adjective /bɪ'dræɡəld/
looking limp, untidy, or dirty, as with rain or mud
Our bedraggled hair and clothes were the only evidence of the sudden rainstorm that had passed.

beguine

noun /bɪ'giːn/
a dance in bolero rhythm that originated in Martinique
The teacher asked the students to prepare a beguine for the function.

beleaguer

verb /bɪ'liːgə/
to lay siege to
Seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them.

belfry

noun /'belfri/
the part of a tower or steeple in which bells are hung
230 years of ringing had taken its toll on the belfry and bells.

bellows

plural noun /'beləʊz/
a device with an air bag that emits a stream of air when squeezed together with two handles, used for blowing air into a fire
Her sole job was to pump the bellows on the furnace to keep it hot.

benevolent

adjective /bɪ'nevələnt/
doing good or giving aid to others
After the flood, benevolent citizens made contributions to the relief effort.

benign

adjective /bɪ'naɪn/
gentle and kind
He is well-liked because of his benign manner.

benison

noun /'benɪzən, 'benɪsən/
blessing, benediction
The candidate sought the benison of the popular priest in the hope of gaining both spiritual and political support.

bereavement

noun /bɪ'riːvmənt/
the condition of having been deprived of something or someone valued, especially through death
The family suffered a sad bereavement.

beret

noun /'beret, 'beri/
a round flattish cap of felt or cloth
She wore a red beret to the party.

berserk

adjective /bə'zɜ:k, bə'sɜ:k/
uncontrollably wild
He went berserk and attacked me.

besmirch

verb /bɪ'smɜ:tʃ/
to damage someone's reputation
The papers had deliberately set out to besmirch his reputation.

besought

past tense verb /bɪ'sɔ:t/
to ask someone urgently and fervently to do or give something
We besought the authorities to come to our assistance.

bewilderment

noun /bɪ'wɪldəmənt/
a feeling of being perplexed and confused
His announcement made me stare at him in bewilderment.

biannual

adjective /baɪ'ænjuəl/
occurring twice a year
The carnival is a biannual event in their school.

bibliotheca

noun /ˌbɪblɪəʊ'ti:kə/
a library or collection of books
The director of the bibliotheca worked hard to ensure the books and shelves were in optimal condition.

bicephalous

adjective /baɪ'sefələs/
having two heads
The bicephalous eagle was displayed in the Museum of Natural History.

bilateral

adjective /baɪ'lætərəl/
involving two parties, especially countries
India and Pakistan signed a bilateral agreement to increase trade.

billet

noun /'bɪlɪt/
a place, especially a civilian's house, where soldiers are lodged temporarily
The soldier had trouble finding a billet for the night.

billionaire

noun /ˌbɪljə'neə[r]/
a person possessing assets worth at least a billion dollars or rupees
Roman Abramovich was a billionaire at the age of 32.

biodiversity

noun /ˌbaɪəʊdaɪ'vɜ:sɪti/
the variety of plant and animal life in the world
The biodiversity of the rainforest is truly vast.

biopharming

noun /ˌbaɪəʊfɑ:mɪŋ/
the process of genetically modifying plants and animals so that they produce substances which may be used as pharmaceuticals
Biopharming, which has been around for a number of years, continues to be a controversial subject.

biophysicist

noun /ˌbaɪəʊ'fɪzɪsɪst/
a physicist who applies the methods of physics to biology
The biophysicist went into great detail when explaining the process used in his experiment.

biosphere

noun /ˌbaɪəʊsfɪə/
the regions of the surface and atmosphere of the earth occupied by living organisms
Human activities have dramatically altered the Earth's biosphere.

B

12 to 14
age group

blare

verb /'bleə[r]/

to make or cause to make a loud, harsh sound
It is not polite to blare music at all hours of the night.

blasphemous

adjective /'blæsfəməs/

insulting or showing a lack of respect for God or religion
Many Christians found the Da Vinci Code to be a blasphemous piece of literature.

blastula

noun /'blæstjələ/

an early stage of embryonic development
After the egg is fertilized it becomes a blastula, which is free swimming.

blithe

adjective /blaɪð/

showing a casual and cheerful indifference considered to be callous or improper
He drove with a blithe disregard for traffic rules.

blockade

noun /blɒ'keɪd/

the action of surrounding or closing a place
The police set up a blockade on the highway.

blotch

noun /'blɒtʃ/

an irregular mark on skin or material
The mosquito bite left a red blotch on her face.

bloviate

verb /'bləʊvɪ,eɪ/

to speak or write verbosely in an inflated manner
It irritates him to see talk show pundits attempting to bloviate about world affairs.

bludgeon

noun /'blʌdʒən/

a thick stick with a heavy end, used as a weapon
He was struck on the head with a bludgeon.

bluff

noun /'blʌf/

deliberate deception intended to create the impression of a stronger position than one actually has
His threat to resign if his pay wasn't increased was just a bluff.

boatswain

noun /'bəʊsən/

a ship's officer in charge of equipment and the crew
The boatswain was furious because the hatch had been left open by the crew.

bohrium

noun /'bɔ:riəm/

the chemical element of atomic number 107
Bohrium is a very unstable element made by high-energy atomic collisions.

boletus

noun /bə'li:təs/

a toadstool with pores rather than gills on the underside of the cap, typically having a thick stem
We found an edible boletus in the woods and brought it back with us.

bombardier

noun /'bɒmbə'dɪə/

a rank of non-commissioned officer in certain artillery regiments, equivalent to corporal
The soldier is a bombardier in the artillery regiment.

bonito

noun /bə'ni:təʊ/

any of various small tuna-like marine food fish

bonsai

noun /'bɒnsaɪ/

the art of growing ornamental, artificially dwarfed varieties of trees and shrubs in pots
Careful pruning and watering is needed for indoor bonsai plants.

borborygmus

noun /ˌbɔːbəˈrɪgməs/

a rumbling or gurgling noise made by the movement of fluid and gas in the intestines

Borborygmus is a normal part of digestion.

bougainvillea

noun /ˌbuːɡənˈvɪlə/

a tropical climbing plant with brightly coloured modified leaves surrounding the flowers

She grew bougainvillea in her garden.

bountiful

adjective /ˈbaʊntɪfʊl/

large in quantity

The farm provides its owners with a bountiful supply of fresh vegetables.

boutique

noun /buːˈtiːk/

a small shop or store that sells fashionable clothes

She bought a dress from the new boutique.

brace

noun /ˈbreɪs/

a device fitted to something, in particular a weak or injured part of the body, to give support

After the accident, doctors advised her to wear a neck brace for two weeks.

brackish

adjective /ˈbrækɪʃ/

referring to water with a somewhat salty, unpleasant taste

Brackish water commonly occurs in lagoons and marshes.

bradycardia

noun /ˌbrædɪˈkɑːdiə/

abnormally slow heart action

Bradycardia may cause cardiac arrest in some patients.

Braille

proper noun /breɪl/

a written language for the blind using raised dots

He is very good at reading Braille.

brethren

plural noun /ˈbreðr[ɪ]n/

fellow Christians or members of a male religious order

The brethren of the religious order follow a vow of silence.

broccoli

noun /ˈbrɒkəli/

a vegetable with a thick green or purple flower head

She made a stew of broccoli and carrots.

bronchitis

noun /brɒŋˈkaɪtɪs/

an illness of the tubes leading to the lungs that causes a very bad cough

Chronic bronchitis is often a result of smoking.

bruit

verb /ˈbruːt/

to spread a report or rumour widely

Our personal business is not something to bruit about.

brunette

noun /bruːˈnet/

a woman or girl with dark brown hair

Jane dyes her hair red, but she is actually a brunette.

buckle

noun /ˈbʌkəl/

a metal or plastic piece used for joining the ends of a belt or straps

The colour of the silver buckle faded with time.

buckteeth

noun /ˈbʌktiːθ/

top teeth that stick forward

The dentist advised braces for his buckteeth.

B

12 to 14
age group

budge

verb /'bʌdʒ/

to move slightly

She pushed at the door, but it wouldn't budge.

buffer

noun /'bʌfə[r]/

a thing that protects against difficulties

Support from family acted as a buffer against stress.

buffoonery

noun /bə'fu:nəri/

acting like a clown or buffoon

John was a well loved comedian, famous for his buffoonery.

bulimia

noun /bjʊ'li:mɪə, bʊ'li:mɪə/

an emotional disorder characterized by a distorted body image and an obsessive desire to lose weight
Bulimia can result in serious health problems.

bullion

noun /'bʊljən/

gold or silver in bulk before coining, or valued by weight

The gold bullion is in the form of bars.

bulwark

noun /'bʊlwək/

a defensive wall

A bulwark protects the harbor from waves.

bungee

noun /'bʌndʒi/

a stretchy, elasticated rope

The bungee was securely tied to his feet before he jumped off the bridge.

buoy

noun /bɔɪ/

a floating object anchored to mark a channel or underwater rocks

The buoy will warn ships away from the dangerous rocks.

burly

adjective /'bɜ:li/

large and strong

I saw a burly figure approaching me in the dark alley.

burnished

adjective /'bɜ:niʃt/

made shiny or smooth by friction

Her fresh dyed hair was shining like burnished copper.

burro

noun /'bʊərəʊ/

a small donkey used as a pack animal

bursary

noun /'bɜ:səri/

a scholarship

Dan was awarded a bursary to study at the prestigious university.

buttress

noun /'bʌtrɪs/

a structure of stone or brick built against a wall to strengthen or support it

A stone buttress supported the crumbling wall.

caballero

noun /ˌkæbəˈljɛərəʊ/
a Spanish gentleman
He wore a sword, the symbol of his status as a gentleman, or caballero.

cache

noun /kæʃ/
a collection of items of the same type stored in a hidden or inaccessible place
A cache of food items was found hidden in the cave.

caffeine

noun /ˈkæfiːn/
a substance in coffee and tea that stimulates the central nervous system
The caffeine in the coffee kept me awake all night.

cahoots

plural noun /kəˈhuːts/
the act of conspiring together secretly
He should know better than to be in cahoots with someone as shady as Tim.

calamity

noun /kəˈlæmɪti/
an event causing great and often sudden damage or distress
The recent earthquake was the worst calamity in the country's history.

calculus

noun /ˈkælkjʊləs/
a type of mathematics that deals with variable quantities
A-level mathematics consists primarily of calculus.

caliper

noun /ˈkælɪpə/
an instrument for measuring external or internal dimensions
The caliper is adjustable and can be reset to measure different dimensions.

callow

adjective /ˈkæləʊ/
inexperienced and immature
Like so many callow men, he wanted to experience life before settling down.

calorimetry

noun /ˌkæləˈrɪmɪtri/
measurement of the amount of heat released or absorbed in a chemical reaction, change of state, or formation of a solution
Encouraged by the textile industry, a great amount of work using differential scanning calorimetry has been undertaken.

calypso

noun /kəˈlɪpsəʊ/
a Caribbean song or type of music about a subject of current interest
They danced to the calypso beat.

cambistry

noun /ˈkæmbɪstri/
the business of foreign exchange
The constant currency fluctuations due to the erratic law and order situation make cambistry a very challenging business.

camphor

noun /ˈkæmfə[r]/
a white substance with an aromatic smell and bitter taste
I put satchels of camphor in my wardrobe to keep insects away.

canasta

noun /kəˈnæstə/
a card game played with two packs of cards in which players try to collect sets of cards
He beat all his friends at canasta.

canine

adjective /ˈkeɪnaɪn/
relating to dogs
Security officials at the airport depend on their canine companions to sniff out anything suspicious.

C

12 to 14
age group

cannelloni

plural noun /ˌkænəˈləʊni/

large tubes of pasta filled with meat or cheese
Boil the cannelloni in salty water.

canny

adjective /ˈkæni/

having or showing shrewdness and good judgement, especially in money or business matters
Canny investors will switch banks if they think they are getting a raw deal.

canoe

noun /kəˈnuː/

a narrow lightweight boat
The river was so violent that the canoe flipped upside down.

cantaloupe

noun /ˈkæntəluːp/

a kind of melon
A cantaloupe is low in calories and is a good source of vitamin C.

cantankerous

adjective /kænˈtæŋkərəs/

always complaining
He does not have many friends because of his cantankerous nature.

capacious

adjective /kəˈpeɪʃəs/

having a lot of space inside
Her capacious handbag was stuffed with makeup.

capacitance

noun /kəˈpæsɪtəns/

the ability of a system to store an electrical charge
Capacitance is measured in a unit called farad.

capacitor

noun /kəˈpæsɪtə/

a device used to store an electric charge, consisting of one or more pairs of conductors separated by an insulator
A capacitor is used in power supplies such as amplifiers.

capitulate

verb /kəˈpɪtjuleɪt/

to cease to resist an opponent or an unwelcome demand
I decided to capitulate to his demand for the iPhone.

cappuccino

noun /ˌkæpuˈtʃiːnəʊ/

coffee made with milk that has been frothed up with pressurised steam
They enjoyed a cappuccino after work.

capybara

noun /ˌkæprɪˈbɑːrə/

a South American mammal that lives in groups near water and is the largest living rodent

carbide

noun /ˈkɑːbaɪd/

a binary compound of carbon with an element of lower or comparable electronegativity
They experimented using tungsten carbide.

carcass

noun /ˈkɑːkəs/

the dead body of an animal
Vultures fed on the carcass of the dead goat.

carcinogenic

adjective /ˌkɑːsɪnəˈdʒenɪk/

likely to cause cancer
The carbon monoxide percentage in the air is reaching a carcinogenic level.

cardamom

noun /ˈkɑːdəməm/

the aromatic seeds of a plant of the ginger family, used as a spice and also medicinally
She used cardamom in the chicken curry.

cardiogram

noun /ˈkɑːdiəʊgræm/

a record of muscle activity within the heart made by a cardiograph
A cardiogram is used to diagnose heart disorders.

cardiovascular

adjective /ˌkɑːdiəʊˈvæskjələ/
relating to the heart and blood vessels
A healthy diet is necessary to keep the cardiovascular system functioning normally.

caribou

noun /ˈkæriˌbuː/
a North American term for reindeer

carrel

noun /ˈkærəl/
a small cubicle with a desk for the use of a reader or student in a library
Each class had a carrel where important books were reserved for the students' use.

carton

noun /ˈkɑːtən/
a cardboard box for holding goods
He off-loaded the carton from the truck.

cascade

noun /kæˈskeɪd/
something that falls like a waterfall
A cascade of blonde hair surrounded her radiant face.

cashmere

noun /ˈkæʃmɪə[r], kæʃˈmɪə[r]/
a fine, soft wool
Sweaters made with cashmere are very luxurious.

categorical

adjective /kætrɪˈɡɔːrɪkəl/
unambiguously explicit and direct
He has issued a categorical denial of his involvement in the plan.

cathode

noun /ˈkæθəʊd/
a negative electrode in a battery
The cathode attracts cations which are positively charged particles.

Caucasian

adjective /kəˈkeɪʒən, kəˈkeɪzɪən/
white-skinned people of European origin
Witnesses described the thief as a Caucasian male with blue eyes and blonde hair.

caviar

noun /ˈkæviɑː[r]/
the eggs of a type of fish that are eaten as a very special kind of food
Caviar is considered to be a delicacy and is very expensive.

cavil

verb /ˈkævəl/
to make petty or unnecessary objections
Students will always cavil at the school uniform regulations.

cavort

verb /kəˈvɔːt/
to jump or dance around excitedly
It was a treat to watch the West Indians cavort in the field after winning the T-20 World Cup.

cedar

noun /ˈsiːdə[r]/
a tall coniferous tree with hard, sweet-smelling wood
The yacht is built of cedar.

cedilla

noun /sɪˈdɪlə/
a mark placed under the letter c, especially in French, to show that it is pronounced like an s rather than a k
In English, the cedilla is mostly used in words that come from French.

celandine

noun /ˈseləndaɪn/
a common plant of the buttercup family which produces yellow flowers in the early spring
Celandine grows in rich, damp soil.

C

12 to 14
age group

cello

noun /ˈtʃələʊ/

a bass instrument of the violin family, held upright on the floor between the legs of the seated player
She has played the cello for many years.

Celtic

noun /ˈkeltɪk/

belonging to a race of people originating in Western Europe
His red hair indicated that he was of Celtic origin.

cephalopod

noun /ˈsefələʊpɒd, ˈkefələʊpɒd/

any of a group of marine molluscs with a well developed head and eyes and sucker-bearing tentacles
The colossal squid is the largest extant cephalopod.

cerebellum

noun /ˌserəˈbeləm/

the part of the brain at the back of the head that controls the movement of the muscles
The cerebellum is one of the main parts of the brain.

Ceres

proper noun /ˈsɪəriːz/

a dwarf planet orbiting in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter
Ceres was the first object to be discovered in the asteroid belt.

cerise

noun /seˈriːs, seˈriːz/

a light clear red colour
The cerise scarf stood out against her off-white dress.

cerulean

adjective /sɪˈruːliən/

deep blue in colour like a clear sky
The cerulean water of the lake sparkled in the sunshine.

chaetiferous

adjective /kiːˈtɪfərəs/

having bristles
Boars are chaetiferous animals.

chagrin

noun /ʃəˈɡrɪn, ˈʃæɡrɪn/

annoyance or distress at having failed or been humiliated
To her chagrin, she failed the test again.

chandelier

noun /ʃændəˈlɪə[r]/

a light fitting or candle holder with many branches
The chandelier in their lounge is very beautiful.

chanteuse

noun /ʃɑːnˈtɜːz/

a female singer of popular songs
The audience appreciated the newly hired chanteuse.

chapel

noun /ˈtʃæpl/

a small room or building used for Christian worship
She always went to the chapel on Sundays.

chapped

adjective /ˈtʃæpt/

describing skin that has been cracked and made sore by wind or cold
She put vaseline on her chapped lips.

characteristically

adverb /ˌkærəktəˈrɪstɪkəli/

typical of somebody's character
Characteristically, she paid for everyone.

charismatic

adjective /ˌkærɪzˈmætɪk/

having charm
He is an immensely charismatic man and usually gets his way.

charter

noun /'tʃɑ:tə/

a written grant by the sovereign or legislative power of a country, by which a group is created or its rights and privileges defined
The university is operating under a charter from the government.

chateau

noun /'ʃætəʊ/

a large French country house or castle
We stayed at a chateau by the lake.

chauvinism

noun /'ʃəʊvɪnɪzəm/

too much support or enthusiasm for one's own gender, group, or kind
His male chauvinism made many people dislike him.

chevron

noun /'ʃevrən/

a V-shaped line or stripe, especially one on the sleeve of a uniform indicating rank
The private had one chevron on the sleeve of his uniform.

chic

adverb /ʃi:k/

elegant and fashionable
She always manages to look extremely chic.

chieftain

noun /'tʃi:ftən/

the leader of a people or clan
The chieftain was respected by the whole clan.

chipotle

noun /tʃɪ'pəʊtleɪ/

a smoked hot chilli pepper used in Mexican cooking
Chipotle was not available so she replaced it with smoked paprika and cayenne pepper.

chisel

noun /'tʃɪzl/

a hand tool with a long blade, used to cut or shape wood, stone, or metal
The artisan used his chisel to chip away at the marble.

chloroform

noun /'klɔ:rəfɔ:m/

a colourless, volatile, sweet-smelling liquid used as a solvent and formerly as a general anaesthetic
Chloroform was once widely used in human surgery.

choler

noun /'kɒlə/

anger or irascibility
I chose to remain tight-lipped to avoid my mother's choler.

chromium

noun /'krəʊmiəm/

a hard grey metal that shines brightly when polished
Coloured plastic bags contain harmful toxic metals like chromium and copper.

chromosome

noun /'krəʊməsəʊm/

a thread-like structure of nucleic acids and protein found in the nucleus of most living cells, carrying genetic information in the form of genes
Human females do not have a Y chromosome.

chuckle

noun /'tʃʌkəl/

a quiet laugh
She gave a chuckle of delight.

chyme

noun /kaɪm/

the pulpy acidic fluid which passes from the stomach to the small intestine
The rhythmic muscular action of the stomach wall moves the chyme into the first section of the small intestine.

C

12 to 14
age group**cilantro****noun** /sɪ'læntroʊ/

the leaves of the coriander plant, used in cooking as a herb

The cilantro added a beautiful aroma to the pasta.

cinnamon**noun** /ˈsɪnəməŋ/

a spice made from the bark of a tree

I used a lot of cinnamon when I made that apple pie.

cipher**noun** /ˈsaɪfəl/

a secret or disguised way of writing

The officer sent secret messages in a cipher in case they fell into enemy hands.

circumscribe**verb** /ˌsɜːkəmˈskraɪb, ˈsɜːkəmˌskraɪb/

to mark or set the bounds of

They will circumscribe the garden with a fence.

classification**noun** /ˌklæsɪfɪˈkeɪʃən/

the action or process of classifying something

Science uses classification to systematically group similar organisms.

clench**verb** /ˈklentʃ/

to close the fingers or hands into a tight ball, especially as a manifestation of extreme anger

Whenever he was upset, he would clench his fists.

climatology**noun** /klaɪməˈtɒlədʒi/

the scientific study of climate

The newsman was trained in climatology.

clique**noun** /kliːk/

an exclusive group of people

There is a clique of older members who do not approve of the younger ones.

clout**noun** /klaʊt/

influence or power, especially in politics or business

The companies used their clout to influence policy.

coagulant**noun** /kəʊˈæɡjələnt/

a substance that causes a fluid to change to a solid or semi-solid state

The doctors injected a coagulant to stop the bleeding.

cockerel**noun** /ˈkɒkərəl/

a young male chicken

coda**noun** /ˈkəʊdə/

the concluding passage of a piece of music, typically forming an addition to the basic structure

The symphony ended with a brilliant coda that summed up the haunting effect of the entire piece.

coerce**verb** /kəʊˈɜːs/

to persuade using force or threats

They tried to coerce him into robbing his friend.

cognitive**adjective** /ˈkɒɡnɪtɪv/

relating to the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding

His cognitive powers became impaired and he could not remember details.

collateral**adjective** /kəˈlætərəl/

connected but less important

Even targeted bombings result in some form of collateral damage.

collegiate**adjective** /kəˈliːdʒiət/

belonging or relating to a college or its students

He is a collegiate athlete.

colliery**noun** /'kɒliəri/

a coal mine

*He has worked at the colliery almost all his life.***colugo****noun** /kə'luːɡəʊ/

a nocturnal tree-dwelling Southeast Asian mammal resembling a lemur, with a membrane between its limbs for gliding from tree to tree

combative**adjective** /'kɒmbətɪv/

ready or eager to fight or argue

*His combative mood led him to pick fights with everyone he met.***comely****adjective** /'kʌmli/

pleasing in appearance

*The audition was filled with comely young men and women looking to be the next face of the fashion industry.***commandant****noun** /'kɒməndənt, ˌkɒmən'dænt/

an officer in charge of a particular force or institution

*The commandant of our unit is very strict and disciplined.***commendable****adjective** /kə'mendəbəl/

deserving praise

*Your test score is commendable.***commensal****adjective** /kə'mensəl/

of two different species living in close association, such that one species benefits without harming or benefiting the other

*Cattle egrets benefit from their commensal relationship with cattle.***commercialism****noun** /kə'mɜːʃəlɪzəm/

an emphasis on the maximizing of profit

*The shift towards capitalism is accompanied by an increase in commercialism.***commissioner****noun** /kə'mɪʃənə[r]/

the head of a particular department in a country

*The police commissioner suspended the incompetent constables.***commodious****adjective** /kə'məʊdiəs/

roomy and comfortable

*She fell asleep in the commodious armchair.***commotion****noun** /kə'məʊʃən/

a state of confused and noisy disturbance

*The chemistry experiment exploded resulting in a huge commotion at the school.***comparatively****adverb** /kəm'pærətɪvli/

to a moderate degree as compared to something else

*Unemployment is comparatively low now that the economy is booming.***compartmentalize****verb** /ˌkɒmpɑːt'mentəlaɪz/

to divide into sections or categories

*Strategies that compartmentalize individuals into arbitrary categories are not likely to be effective.***complacent****adjective** /kəm'pleɪsnt/

showing smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements

Shahid lost his job because of his complacent attitude.

C

12 to 14
age group**complement****verb** /'kɒmplɪment/

to contribute extra features to someone or something in such a way as to improve or emphasize their qualities

She wore a scarf to complement her outfit.

component**noun** /kəm'pəʊnənt/

one of the several parts of which something is made

The radiator is a very important component in a car.

composure**noun** /kəm'pəʊʒə[r]/

mental calmness

She showed great composure during the emergency.

compulsion**noun** /kəm'pʌlʃn/

obligation

There is no compulsion for you to attend the meeting.

concede**verb** /kən'si:d/

to admit

He was forced to concede that there might be difficulties.

conceivable**adjective** /kən'si:vəbəl/

capable of being imagined or grasped mentally

It is conceivable that difficulties will arise due to your actions.

concentric**adjective** /kən'sentrik/

having a common centre

Planets orbit the sun in concentric circles.

conception**noun** /kən'sepʃn/

the origin or beginning of something

The country has been confronted with problems since its conception.

concerto**noun** /kən'tʃeətəʊ/

a musical composition for an orchestra and one or more solo instruments

Brahm's Concerto for Violin is one of my favourites.

concierge**noun** /'kɒnsi'eɪʒ, ˌkɒnsi'eɪʒ/

a resident caretaker of a block of flats or small hotel

The concierge told the noisy tenants on the fifth floor not to play loud music.

conciliatory**adjective** /kən'sɪliətəri/

making calmer and less angry

The president's speech was a conciliatory gesture towards businessmen.

concrete**adjective** /'kɒŋkri:t/

relating to a particular instance or object

We have concrete evidence that he is the culprit.

concurrence**noun** /kən'kʌrəns/

agreement in opinion

The doctor nodded in concurrence with his assistant's diagnosis.

condolence**noun** /kən'dəʊləns/

an expression of sympathy, especially on the occasion of the death of a person's relative or close friend

I sent a letter of condolence on the demise of her grandfather.

condor**noun** /'kɒndɔː[r]/

a large bird of the vulture family that lives mainly in South America

confetti

noun /kən'feti/

small pieces of coloured paper traditionally thrown at weddings

The bride and groom were showered with confetti as they left the church.

congressional

adjective /kən'ɡreʃənəl/

belonging to or relating to a national legislative body, especially that of the US

The document surfaced in a congressional hearing last year.

connoisseur

noun /kɒnɪ'sɜː[r], kɒnə'sɜː[r]/

an expert judge in matters of taste

He is a connoisseur of antiques.

conscription

noun /kən'skrɪpʃən/

compulsory military service

In the two world wars, the issue of conscription almost tore the country apart.

consecrate

verb /'kɒnsɪkreɪt/

to declare or set apart as sacred

They organised a ceremony to consecrate the new mosque.

consolidate

verb /kən'sɒlɪdeɪt/

to form or cause to form into a solid mass or whole

If we consolidate our businesses, our operations will be more efficient.

constellation

noun /ˌkɒnstə'leɪʃən/

a group of stars forming a recognizable pattern

The constellation Orion is easy to find.

constituency

noun /kən'stɪtjuənsi/

a district that elects its own representative to parliament

He owns a house in his Oxford constituency.

consultancy

noun /kən'sʌltənsi/

a business or agency offering expert or professional advice in a field

He works for a financial consultancy, advising people how to invest their money.

contagious

adjective /kən'teɪdʒəs/

transmissible by direct or indirect contact

Chicken pox is a contagious illness.

contaminate

verb /kən'tæmɪneɪt/

to make something impure by exposure to a polluting substance

The leak in the sewage system might contaminate the main water supply.

contemplate

verb /'kɒntəmpleɪt/

to think about as possible

The idea of war is too awful to contemplate.

continuation

noun /kəntɪnju'eɪʃən/

the action of carrying something on over time or the state of being carried on

The continuation of discussions shows that progress is being made.

continuous

adjective /kən'tɪnjuəs/

without interruption

The child's continuous questioning about the movie was annoying the audience.

contour

noun /'kɒntʊə[r]/

an outline representing or bounding the shape or form of something

The contour of the lake was visible from the plane.

contributory

adjective /kən'trɪbjʊtəri/

playing a part in bringing something about

A poor diet is a contributory factor to bad health.

C

12 to 14
age group**contrive****verb** /kən'traɪv/

to create or bring about an object or a situation by deliberate use of skill and artifice
Politicians are always trying to contrive situations which increase their popularity.

controversial**adjective** /ˌkɒntrə'vɜːʃl/

causing or likely to cause public debate
The European Union's constitution is a controversial document, splitting opinion down the middle.

convene**verb** /kən'viːn/

to come together formally
The committee will convene at nine o'clock tomorrow morning.

convenience**noun** /kən'viːniəns/

a useful device or situation
Supermarkets are a great convenience to most people.

conversationalist**noun** /ˌkɒnvə'seɪʃənəlɪst/

a person who is good at or fond of engaging in conversation
He is a terrific conversationalist and after-dinner speaker.

converse**verb** /kən'vɜːs/

to talk with
The ability to converse easily with strangers comes naturally to some people.

convincing**adjective** /kən'vɪnsɪŋ/

capable of causing someone to believe that something is true or real
It was a convincing story, and everyone believed her.

convocation**noun** /ˌkɒnvə'keɪʃən/

a large formal assembly of people
She was awarded a degree at the university's convocation.

convoy**noun** /'kɒnvɔɪ/

a group of ships or vehicles travelling together
A convoy of trucks delivered aid to the refugees.

copious**adjective** /'kəʊpiəs/

abundant
He had a copious supply of tools in his workshop.

cordial**adjective** /'kɔːdiəl/

pleasant, friendly
He greeted me with a cordial handshake.

corduroy**noun** /'kɔːdərɔɪ/

a thick cotton fabric with velvety ribs
The trousers are made of corduroy.

coriander**noun** /ˌkɒrɪ'ændə/

an aromatic Mediterranean plant of the parsley family
I garnished the vegetables with green coriander.

corkscrew**noun** /'kɔːkskruː/

a device for drawing corks from bottles
She opened the bottle of champagne with a corkscrew.

cornea**noun** /'kɔːniə/

the transparent layer forming the outer part of the eye
She wore a patch over her eye to protect her injured cornea.

corniche

noun /'kɔːnɪʃ, kɔː'niːʃ/
a road cut into the edge of a cliff, especially one running along a coast
The corniche between Nice and Monte Carlo has beautiful landscapes.

corpse

noun /kɔːps/
a dead body
His corpse was taken to the city morgue.

corrode

verb /kə'reɪd/
to destroy something slowly especially by chemical action
The bonnet of his car has started to corrode.

corvette

noun /kɔː'vet/
a small warship designed for convoy escort duty
The ship was escorted by a navy corvette.

cosmonaut

noun /'kɒzməʊnɔːt/
a Russian astronaut
Yuri Gagarin is the most famous cosmonaut.

Cossack

noun /'kɒsæk/
a member of a people of Ukraine and southern Russia, noted for their horsemanship and military skill
It is not a good idea to get into a fight with a Cossack.

cosset

verb /'kɒsɪt/
to care for and protect in an overindulgent way
It is common for parents to cosset an only child.

coterie

noun /'kəʊtəri/
a small group of people with shared interests or tastes, especially one that is exclusive of other people
She was always seen with a coterie of friends.

councillor

noun /'kaʊnsələ[r]/
a member of a council
The councillor was elected on the basis of his past experience.

countenance

noun /'kaʊntənəns/
a person's face or facial expression
Be friendly and have a smiling countenance.

couplet

noun /'kʌplət/
a pair of successive rhyming lines of verse
The poet recited a couplet from his latest poem.

courteous

adjective /'kɜːtiəs/
polite and considerate
I received a charmingly courteous reply to my invitation.

covert

adjective /'kəʊvɜːt, 'kʌvət/
secret or hidden
He stole a covert glance at her across the table.

cozen

verb /'kʌzən/
to trick or deceive
His partner was trying to cozen him out of his wealth.

cranium

noun /'kreɪniəm/
the bone structure that forms the head and encloses the brain
The cranium, which protects the brain, is the hardest part of the body.

creosote

noun /'kriːəsəʊt/
a thick brown liquid that is made from coal tar
Creosote used to be used as a wood preservative for fences and gates.

C

12 to 14
age group

crevasse

noun /kriˈvæs/
a deep open crack especially in ice
If you fall into the crevasse, it will be impossible to climb out again.

crimson

adjective /ˈkrɪmzən/
a deep red colour
She was wearing a crimson dress.

cringle

noun /ˈkrɪŋɡəl/
a ring of rope containing a thimble, for another rope to pass through
The cringle encloses a metal ring for reinforcement and to reduce wear.

croissant

noun /ˈkrwɑːsɑ̃, ˈkrwəsɑ̃/
a French crescent-shaped roll made of sweet flaky yeast dough
She ate a croissant for breakfast.

croon

verb /kruːn/
to hum or sing in a soft, low voice
A mother will croon to her child to put him to sleep.

cubicle

noun /ˈkjuːbɪkl/
a small division of a larger room which makes a separate compartment
She studies in a cubicle at the school library.

culvert

noun /ˈkʌlvɜrt/
a tunnel carrying a stream or open drain under a road or railway
The water of the canal passes through a culvert beneath the road.

cumulative

adjective /ˈkjuːmjʊlətɪv/
increasing or increased in quantity, degree, or force by successive additions
The cumulative effects of global warming could be catastrophic.

curator

noun /kjuəˈreɪtə[r]/
an official in charge of a museum or art gallery
The new curator of the museum was asked to plan interesting events.

curio

noun /ˈkjuəriəʊ/
a rare, unusual, or intriguing object
I bought a curio from a shop full of strange objects.

cyclotron

noun /ˈsaɪklətrɒn/
a machine that, using electrical and magnetic fields, makes atoms or electrons move more quickly
The design of a cyclotron varies according to the specifications of the purchaser.

cynical

adjective /ˈsɪnɪkl/
doubtful or distrustful of human motives
The cynical old man did not believe anything he read in the paper.

cypress

noun /ˈsaɪprəs/
an evergreen, coniferous tree with small rounded woody cones and flattened shoots
Cypress trees are abundant in the Louisiana swamps.

cytosol

noun /ˈsaɪtəʊ, sɒl/
the solution of proteins and metabolites inside a biological cell, in which the organelles are suspended
Cytosol is separated into compartments by membranes.

dandruff

noun /'dændrʌf/

small pieces of dead skin in the hair that look like white flakes

He uses a special shampoo for his dandruff.

debilitate

verb /dɪ'bɪlɪteɪt/

to weaken

His bout of malaria served to debilitate his already questionable health.

debris

noun /'debrɪ:/

fragments or remnants of something destroyed or broken

The tornado left a trail of debris.

decapitate

verb /dɪ'kæpɪteɪt/

to behead

They are going to decapitate him as a punishment for his crime.

deceased

noun /dɪ'siːst/

a person who has died

The body of the deceased was moved from the hospital to his home.

decennium

noun /dɪ'seniəm/

a decade

The events of the last decennium characterize a world in upheaval.

decibel

noun /'desɪbel/

a unit used to measure the intensity of a sound

The decibel is a logarithmic unit so every 10 units represents a 10 fold increase.

declamation

noun /deklə'meɪʃən/

a rhetorical or emotional speech, especially in order to protest or condemn

The politician's declamation against corruption garnered a lot of attention.

decorum

noun /dɪ'kɔːrəm/

polite behaviour

She showed remarkable decorum at the reception.

deductible

adjective /dɪ'dʌktəbəl/

able to be deducted, especially from taxable income

You should keep receipts for any deductible expenses.

defamatory

adjective /dɪ'fæmətəri/

attacking one's reputation

His defamatory remarks about the company ruined its reputation.

defiance

noun /dɪ'faɪəns/

open disobedience

He has made it a habit to act in defiance of the law.

defibrillator

noun /dɪ'fɪbrɪleɪtə[r]/

a piece of equipment used to control the movement of the heart muscles

The patient was put on the defibrillator to restore normal rhythm to his heart.

degenerative

adjective /dɪ'dʒenərətɪv/

causing gradual deterioration

A degenerative disease like arthritis will eventually make the patient bedridden.

D

12 to 14
age group

deionization

noun /diːaɪənaɪˈzeɪʃən/

the act of removing the ions or ionic constituents from a substance, especially water

Water was purified by reverse osmosis, charcoal filtration, deionization, ion exchange, and ultraviolet irradiation.

delirious

adjective /dɪˈlɪrɪəs/

in an excited state and not able to think or speak clearly, usually because of fever

The delirious patient did not recognise his children.

delusion

noun /dɪˈluːʒn/

a false impression or opinion

Her comments make it seem like she is living in a world of delusion.

demagogue

noun /ˈdeməɡɒɡ/

a political leader who tries to win support by using arguments based on emotion rather than reason

Many historians describe Hitler as a demagogue.

demography

noun /dɪˈmɒɡrəfi/

the study of statistics such as births, deaths, and income which illustrate the changing structure of human populations

The city administration uses demography to determine which course of action to follow.

demonic

adjective /dɪˈmɒnɪk/

connected with evil

The priest said the magician was using demonic powers to perform certain acts.

demote

verb /dɪˈməʊt/

to lower in rank or position

His boss threatened to demote him if he did not improve his work.

demur

verb /dɪˈmɜː/

to raise objections or show reluctance

Her husband was very strict, so she dared not demur.

dendrite

noun /ˈdendraɪt/

a short branched extension of a nerve cell, along which impulses received from other cells at synapses are transmitted to the cell body

An axon sends a signal and a dendrite receives it.

denizen

noun /ˈdenɪzn/

the inhabitant or occupant of a particular place

A large brown bear is the denizen of this cave.

denounce

verb /dɪˈnaʊns/

to publicly declare to be wrong or evil

I was shocked to hear Jane denounce her sister as a liar.

denudation

noun /dɪnjʊˈdeɪʃən/

the removal or exposure of a covering or surface layer

The denudation of forest land may result in mudslides during the monsoon.

deplorable

adjective /dɪˈplɔːrəbəl/

deserving strong condemnation

The bombing was a deplorable act of violence.

dereliction

noun /ˌderəˈlɪkʃən/

abandonment

The previous owners had rescued the building from dereliction.

deride

verb /dɪˈraɪd/

to ridicule

He will deride us for making such a silly mistake.

derogatory

adjective /dɪ'rɒɡətəri/
expressing a low opinion and lack of respect
He made derogatory statements about her behaviour.

desalination

noun /diːsæli'neɪʃən/
the process of removing salt, especially from sea water
The desalination of sea water makes it drinkable.

desiccated

adjective /'desɪkətɪd/
dried out
Amna put desiccated coconut in the dessert.

designation

noun /deziɡ'neɪʃən/
the action of choosing someone to hold an office or post
The minister's first task is the designation of a new postmaster.

despicable

adjective /dɪ'spɪkəbl/
very unpleasant or evil
His despicable behaviour was not acceptable.

despondency

noun /dɪ'spɒndənsi/
low spirits from loss of hope or courage
He was unable to conceal his despondency from his parents.

destitute

adjective /'destɪtjuː/
without money, food, and the other things necessary for life
The destitute family applied to the shelter for assistance.

detergent

noun /dɪ'tɜːdʒənt/
a washing powder or liquid that removes dirt
This laundry detergent can remove grease stains from clothes.

detonation

noun /,detə'neɪʃn/
the action of causing a bomb or explosive device to explode
The detonation of the bomb was heard all over the city.

deuce

noun /djuːs/
a playing card or dice with the number two
I played the deuce which won me the card game.

deuteron

noun /'djuːtərɒn/
a positively charged particle consisting of a proton and a neutron
The deuteron is a stable particle.

devitalize

verb /diː'vaɪtəlaɪz/
to deprive of strength and vigour
The disease will devitalize his immune system.

diabetes

noun /,daɪə'biːtiːz/
a disease in which the body's ability to produce or respond to insulin is impaired
My friend was diagnosed with diabetes.

diadem

noun /'daɪədem/
a jeweled crown or headband worn as a symbol of sovereignty
The princess looked beautiful in the diadem with brilliant gems.

diaglyph

noun /'daɪəɡlɪf/
any instance of artwork carved into the surface of a hard substance, such that the design is set back from the surface
The marble slab was decorated with an elaborate diaglyph.

D

12 to 14
age group

diarrhoea

noun /ˌdaɪəˈrɪə/

an illness in which waste matter is emptied from the bowels much more frequently than normal
She suffered from diarrhoea after eating the stale food.

dichotomy

noun /daɪˈkɒtəmi/

a division or contrast between two things that are opposed or entirely different
There is a dichotomy between science and mysticism.

digress

verb /daɪˈɡres/

to leave the main subject temporarily in speech or writing
He has a tendency to digress during his long speeches.

diktat

noun /ˈdɪktət/

an order or decree imposed by someone in power without popular consent
The people refused to accept the diktat of the ruling party and protested against it.

diphtheria

noun /dɪfˈθɪəriə, dɪpˈθɪəriə/

a serious infectious disease causing inflammation of the mucous membranes, especially in the throat
He cancelled his holiday because he was ill with diphtheria.

directorate

noun /dɪˈrektərət, daɪˈrektərət/

the board of directors of a company
The company's directorate fired the general manager.

disarray

noun /ˌdɪsəˈreɪ/

a state of disorder
The peace talks broke up in disarray.

discourteous

adjective /dɪsˈkɜːtɪəs/

rude and lacking consideration for others
It is discourteous to cut in line.

discrete

adjective /dɪˈskriːt/

separate from other things of the same type
The organisms can be divided into discrete categories.

dishevelled

adjective /dɪˈʃevəld/

having an untidy and disordered appearance
He appeared dishevelled and unshaven.

disinclination

noun /dɪsˌɪnklɪˈneɪʃn/

a lack of willingness or enthusiasm
Some people have a strong disinclination for work.

disintegration

noun /dɪsˌɪntɪˈɡreɪʃən/

the process of losing cohesion or strength
Disintegration of the family unit is an underlying cause of many social problems.

disinterested

adjective /dɪsˈɪnt[ə]rɪstɪd/

not influenced by personal concerns
They asked a disinterested observer to settle the dispute.

dismal

adjective /ˈdɪzməl/

gloomy and depressing
I do not feel like going out in this dismal weather.

dismantle

verb /dɪsˈmæntəl/

to take a machine or structure apart
I will dismantle the furniture before moving it.

dispassionate

adjective /dis'pæʃənət/

devoid of or uninfluenced by emotion or prejudice
In a dispassionate analysis, he carefully examined the concerns of both parties.

dispenser

noun /dis'pensə[r]/

a machine or container holding something that can be obtained quickly
The water dispenser was empty.

dispirited

adjective /di'spiritid/

having lost enthusiasm and hope
The dispirited refugees struggled to survive in the refugee camp.

disposition

noun /dispə'zɪʃən/

a person's inherent qualities of mind and character
She has a quiet disposition and does not like to attract attention.

dissertation

noun /ɪ'dɪsə'teɪʃn/

a long, formal essay
Her dissertation was on modern poetry.

diurnal

adjective /daɪ'z:rnəl/

of or during the day
Diurnal animals are active during the day.

divination

noun /ɪ'dɪvɪ'neɪʃn/

discovery of the unknown by supernatural means
The old man used divination to find the water source.

docile

adjective /'dəʊsaɪl/

quiet and easy to control
The trainer gave a docile horse to the new rider.

doldrums

plural noun /'dɒldrəmz/

a state or period of stagnation or depression
The stock market has been in the doldrums for three months.

doleful

adjective /'dəʊlfʊl/

expressing sorrow
Her father watched her with his doleful blue eyes as she walked away.

dollop

noun /'dɒləp/

a lump of soft food often dropped from a spoon
I added a dollop of whipped cream to the fruit trifle.

dolorous

adjective /'dɒlərəs/

feeling or expressing great sorrow or distress
It was evident from his dolorous expression that he did not pass his entry exam.

domain

noun /dəʊ'meɪn, də'meɪn/

an area of knowledge or activity
Luxury resorts are the domain of the rich and famous.

domineering

adjective /ɪ'dɒmɪ'niəriŋ/

arrogant and overbearing
Nobody enjoys the company of a domineering person.

dormitory

noun /'dɔ:mɪt[ə]ri/

a bedroom for a number of people in an institution
The dormitory was large enough to sleep twenty people.

doughty

adjective /'daʊti/

resolute and without fear
The doughty explorers reached their goal, enduring many hardships along the way.

D

12 to 14
age group

dowager

noun /ˈdaʊədʒəl/

a widow with a title or property derived from her late husband

It was an honor to meet the dowager Duchess of Norfolk.

drizzle

noun /ˈdrɪzl/

a light rain

The drizzle slowly turned into a heavy downpour.

drought

noun /draʊt/

a very long period of little or no rainfall

The drought in Ethiopia has killed thousands of people.

drudgery

noun /ˈdrʌdʒəri/

hard, menial, or dull work

Working all day on the assembly line is sheer drudgery.

dubious

adjective /ˈdjuːbiəs/

of questionable value or truth

He gave his teacher a dubious excuse for being late.

dungeon

noun /ˈdʌndʒən/

a strong underground prison cell

He was kidnapped and kept prisoner in the dungeon of the old castle.

duress

noun /djuˈres/

threats, violence or other action used to coerce someone into doing something against their will

He signed the statement under duress.

duvet

noun /ˈduːvet/

a large, thick quilt filled with feathers or other soft material

The duvet kept me warm and cosy last night.

dynamic

adjective /daɪˈnæmɪk/

characterized by constant change, activity, or progress

It is important to keep up to date in this dynamic environment.

dynamometer

noun /ˌdaɪnəˈmɒmɪtə[r]/

an instrument which measures the power output of an engine

The dynamometer showed the actual power output of the rebuilt engine.

dyslexia

noun /dɪsˈleksiə/

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

Her dyslexia made it difficult to take exams.

earnest

adjective /'ɜːnɪst/
serious or determined
I had an earnest conversation with him.

easel

noun /'iːzl/
a wooden frame on legs used for holding an artist's work in progress
His easel stands in the far corner of the studio.

echelon

noun /'eʃələn, 'eɪʃələn/
a level or rank in an organization, profession, or society
Chief executive officers represent the highest echelon of the business world.

echt

adjective /ekt/
authentic and typical
He was an echt baseball fan and didn't want to miss a single game.

eclogite

noun /'eklɒdʒaɪt, 'eklɒdʒaɪt/
a coarse-grained greenish rock
Eclogite is a rare rock formed under conditions of high pressure.

ecosphere

noun /'iːkəʊsfɪə/
the biosphere of the earth or another planet
The ecosphere is comprised of the regions where life can exist.

ectoderm

noun /'ektəʊdɜːm/
the outermost layer of cells or tissue of an embryo in early development
Part of the ectoderm will develop into the epidermis.

eczema

noun /'eksɪmə, ɪg'ziːmə/
a skin condition in which areas of skin become red, rough, and sore
I have tried a lot to cure the eczema on my legs but nothing seems to work.

efface

verb /ɪ'feɪs/
to erase a mark from a surface
Even the rain could not efface the stain from the pavement.

efflorescent

adjective /ɪ'flɒ'resnt/
having become powdery by loss of water or crystallization
Efflorescent salts sometimes appear on newly laid bricks.

effluent

noun /'efluənt/
liquid waste or sewerage discharged into a river or sea
Effluent from the river-side factories represents a considerable pollution risk.

effusive

adjective /ɪ'fjuːsɪv/
showing or expressing gratitude, pleasure, or approval in an unrestrained or heartfelt manner
The participants were showered with effusive praise.

egalitarian

adjective /ɪ'gæli'teəriən/
believing that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities
Sweden is a good model of an egalitarian society.

egocentric

adjective /ɪ'ɪ:gəʊ'sentɪk, ɪ'gəʊ'sentɪk/
thinking only of oneself, without regard for the feelings or desires of others
Egocentric people do not have many friends.

egotism**noun** /'i:gə'tɪzəm/

thinking that you are better or more important than anyone else

Society is slowly deteriorating because of excessive egotism and pride.

electioneering**noun** /ɪˌlekʃə'neəriŋ/

the action of campaigning to be elected to a political position

The party has started its electioneering early this term.

electrocute**verb** /ɪ'lektɹəkju:t/

to injure or kill by electric shock

The exposed wires could electrocute someone.

elicit**verb** /ɪ'lisɪt/

to evoke or draw out a reaction or answer from someone

The teacher was unable to elicit an answer from her student.

elixir**noun** /ɪ'liksəl/

a magical or medicinal potion

No magical elixir exists that can stop ageing.

elusive**adjective** /ɪ'lu:sɪv/

difficult to find or capture

Wild rabbits are extremely elusive animals.

elution**noun** /ɪ:'lu:ʃən, ɪ'lu:ʃən/

the process of extracting one material from another by washing with a solvent

The process of elution is referred to as washing of loaded ion-exchange resins to remove captured ions.

embalm**verb** /em'ba:m, ɪm'ba:m/

to treat a dead body with special substances to preserve it and prevent it from decay

In ancient Egypt, it was a common ritual to embalm a body before burying it.

embargo**noun** /em'ba:gəʊ/

an official ban on trade or other commercial activity with a particular country

A trade embargo has been imposed on the country.

embellish**verb** /em'belɪʃ, ɪm'belɪʃ/

to improve or beautify by adding detail or ornament

The designer used gold thread to embellish the silk shawl.

emblazon**verb** /em'bleɪzn, ɪm'bleɪzn/

to decorate something with a design, symbol, or words

The principal wanted to emblazon the gymnasium floor with the school logo.

embrocation**noun** /ɪˌembrə'keɪʃən/

a liquid used for rubbing on the body to relieve pain from sprains and strains

Embrocation should not be used on sensitive or broken skin.

emigration**noun** /ɪˌemɪ'greɪʃən/

the act of leaving one's own country to settle permanently in another

Political unrest has resulted in a spike in emigration.

eminent**adjective** /ɪ'mɪnənt/

famous and respected within a particular sphere

He is an eminent architect.

emission

noun /ɪ'mɪʃən/

the production and discharge of something, especially gas or radiation

Emission of radiation from the nuclear plant is alarming.

empathize

verb /'empəθaɪz/

to understand and share the feelings of another
I can really empathize with the people affected by the earthquake.

emphasize

verb /'emfəsaɪz/

to give special importance or value to something in speaking or writing
I can only emphasize the importance of a sympathetic attitude.

emphatic

adjective /em'fætɪk, ɪm'fætɪk/

expressing something forcibly and clearly
He responded to my question in an immediate and emphatic manner.

emporium

noun /em'pɔːrɪəm/

a large retail store selling a wide variety of goods
She found the sofa she wanted at the furniture emporium.

emulate

verb /'emjʊleɪt/

to match or surpass a person or achievement, typically by imitation
She hopes to emulate her sister's sporting achievements.

emulsion

noun /ɪ'mʌlʃən/

a fine dispersion of minute droplets of one liquid in another in which it is not soluble
Oil and water can only be combined in an emulsion.

enclosure

noun /en'kləʊʒə[r], ɪn'kləʊʒə[r]/

an area surrounded by a fence or wall
The chickens escaped from their enclosure.

encumbrance

noun /en'kʌmbərəns, ɪn'kʌmbərəns/

a burden or impediment
His heavy luggage was an encumbrance.

encyclopedia

adjective /en'saɪkləʊ'piːdɪk/

comprehensive in terms of information
His knowledge of history is encyclopedic.

endangered

adjective /ɪn'deɪndʒə[r]d/

at risk of being destroyed
The giant panda is an endangered species.

endearment

noun /en'diəmənt/

an act, word, or expression of affection
The word 'darling' is a term of endearment.

endeavour

verb /en'devə[r]/

to try hard
Pakistan will endeavour to uphold the rights of women.

endorphin

noun /en'dɔːfɪn/

any of a group of hormones secreted within the nervous system which activate opiate receptors and cause an analgesic effect
The principal function of an endorphin is to inhibit the transmission of pain signals.

endorse

verb /en'dɔːs/

to declare one's public approval or support of
He was quick to endorse his colleague's campaign.

endoscopy**noun** /en'dɒskəpi/

a procedure in which an instrument is introduced into the body to give a view of its internal parts
The endoscopy revealed damage to the stomach lining.

endowment**noun** /en'dəʊmənt/

a gift of money made to an institution in order to provide it with an annual income
She made an endowment to the charity organization.

enfleurage**noun** /ɪˈflɔːrɑːʒ/

the extraction of essential oils and perfumes from flowers using odourless animal or vegetable fats
Enfleurage is done to extract fragrance from jasmine and roses.

engross**verb** /en'grəʊs/

to absorb all the attention or interest of someone
The latest Star Wars film managed to engross audiences of all ages.

engulf**verb** /en'gʌlf/

to sweep over something so as to surround or cover it completely
Flames will soon engulf the entire building.

enhance**verb** /en'hɑːns, en'hæns/

to intensify, increase, or further improve the quality, value, or extent of something
High quality fuel can enhance the performance of your car.

enliven**verb** /en'laɪvən/

to make something more entertaining, interesting, or appealing
They should enliven the party with music.

ensign**noun** /'ensain, 'ensən/

a flag flown to indicate nationality or allegiance
Every ship displays its ensign to show its nationality.

ensnare**verb** /en'sneə[r]/

to catch in a trap
He tried to ensnare the mouse.

enthalpy**noun** /en'θælpɪ, 'enθəlpɪ/

a thermodynamic quantity equivalent to the total heat content of a system
The internal energy of a system, like the enthalpy, is a state property, so it is fixed when the state of the system is specified.

entrepreneurial**adjective** /ɪˌntrəprəʊ'nɜːrɪəl/

characterized by the taking of financial risks in the hope of profit
His entrepreneurial skills will help the company greatly.

entropy**noun** /'entrəpi/

a thermodynamic quantity representing the unavailability of a system's thermal energy for conversion into mechanical work
The second law of thermodynamics says that entropy always increases with time.

envious**adjective** /'enviəs/

jealous
He could see the envious look in the other boy's eyes.

envisage**verb** /en'vɪzɪdʒ/

to imagine a future situation
I don't envisage myself working with him next year.

epicentre

noun /ˈepɪsɛntə[r]/

the point on the earth's surface vertically above the focus of an earthquake

The epicentre of the earthquake was in the sea.

epistle

noun /ˈɪpɪsəl/

a letter, especially one that is long, formal, or didactic

The lengthy epistle shed no new light on the situation.

epitome

noun /eˈpɪtəmi/

a person or thing that is a perfect example of a particular quality or type

Her clothes are the epitome of good taste.

equatorial

adjective /ˌɛkwəˈtɔːriəl/

of, at, or near the equator

Equatorial rainforests are disappearing fast.

equipment

noun /ˈkwɪpmənt/

the items needed for a particular purpose

They loaded the equipment into the back of the van.

eradicate

verb /ɪˈrædɪkeɪt/

to destroy completely or put an end to

The citizens of this town are determined to eradicate crime.

eristic

adjective /eˈrɪstɪk/

of, relating, or given to controversy or logical disputation for its own sake

The UN should urge countries to refrain from eristic dialogue which is one-sided, quarrelsome, and antagonistic.

erroneous

adjective /eˈrɒniəs/

incorrect

He was under the erroneous impression that the boss was very fond of him.

escalope

noun /ˈɛskəloʊp/

a thin, boneless slice of meat, especially veal

She had only one escalope left to cook with.

escargot

noun /eˈskɑːɡəʊ/

a variety of edible snail

Escargot is usually eaten with a sauce made of melted butter and garlic.

esplanade

noun /ˌɛspləˈneɪd, ˌɛspləˈnɑːd/

a long, level area along which people may walk for pleasure

The couple enjoy their walks along the esplanade.

estuary

noun /ˈɛstʃʊəri/

the tidal mouth of a large river

An estuary contains a mix of both fresh and salt water.

ethical

adjective /ˈeθɪkəl/

connected with beliefs about what is right or wrong

There were severe ethical issues with the functioning of the organization.

ethos

noun /ˈiːθɒs/

the distinctive character, spirit, and attitudes of a people, culture, or era

Deceit is a word that has no place in the ethos of this family.

eucalyptus

noun /ˌjuːkəˈlɪptəs/

a tall straight tree with leaves that produce an oil with a strong smell

He was sitting under the shadow of a tall eucalyptus, reading a book.

E

12 to 14
age group

euphemism

noun /'ju:fəməɪzəm/

a mild word or phrase that is used to refer to something unpleasant
"User fees" is a politician's euphemism for taxes.

euphonium

noun /ju:'fəʊniəm/

a brass musical instrument with four valves
The euphonium is used mainly in brass bands.

euphoria

noun /ju:'fɔ:riə/

a feeling or state of intense excitement and happiness
I was in a state of euphoria after my victory.

euphuism

noun /'ju:fju:ɪzəm/

a highly ornate style of writing
Euphuism was fashionable in the 1580s, especially in the Elizabethan court.

eustasy

noun /'ju:stəsi/

a change of sea level throughout the world
Global warming may result in eustasy.

evasion

noun /ɪ'veɪʒən/

the action of avoiding something
A politician must be adept at the evasion of questions.

eventuality

noun /ɪ'ventʃʊ'ælɪti/

a possible event or outcome
Precautions must be taken against any unforeseen eventuality.

exacerbate

verb /ek'sæsəbeɪt, ɪg'zæsəbeɪt/

to make something worse
Your intrusion will only exacerbate the situation.

excerpt

noun /'eksɜ:pt /

a short piece of writing, music, or film taken from a longer whole
The magazine will be carrying an excerpt from his new book.

excessive

adjective /ek'sesɪv/

more than is necessary, normal, or desirable
Excessive rainfall has been predicted for this season.

exchequer

noun /eks'tʃekə[r]/

a royal or national treasury
The Chancellor of the Exchequer takes credit for the strong economy.

exclusion

noun /ek'sklu:ʒən/

the act of deliberately not using, allowing, or considering someone or something
He was disappointed at his exclusion from the picnic.

excursion

noun /ek'skɜ:ʃn/

a short journey or trip, especially one taken as a leisure activity
We are planning a holiday excursion next month.

exemplary

adjective /eg'zempləri/

serving as a desirable model
The teenager impressed everyone with his exemplary behaviour.

exemplify

verb /eg'zemplɪfaɪ/

to be a typical example
I would like my food to exemplify Italian cooking at its best.

existential

adjective /ˌegzɪ'stenʃəl/

connected with human existence

The existential philosopher put forward a new theory, which was widely criticised.

exoskeleton

noun /'eksəʊskelɪtən/

a rigid external covering for the body in some invertebrate animals, especially arthropods

A lobster periodically sheds its exoskeleton as it grows.

expedient

adjective /ek'spi:diənt/

advantageous but not always fair

The government has decided that a cut in interest rates would be politically expedient.

explicit

adjective /ek'splɪsɪt/

clear and easy to understand

He gave me very explicit directions on how to get to his place.

extinction

noun /ek'stɪŋkʃən/

the death of all the living members of a species

The snow leopard is facing extinction.

extortionate

adjective /ek'stɔ:ʃənəl/

grossly over-priced

They are offering loans at extortionate rates of interest.

extrapolate

verb /ek'stræpəleɪt/

to estimate something not known from data or information available

I am trying to extrapolate some results from research done in other countries.

extricate

verb /'ekstrikeɪt/

to free someone or something from a constraint or difficulty

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

extrovert

noun /'ekstrəvɜ:t/

an outgoing, socially confident person

As an extrovert, she makes friends wherever she goes.

exuberant

adjective /eg'zju:bərənt/

full of energy, excitement, and happiness

She gave an exuberant performance at the piano recital.

F

12 to 14
age group

fabricate

verb /'fæbrɪkeɪt/

to make up something false

He likes to fabricate stories which have very little truth in them.

facet

noun /'fæsɪt/

a particular part or aspect of something

As they struggled to find a solution, they realised there was another facet to the problem.

fagin

noun /'feɪɡɪn/

a criminal, especially one who instructs other criminals

The police arrested the fagin and shut down his operation.

falconry

noun /'fɔːlkənri, fælkənri/

the art or sport of keeping and breeding birds of prey and training them to hunt

The sheikh is known for his interest in falconry.

fallacy

noun /'fæləsi/

a misleading argument

It is a fallacy to say that the camera never lies.

fanaticism

noun /fə'natɪsɪzəm/

extreme beliefs or behaviour

The management decided to take action against fanaticism.

fantasize

verb /'fæntəsaɪz/

to indulge in daydreaming about something desired

I fantasize about being a superhero.

farrier

noun /'færɪə[r]/

a person who shoes horses

Since Hassan spent so much of his childhood around horses, he wanted to learn to be a farrier.

fascia

noun /'feɪʃɪə/

a wooden board or other flat piece of material covering the ends of rafters or other fittings

Once the basic renovation was over, fascia panels were attached to the kitchen units.

Fauvism

noun /'fəʊvɪzəm/

a style of painting with vivid expressionistic and non-naturalistic use of colour

Fauvism flourished in Paris from 1905, but the movement was short-lived.

feldspar

noun /'feld,spɑː/

a type of white or red rock

Feldspar belongs to the family of silicate minerals which occur in igneous rocks.

felicitous

adjective /fə'lɪsɪtəs/

well chosen or suited to the circumstances

The master-of-ceremonies was well-known for his felicitous remarks.

fenestration

noun /fɛnɪ'streɪʃən/

the arrangement and design of windows in a building

He was impressed by the architect's designs for the fenestration of his new house.

festoon

verb /fe'stuːn/

to adorn a place with chains, garlands, or other decorations

They planned to festoon the lobby with streamers and balloons for the celebration.

Festschrift

noun /'festʃrɪft/

a collection of writings published in honour of a scholar

The audience gave a hearty round of applause when he finished reading excerpts from the Festschrift.

fete

noun /'fet/

an outdoor public function held to raise funds for a charity which includes entertainment and the sale of goods and refreshments
There will be a magic show at the fete.

fetish

noun /'fetɪʃ/

an object or principle irrationally revered
Some women have a fetish for new clothes.

fibranne

noun /faɪ'bræn/

a synthetic fabric resembling linen, made from rayon
I prefer real linen to fibranne.

fibrous

adjective /'faɪbrəs/

having to do with or made of threads
Muscles are made up of fibrous tissue.

fictitious

adjective /fɪk'tɪʃəs/

not real or true
The fictitious places in the novel really fascinated the readers.

figurine

noun /'fɪɡərɪn/

a small statue of a person or animal used as a decorative object
She presented me with a beautiful figurine from China.

filigree

noun /'fɪlɡri:/

ornamental work of fine wire formed into delicate tracery
Her earrings were beautiful silver filigree.

financier

noun /faɪ'nænsiə, fɪ'nænsiə/

a person concerned in the management of large amounts of money on behalf of governments or organizations
The financier provided the funds required to start construction.

fiscal

adjective /'fɪskl/

relating to government revenue, especially taxes
The government proposed new fiscal policies to improve the country's economy.

flamboyant

adjective /flæm'bɔɪənt/

ostentatious and showy
She dresses in a very flamboyant style.

flaunt

verb /flɔːnt/

to display something ostentatiously, especially in order to provoke envy or admiration
He likes to flaunt his expensive cars.

fluorescence

noun /ˌflʊə'rensns/

light given out by a substance when it is exposed to radiation
Fluorescence has been used to study the structure and conformations of DNA techniques.

flutter

verb /'flʌtə[r]/

to move lightly and quickly
The wounded bird attempted to flutter its wings.

foible

noun /'fɔɪbl/

a minor character flaw
His only foible was a tendency to mumble whenever he spoke.

F

12 to 14
age group

foreboding

noun /fɔː'bəʊdɪŋ/

a feeling that something bad will happen
She read the note with a sense of foreboding.

formulistic

adjective /fɔːmjʊ'lɪstɪk/

tending to adhere to or believe in formulas
He preferred to have a formulistic approach to avoid any errors.

forsooth

adverb /fɔː'suːθ/

in truth or indeed
The middle class will forsooth be mad and will make mayhem if their taxes are touched.

fractionalize

verb /'frækʃənəlaɪz/

to divide something into separate groups or parts
I will have to fractionalize the course material into smaller portions.

fractious

adjective /'frækʃəs/

irritable and quarrelsome
He is a fractious child who needs to be disciplined.

fraudulent

adjective /'frɔːdjʊlənt/

obtained, done by, or involving deception
The criminals used a fraudulent website as part of their scam.

fraught

adjective /frɔːt/

describing a situation or course of action which is filled with something undesirable
This situation is fraught with danger.

frazzled

adjective /'fræzəld/

completely exhausted
I felt sorry for the frazzled mother at the supermarket.

freighter

noun /'freɪtə/

a large ship or aircraft designed to carry goods in bulk
The freighter carrying the shipment is due in port today.

frequency

noun /'friːkwənsi/

the rate at which something occurs over a particular period of time or in a given sample
Natural disasters are happening with increasing frequency.

frigate

noun /'frɪɡət/

a small, fast ship
A frigate accompanied the battleship.

fritter

verb /'frɪtə[r]/

to waste time or money on things that are not important
His sincere friends advised him not to fritter away the millions his father had left him.

frivolous

adjective /'frɪvələs/

not serious or important
She spends too much money on frivolous things.

frowsty

adjective /'fraʊstɪ/

having a stale, warm, and stuffy atmosphere
The small, frowsty office had no air conditioning.

frugal

adjective /'fruːɡl/

sparing or economical as regards money or food
They had a frugal meal at a small restaurant.

fruition

noun /fruː'ɪʃən/

the realization or fulfilment of a plan or project
This book is the fruition of years of research.

fulcrum

noun /'fʊlkrəm, 'fʌlkrəm/

the point against which a lever is placed to get a purchase, or on which it turns or is supported
By rotating the dial, the pivot point or the fulcrum of the brake lever moves in and out.

fulfilment

noun /fʊl'fɪlmənt/

satisfaction

The members of the committee could look back on their report with a feeling of fulfilment.

fumigate

verb /'fju:migeɪt/

to disinfect with chemical vapour

He had to fumigate his cotton fields every year.

functionary

noun /'fʌnkʃənəri/

a person who has to perform official functions or duties

A police functionary spoke at the press conference.

funereal

adjective /fju:'niəriəl/

having the mournful, somber character appropriate to a funeral

There was a funereal atmosphere in their house for days after their mother's death.

furioso

adjective /'fjuəri'əʊsəʊ/

performed furiously and wildly

The furioso performance left the audience in awe of the musician.

furlong

noun /'fɜ:lɒŋ/

a unit of distance equal to 220 yards or about 201 meters

They had not gone more than a furlong when the storm returned with fresh fury.

G

12 to 14
age group

gallivant

verb /'gælɪvənt/

to go from place to place in the pursuit of pleasure or entertainment

He likes to gallivant from one party to the next.

galore

adjective /gə'lo: [r]/

in large numbers or amounts

They have flowers galore in their garden every spring.

galoshes

plural noun /gə'loʃɪz/

a pair of waterproof overshoes

The men wore galoshes while working in the rice fields.

gamma

noun /'gæmə/

a letter of the Greek alphabet

Gamma is the third letter of the Greek alphabet.

gander

noun /'gændə[r]/

a male goose

gangrene

noun /'gæŋɡri:n/

localized death and decomposition of body tissue, resulting from obstructed circulation or bacterial infection

He has developed frostbite in his foot and is taking antibiotics to stop gangrene from setting in.

Ganymede

noun /'gænimɪd/

the largest moon of the planet Jupiter

Ganymede was originally sighted by Galileo and is one of the largest satellites in the solar system.

gargle

verb /'gɑ:ɡl/

to wash the throat with a liquid

He was told to gargle with salt and hot water everyday to cure his sore throat.

garrulous

adjective /'gærələs/

talking too much

One should not trust a garrulous person with a secret.

gaseous

adjective /'gæsiəs/

relating to or having the characteristics of a gas

Gaseous emissions from motor vehicles are a major source of air pollution.

gastritis

noun /gæs'traɪtɪs/

an inflammation of the stomach

Gastritis occurs when the lining of the stomach becomes inflamed or swollen.

gauche

adjective /gəʊʃ/

unsophisticated and socially awkward

The gauche schoolgirl always ate lunch alone.

gaunt

adjective /gɔ:nt/

very thin because of hunger or illness

The gaunt faces of the starving children were a sorrowful sight.

gavial

noun /'geɪvɪəl/

a member of the crocodile family, this reptile has a long slender snout

gazebo

noun /gə'zi:bəʊ/

a small building with open sides usually in a garden offering a wide view of the surrounding area

We sat in the gazebo admiring the beautiful view of the garden.

gazillion

noun /gə'zɪljən/

a very large number or quantity

A gazillion stars lit up the desert sky.

gelatin

noun /'dʒelətiːn/

a clear, tasteless protein prepared from collagen and used in food, photography, and glue
The chef used gelatin in the cheesecake.

gendarme

noun /'ʒɒndɑːm/

a paramilitary police officer in French speaking countries
During the riots a gendarme force was posted outside the palace gates.

genesis

noun /'dʒenəsis/

the beginning or origin of something
He proposed a new theory about the genesis of civilization.

genome

noun /'dʒiːnəʊm/

the complete set of genes in a cell or living thing
Mapping the human genome is an important milestone in medical research.

geodesic

adjective /,dʒiːəʊ'desɪk/

denoting the shortest possible line between two points on a curved surface
Commercial airplanes usually follow the geodesic route to their destination.

georgic

adjective /'dʒɔːdʒɪk/

rustic or pastoral
He had been raised in the city and was unable to get used to the georgic lifestyle.

germanium

noun /dʒɜː'meɪniəm/

a grey crystalline element with semiconducting properties, resembling silicon
Garlic contains germanium, along with several other minerals.

gestalt

noun /gə'stɑːlt, gə'stælt/

an organized whole that is perceived as more than the sum of its parts
For me, real film music creates a whole gestalt where the song allows you to enter another universe.

ghoulish

adjective /'guːlɪʃ/

resembling or characteristic of a ghoul
Blaine is famous for his ghoulish tricks.

gild

verb /ɡɪld/

to cover thinly with gold
The Romans used to gild the ceilings of their temples and palaces.

glaciation

noun /,ɡleɪsɪ'eɪʃn/

the process or state of being covered by glaciers or ice sheets
Global warming is having a harmful effect on glaciation.

glacier

noun /'ɡleɪsɪə[r], 'glæsiə[r]/

a large mass of ice that moves very slowly down a valley
A glacier is a slow-moving river of ice.

glisten

verb /'ɡlɪsn/

to shine
He could see her eyes glisten with tears.

glitch

noun /ɡlɪtʃ/

a small problem or fault
The pilot blamed the delay on a technical glitch.

G

12 to 14
age group

glitterati

plural noun /ˈɡlɪtəˈræti/

the fashionable set of people engaged in show business or some other glamorous activity
The red carpet affair was littered with glitterati from television to the big screen.

globular

adjective /ˈɡləbjʊlə[r]/

spherical
On her birthday, her father gave her a lovely lamp with a globular shade.

gluon

noun /ˈɡluːɒn/

a subatomic particle of a class that is thought to bind quarks together
The first direct experimental evidence of a gluon was noted in 1979.

glutinous

adjective /ˈɡluːtɪnəs/

sticky like glue in texture
She served an unappetizing, glutinous dessert.

glycolysis

noun /ɡlaɪˈkɒlɪsɪs/

the breakdown of glucose by enzymes, releasing energy and pyruvic acid
There is clear evidence of metabolite channeling in glycolysis and other metabolic pathways.

gnat

noun /næt/

a tiny fly that bites

gnome

noun /nəʊm/

a kind of dwarf in fairy tales, usually living underground
The gnome and his family lived happily ever after.

gnu

noun /nuː/

a large dark antelope also called a wildebeest

gondolier

noun /ˈɡɒndəˈliə[r]/

a Venetian boatman
The gondolier sang a ballad while he rowed.

gossamer

noun /ˈɡɒsəmə/

a light, thin, and insubstantial or delicate material or substance
Her gown was made of gossamer.

graben

noun /ˈɡrɑːbən/

an elongated trough of land produced by subsidence of the earth's crust between two faults
The students made a model of a graben for the geography exhibition in their school.

gradient

noun /ˈɡreɪdɪənt/

the degree of a slope
The gradient of the hill was too steep to climb.

graffiti

plural noun /ɡrəˈfiːti/

writing or drawings scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in a public place
The hooligans covered the college walls with graffiti.

grandiose

adjective /ˈɡrændiəʊs/

on an impressive scale
I was greatly impressed by the grandiose architecture of the mosque.

gratuity

noun /ɡrəˈtjuːti/

a tip given to a waiter, taxi driver, or other similar person
It is customary to give waiters in the U.S. a 15% gratuity.

graupe

noun /ˈɡraʊpəl/

small particles of snow with a fragile crust of ice
Graupel is similar to hail, but softer.

gravelly

adjective /'grævəli/

resembling, containing, or consisting of small stones
The gravelly beach made walking difficult.

Grecian

adjective /'griːʃn/

relating to ancient Greece, especially its architecture
Grecian architecture is renowned for its beauty and elegance.

gregarious

adjective /grɪ'ɡeəriəs/

sociable or liking the company of others
The gregarious child amused everyone at the birthday party.

gristle

noun /'grɪsl/

tough, flexible tissue in vertebrates
The gristle in the meat really spoiled the dinner for me.

grouse

noun /'ɡraʊs/

a medium to large game bird with a plump body and feathered legs

gueridon

noun /'ɡerɪdɒn/

a small, ornately carved table or stand
A beautiful gueridon stood in the entryway.

gynaecology

noun /ˌɡaɪnəˈkɒlədʒi/

the scientific study and treatment of the diseases and medical conditions of women
She is specialising in the field of gynaecology.

gyroscope

noun /'dʒaɪrəskəʊp/

a device used to provide stability or maintain a fixed direction
The gyroscope malfunctioned and threw them off course.

H

12 to 14
age group

habitual

adjective /hə'bitʃʊəl, hə'bitʃuəl/
done constantly or as a habit
She is a habitual liar.

hackles

plural noun /'hækəlz/
hairs along an animal's back, which rise when it is angry or alarmed
The dog continued to growl, its hackles raised.

hacksaw

noun /'hæksɔ:/
a saw with a narrow fine-toothed blade set in a frame, used especially for cutting metal
A hacksaw was used to cut the thick iron grill.

haemophilia

noun /,hi:mə'filiə/
a medical condition in which the blood fails to clot normally
Patients suffering from haemophilia must be extremely wary of anything that could cause them injury.

halitosis

noun /,hæli'təʊsɪs/
a condition in which the breath smells unpleasant
Halitosis can often be remedied by something as simple as toothpaste.

hallucination

noun /hə'lʊ:si'neiʃn/
a vision of something that is not present
Some drugs can cause a hallucination.

halogen

noun /'hælədʒən/
any of a set of five chemical elements that react with hydrogen to form acids
Chlorine is a well known halogen.

hammock

noun /'hæmək/
a hanging bed made of canvas or a network of ropes
Mark is always asleep in the hammock in his backyard.

haploid

adjective /'hæplɔɪd/
having a single set of unpaired chromosomes
Honeybee drones are all haploid males.

harpoon

noun /hɑ:'pu:n/
a weapon like a spear on a rope, that is thrown or fired from a gun
The harpoon is used to hunt whales.

haul

verb /'hɔ:l/
to pull or drag with great effort
Ali had to haul the luggage down the stairs.

haversack

noun /'hævə,sæk/
a bag that is carried on the back or over the shoulder, especially when walking in the country
He was carrying a haversack full of food over his shoulder.

hearsay

noun /'hiəsɪ/
information received from other people which cannot be substantiated
Hearsay testimony is not admissible in a court of law.

heddle

noun /'hedəl/
a looped wire or cord with an eye in the centre through which a warp yarn is passed in a loom
A single heddle makes a weave known as 'tabby'.

hegemony

noun /hɪ'dʒeməni, hɪ'geməni/
leadership or dominance, especially by one state or social group over others
Western hegemony is growing in most parts of Asia.

heiress

noun /'eərɪs, eə'res/

a female heir

She was the sole heiress of her father's entire business and property.

heliacal

adjective /hɪ'leɪəkəl/

relating to or near the sun

The ancient Egyptian calendar was based on the heliacal rising of Sirius.

hepatitis

noun /ˌhepə'taɪtɪs/

inflammation of the liver

She has been missing school because she is suffering from hepatitis.

herbaceous

adjective /hɜː'beɪʃəs/

denoting or relating to herbs in the botanical sense

She wanted to put some herbaceous plants in the house.

hereditary

adjective /hɪ'redɪtəri/

passed on from parent to child

Epilepsy is a hereditary illness.

heritage

noun /'herɪtɪdʒ/

the history, traditions, and qualities important to a society or country

Europe is known for its rich cultural heritage.

heroin

noun /'herəʊɪn/

a strong addictive drug made from morphine

Customs officials arrested a man and recovered six kilograms of heroin from him.

herringbone

noun /'herɪŋbəʊn/

a pattern used in stitching consisting of V-shaped lines that are parallel to each other

The napkin was embroidered in herringbone.

heterogeneous

adjective /ˌhetərəʊ'dʒɪniəs/

formed of parts of different kinds

The population is a heterogeneous mixture of various races and ethnic groups.

hibiscus

noun /hɪ'bɪskəs/

a plant of the mallow family, grown in warm climates

for its large brightly coloured flowers

Hibiscus plants can beautify any garden.

hideous

adjective /'hɪdɪəs/

extremely ugly

The witch was given a hideous face in the movie.

hierarchical

adjective /ˌhaɪə'rɑːkɪkl/

related to a system of status or authority ranked one above another

The new manager got rid of the company's complicated hierarchical structure.

hinterland

noun /'hɪntə,lænd/

the areas of a country that are away from the coast,

from the banks of a large river or from the main cities

In shipping usage, a port's hinterland is the area that it serves, both for imports and for exports.

hippodrome

noun /'hɪpədrəʊm/

a stadium for chariot or horse races in ancient Greece

The hippodrome was a long oval race track used by horses and chariots.

holocaust

noun /'hɒləkɔːst/

a large scale destruction

We saw a documentary about the nuclear holocaust in Japan.

H

12 to 14
age group

hombre

noun /'hɒmbreɪ/
a man, especially one of a particular type
Their quarterback is one tough hombre.

homburg

noun /'hɒmbɜːg/
a man's felt hat having a narrow curled brim and a tapered crown with a lengthwise indentation
Reports and pictures showed him resplendent with a giant cigar and wearing a homburg.

homeostasis

noun /ˌhəʊmiəʊ'steɪsɪs/
the tendency towards a relatively stable equilibrium between interdependent elements
Homeostasis is essential for survival.

homicide

noun /'hɒmɪsaɪd/
murder
In the United Kingdom, the punishment for homicide is life imprisonment.

honeyed

adjective /'hʌnɪd/
containing or coated with honey
The honeyed chicken wings were served with rice.

honorable

adjective /'ɒnərəbəl/
bringing or deserving honour
Teaching is an honorable profession.

hoodwink

verb /'hʊdwɪŋk/
to deceive or trick
Do not try to hoodwink me by lying.

horde

noun /'hɔːd/
a large group or crowd
A horde of spectators rushed onto the football field.

horrendous

adjective /hɒ'rendəs/
extremely shocking and unpleasant
We saw a horrendous car accident on the motorway.

humiliation

noun /ˌhjuːmɪlɪ'eɪʃn/
the embarrassment and shame you feel when you make a mistake in public
He suffered much humiliation after his defeat in the election.

humus

noun /'hjuːməs/
rich earth made by decayed plants
The gardener uses humus to improve the soil.

husbandry

noun /'hʌzbəndri/
the care, cultivation, and breeding of crops and animals
He is engaged in animal husbandry.

hybrid

noun /'haɪbrɪd/
a plant or animal produced by combining two different species or varieties
The scientist announced that the odd-looking plant was a hybrid.

hydrant

noun /'haɪdrənt/
an outlet from a water main from which water can be tapped for fighting fires
It is illegal to park near a fire hydrant.

hydraulic

adjective /haɪ'drɔːlɪk, haɪ'drɒlɪk/
involving the movement of water or oil through pipes under pressure
Heavy machines get their power from hydraulic systems.

hymnal

noun /'hɪmnəl/

a book of hymns

The hymnal is an important feature in churches.

hyperthermia

noun /ˌhaɪpə'θɜːmiə/

the condition of having a body temperature greatly above normal

Hyperthermia is commonly called heat stroke.

hypnosis

noun /hɪp'nəʊsɪs/

an artificially produced state like deep sleep

Many people use hypnosis to cure bad habits such as smoking.

hypnotic

adjective /hɪp'nɒtɪk/

inducing a trance-like sleep

His voice had an almost hypnotic effect on me.

hypocrisy

noun /hɪ'pɒkrɪsi/

the practice of claiming to have higher standards or more noble beliefs than is the case

He condemned the hypocrisy of those politicians who say one thing and do another.

hypotenuse

noun /haɪ'pɒtənjuːs/

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

Measure the hypotenuse of the triangle.

hypothesis

noun /haɪ'pɒθɪsɪs/

a proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation

The scientist wanted to perform a series of experiments to test his hypothesis.

12 to 14 age group

ideology

noun /aɪdɪ'ɒlədʒi/

a system of ideas and ideals forming the basis of an economic or political theory
The constitution of Pakistan is based on the ideology of Islam.

idiosyncrasy

noun /ɪdɪəʊ'sɪŋkrəsi/

a person's particular way of behaving or thinking especially when it is unusual
His only idiosyncrasy was always preferring to be in the car first.

igneous

adjective /'ɪɡniəs/

describing a rock which has solidified from lava or magma
Sarah carried out research on igneous rock formations as part of her geology course.

ignition

noun /ɪɡ'niʃn/

the action of setting something on fire or starting to burn
The ignition of the rocket's fuel went exactly as planned.

imbecile

noun /'ɪmbɪsɪl, 'ɪmbɪsaɪl/

a rude way to describe a person one believes to be stupid
He behaved like an imbecile at the party last night.

imitation

noun /ɪmɪ'teɪʃn/

the action of using someone or something as a model
A child learns to speak by imitation.

immaterial

adjective /ɪmə'tɪəriəl/

unimportant under the circumstances
It is immaterial whether the firing was accidental or not.

immiscible

adjective /ɪ'mɪsɪbl/

incapable of being mixed to form a homogeneous substance
Oil and water are immiscible liquids.

immutable

adjective /ɪ'mju:təbl/

unchangeable
Death is an immutable fact of life.

impairment

noun /ɪm'peəmənt/

a physical or a mental weakness
His physical impairment did not stop him from excelling in his work.

impale

verb /ɪm'peɪl/

to pierce with a sharp, pointed object
He picked up a skewer to impale the meat and barbecue it.

impeach

verb /ɪm'pi:tʃ/

to accuse an important public figure of a serious crime
They wanted to impeach the president but were forced to abandon their plan.

impeccable

adjective /ɪm'pekəbl/

faultless or flawless
His impeccable manners impressed his employer.

impede

verb /ɪm'pi:d/

to obstruct or hinder
Failure to pass this exam will impede your academic progress.

impenitent

adjective /ɪm'penɪtənt/

not sorry for having done wrong
The impenitent thief was not afraid of punishment.

imperious

adjective /ɪmˈpɪəriəs/
arrogant and domineering
I cannot tolerate his imperious demands any more.

impetuous

adjective /ɪmˈpetʃuəs/
acting without thought or care
She made an impetuous decision which she regretted later.

implacable

adjective /ɪmˈplækəbl/
unable to be appeased or placated
He was an implacable enemy of Ted's.

implementation

noun /ɪmˌplɪmenˈteɪʃn/
the process of putting a decision or plan into effect
Both sides are working towards the implementation of the peace agreement signed last year.

importunate

adjective /ɪmˈpɔːtʃənət/
persistent, especially to the point of annoyance
I tried to get rid of the importunate beggar, but he kept following me.

impostor

noun /ɪmˈpɒstə[r]/
one who pretends to be somebody else
The impostor made his way carefully to the bank vault dressed as a security guard.

impoverish

verb /ɪmˈpɒv[ə]rɪʃ/
to make a person or area poor
Hospital bills can impoverish even a wealthy family.

impromptu

adjective /ɪmˈprɒptjuː/
unplanned or unrehearsed
He was asked to give an impromptu speech after dinner.

impropriety

noun /ɪmprəˈpraɪəti/
failure to observe standards of honesty or modesty
His impropriety affected all of his relationships.

improvident

adjective /ɪmˈprɒvɪdənt/
wasteful and not caring about future needs
I warned him to mend his improvident ways and to begin saving for his future.

inaccessible

adjective /ɪnəkˈsesɪbəl/
unable to be reached
The mountainous areas are inaccessible during the harsh winters.

inadequate

adjective /ɪnˈædɪkwət/
not enough or not good enough
The inadequate food supplies could not meet the needs of the hungry refugees.

inapparent

noun /ɪnəˈpærənt/
not obvious
It was inapparent from her face that she was angry.

inarguable

adjective /ɪnˈɑːɡjuəb[ə]l/
not open to disagreement
There was inarguable proof of a conspiracy.

inauspicious

adjective /ɪnɔːˈspɪʃəs/
not favourable or promising
The team's inauspicious start did not bode well for the rest of the season.

incant

verb /ɪnˈkænt/
to chant or intone
Harry Potter began to incant a spell to levitate his broom.

12 to 14 age group

incapacitate

verb /ɪnkeɪˈpæsɪteɪt/

to disable or make a person unfit for work
The sickness would eventually incapacitate the old man.

incarnate

adjective /ɪnˈkɑːnət/

in human form, especially of a deity or spirit
He thought his boss was the devil incarnate.

incipient

adjective /ɪnˈsɪpiənt/

beginning to happen or develop
The ruler could see the incipient signs of unrest.

incision

noun /ɪnˈsɪʒən/

a sharp cut
The surgeon made an incision below the patient's ribs.

incite

verb /ɪnˈsaɪt/

to encourage someone to do something violent, illegal, or unpleasant
His poetry has the potential to incite the public to rebel.

incontrovertible

adjective /ɪnkəʊntrəˈvɜːtɪbl/

something that is true and cannot be disputed
The lawyer was able to present incontrovertible evidence in favour of his client.

incorporeal

adjective /ɪnkɔːˈpɔːriəl/

without a material body or form
Ghosts are supposed to be incorporeal beings.

incurable

adjective /ɪnˈkʊrɪdʒəbl/

incurably bad
Her husband is an incurable flirt.

increment

noun /ɪnkrɪmənt/

an increase or addition, especially one of a series on a fixed scale
On this scale each increment represents 10 grams.

incur

verb /ɪnˈkʊː[r]/

to become subject to something unwelcome or unpleasant as a result of one's own actions
You will incur the anger of a friend by lying to him.

indecipherable

adjective /ɪndɪˈsaɪfrəbl/

not able to be read or understood
There was an indecipherable message on the notepad by the telephone.

indeterminate

adjective /ɪndɪˈtɜːmɪnət/

not exactly known, established, or defined
Mr. Shah has gone into exile for an indeterminate period.

indie

adjective /ˈɪndi/

not belonging to or affiliated with a major record or film company
The popularity of indie bands has soared in recent years.

indisputable

adjective /ɪndɪˈspjuːtəbl/

unquestionable
The indisputable evidence made it easy for the jury to come to a unanimous decision.

induction

noun /ɪnˈdʌkʃən/

the action or process of inducting someone to a post or organization
The government has stopped further induction of teachers to state run schools.

inestimable

adjective /ɪn'estɪməbəl/

too great to calculate

The flood caused inestimable damage to life and property.

inevitable

adjective /ɪn'evɪtəbəl/

unavoidable

It was an inevitable consequence of the decision.

inexorable

adjective /ɪn'eksəreɪbəl/

relentless

The inexorable rise in crime is a result of the high levels of unemployment.

inexplicable

adjective /ɪn'ek'splɪkəbəl/

unable to be explained or accounted for

She left the meeting for inexplicable reasons.

infallible

adjective /ɪn'fælibl/

never making mistakes or being wrong

The professor always gave infallible advice to his students.

infectious

adjective /ɪn'fekʃəs/

likely to spread

Influenza is a highly infectious disease.

inference

noun /ɪn'fərəns/

a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning

The clear inference from this data is that the universe is expanding.

infinitesimal

adjective /ɪn'fɪnɪ'tesɪməl/

extremely small

The infinitesimal granules were barely visible to the naked eye.

infinitive

noun /ɪn'fɪnɪtɪv/

the basic form of a verb

In English the infinitive can be used with or without the word "to" in front of it.

inflexible

adjective /ɪn'fleksɪbəl/

rigid and unbending

Her inflexible attitude may be the reason why nobody likes her.

infringe

verb /ɪn'frɪndʒ/

to act so as to limit or undermine something

One should not infringe on the rights of other people.

ingredient

noun /ɪn'ɡriːdɪənt/

one of the things from which something is made, especially one of the foods that are used together to prepare a particular dish

The pasta did not taste very good because she forgot to add the key ingredient.

inhibition

noun /ɪnhɪ'bɪʃən/

a feeling that makes one self-conscious and unable to act in a relaxed and natural way

His inhibition prevented him from trying to meet new people.

initialize

verb /ɪ'nɪʃəlaɪz/

to set to the value or put in the condition appropriate to the start of an operation

Once I initialize the scanner, we can begin.

injudicious

adjective /ɪndʒʊ'dɪʃəs/

showing poor judgement

Spending all that money on something so useless was an injudicious act.

12 to 14 age group

injunction

noun /ɪn'dʒʌŋkʃn/

an official order from a court of law to do or not do something

The court granted an injunction against the defendants.

inopportune

adjective /ɪn'ɒpə'tju:n, ɪn'ɒpə'tju:n/

occurring at an inconvenient or inappropriate time

Shaheen always arrives at the most inopportune time.

insatiable

adjective /ɪn'seɪʃəbl/

not able to be satisfied

There seems to be an insatiable demand for more powerful computers.

inscription

noun /ɪn'skrɪpʃən/

a thing inscribed, as on a monument or in a book

A clay tablet with a strange inscription has been found in a dig at Harappa.

inscrutable

adjective /ɪn'skru:təbəl/

impossible to understand or interpret

The note had an inscrutable mark in the centre.

inselberg

noun /'ɪnsəl'ber:g, 'ɪnzəl'ber:g/

an isolated rocky hill rising abruptly from a flat plain

Ayers Rock is a great example of an inselberg.

insidious

adjective /ɪn'sɪdɪəs/

proceeding in a gradual, subtle way, but with very harmful effects

The whole village suffers from the insidious effects of a polluted water supply.

insignia

noun /ɪn'sɪɡniə/

a distinguishing badge or emblem of military rank, office, or membership of an organization

The school insignia has been engraved on the main door.

instability

noun /ɪnstə'bɪlɪti/

the state of being unstable

Experts warn that soaring prices will lead to political instability in the country.

insusceptible

adjective /ɪnsə'septɪbəl/

not likely to be affected, impressed, or moved

The police officer was insusceptible to all forms of bribery and flattery.

integrity

noun /ɪn'tegriti/

the quality of being honest or moral

He is known to be a man of integrity.

intellectual

adjective /ɪntə'lektʃʊəl/

involving a person's ability to think and to understand ideas and information

Asma is known for her intellectual abilities.

intercede

verb /ɪntə'si:d/

to intervene on behalf of another

The argument got so heated that I had to intercede.

interdependent

adjective /ɪntədɪ'pendənt/

dependent on each other

We live in an increasingly interdependent world.

interdisciplinary

adjective /ɪntə'dɪsɪplɪnəri/

relating to more than one branch of knowledge

Interdisciplinary courses were offered in philosophy and psychology.

intermediary

noun /ˌɪntə'mɪdiəri/

a person who acts as a link between people in order to try and bring about an agreement
He was appointed as an intermediary at the meeting of the two warring leaders.

intervene

verb /ˌɪntə'veɪn/

to interfere
The government had to intervene to prevent fighting between the tribes.

intolerant

adjective /ɪn'tɒlərənt/

not willing to accept ideas or behaviour different from your own
Extremists are intolerant of any who would challenge them.

intoxicate

verb /ɪn'tɒksɪkeɪt/

to cause someone to lose control of their faculties or behaviour
The ability of alcohol to intoxicate is the main argument against its use.

intractable

adjective /ɪn'træktəbəl/

very difficult to deal with

The country is facing intractable economic problems.

intrepid

adjective /ɪn'trepɪd/

fearless and adventurous
These intrepid adventurers deserved to have their story told.

intruder

noun /ɪn'truːdə[r]/

a person who enters a place without permission
Thankfully, the intruder did not steal anything.

inveigle

verb /ɪn'veɪgl/

to persuade somebody to do something by means of deception or flattery
He managed to inveigle her into helping him with his work.

invulnerable

adjective /ɪn'veɪləbəl/

never to be broken, infringed, or dishonoured
All nations recognize the invulnerable sanctity of religious buildings during times of war.

invulnerable

adjective /ɪn'veɪləbəl/

impossible to harm or damage
Armored vehicles are invulnerable to small arms fire.

iodine

noun /'aɪədiːn, 'aɪədaɪn/

chemical element number 53, a non-metallic element forming black crystals and a violet vapour
Iodine is useful as an antiseptic and water purifier.

irrational

adjective /ɪ'ræʃənəl/

not logical or reasonable
His irrational behaviour surprised everyone.

irrefutable

adjective /ɪ'refjʊtəbəl, ɪrɪ'fju:təbəl/

impossible to deny or disprove
It is an irrefutable fact that humans have caused the extinction of many species.

irreverent

adjective /ɪ'revərənt/

showing a lack of respect for people or things that are generally taken seriously
The comedian was known for his irreverent jokes about politics.

irrevocable

adjective /ɪ'revəkəbəl/

not able to be changed, reversed, or recovered
The fire caused irrevocable damage to the hard drive.

J

12 to 14
age group

Jacuzzi

noun /dʒə'ku:zi/

a large bath with jets of water to massage the body
A long soak in the Jacuzzi is the most relaxing way to spend an hour.

jettison

verb /'dʒetɪsən/

to throw or drop something from an aircraft or ship
The pilot had to jettison the bombs to conserve fuel.

jicama

noun /'hi:kəmə, dʒɪ'kɑ:mə/

the crisp white-fleshed edible tuber of the yam bean
Jicama can be eaten raw or cooked.

jockey

noun /'dʒɒki/

a person who rides in horse races, especially as a profession
The winner of the race was a young jockey by the name of Gogo.

jodhpurs

plural noun /'dʒɒdpəz/

full-length trousers, worn for horse riding, that are close-fitting below the knee and have reinforced patches on the inside of the leg
She was dressed in her khaki jodhpurs, crisp white high collared blouse, and riding boots.

judgement

noun /'dʒʌdʒmənt/

the ability to make considered decisions or come to sensible conclusions
Her poor judgement was reflected in all aspects of her life.

julienne

noun /ˌdʒuːlɪ'en/

a portion of food cut into short, thin strips
The famous chef used a julienne of vegetables in the soup.

junction

noun /'dʒʌŋktʃə[r]/

a particular point or stage in an activity or series of events
Mary should think carefully before proceeding at this critical junction.

jurisprudence

noun /ˌdʒʊərɪs'pruːdnəs/

the science and philosophy of law
He was a student of jurisprudence rather than a practitioner of law.

justifiable

adjective /'dʒʌstɪfəɪəbl/

able to be shown to be right or reasonable
It was a justifiable act to hit out in self defence.

juvenile

adjective /'dʒuːvənəl/

of or suitable for young people
The juvenile court has been extremely successful in decreasing the number of young offenders.

kabuki

noun /kə'bu:ki/

a form of traditional Japanese drama
Performers of kabuki have to learn to move with great control.

kakemono

noun /ˌkæki'məʊnəʊ/

a Japanese unframed painting made on paper or silk and displayed as a wall hanging
One kakemono hung in the entrance of the library and two hung inside the hall.

kaleidoscope

noun /kə'laidəskəʊp/

a tube that you look through to see brightly coloured patterns which change as you turn the end of the tube
Children found the ever-changing patterns in the kaleidoscope fascinating.

kamikaze

adjective /ˌkæmi'kɑ:zi/

a Japanese aircraft loaded with explosives and making a deliberate suicidal crash on an enemy target
It was difficult to defend against kamikaze attacks.

kaput

adjective /kə'pʊt/

ruined, broken, or not functioning
The water pump is kaput.

karst

noun /kɑ:[r]st/

denoting the characteristic scenery of a limestone region
That remarkable karst is a significant part of New Zealand's natural heritage.

kedge

verb /kedʒ/

to move a ship by means of a line attached to a small anchor
To get closer to shore, they decided to kedge the ship.

kedgerie

noun /'kedʒəri:/

a dish of rice and lentils
She cooked the rice for the kedgerie.

kendo

noun /'kendəʊ/

a Japanese form of fencing with two-handed bamboo swords
Kendo developed as a safe form of sword training for samurai.

kestrel

noun /'kestrəl/

a small falcon that hovers with rapidly beating wings while searching for prey on the ground

ketone

noun /'ki:təʊn/

any of a class of organic compounds
In the reaction, an ester joined with a ketone.

kimono

noun /ki'məʊnəʊ/

a long, loose traditional Japanese robe with wide sleeves, tied with a sash
Saba wore a lovely kimono to the fancy dress party.

kindergarten

noun /'kɪndəɡɑ:tɪn/

a school for very young children
It is essential for young children to attend kindergarten.

kipper

noun /'kɪpə[r]/

a fish that has been cleaned, salted, and smoked
While vacationing in London, she enjoyed a fine breakfast of kipper and eggs.

K

12 to **14**
age group

kookaburra

noun /'kʊkəˌbʌrə/

an Australian bird with a strange laughing cry

krill

noun /krɪl/

a small shrimp-like planktonic crustacean of the open seas



labyrinthine

adjective /ˌlæbəˈrɪnθaɪn/

like an irregular, twisting network

Harry Potter went through the labyrinthine tunnels in search of his friends.

laceration

noun /ˌlæsəˈreɪʃn/

a deep cut or tear in skin or flesh

Falling off the bike resulted in a deep laceration on his knee.

lacklustre

adjective /ˈlækˌlʌstə[r]/

lacking in vitality, force, or conviction

His lacklustre performance received hardly any applause.

lacuna

noun /ləˈkjuːnə/

an unfilled space or gap

There is a serious lacuna in the historical record.

ladle

noun /ˈleɪdl/

a large, deep spoon with a long handle

She used a ladle to serve him soup.

lahar

noun /ˈlɑːhɑː/

a destructive mudflow on the slopes of a volcano

A lahar can bulldoze through virtually any structure in its path.

lance

noun /lɑːns/

a long spear

He threw the lance at the target with all his might.

lanolin

noun /ˈlænəˌlɪn/

a wax obtained from sheep's wool

Lanolin is used in soaps, creams, ointments and cosmetics.

lariat

noun /ˈlæriət/

a rope used to catch livestock or to tether grazing animals

The lariat demonstration was my favourite part of the rodeo.

laryngitis

noun /ˌlærɪnˈdʒaɪtɪs/

a mild inflammation of the throat that makes it difficult to speak

She could not participate in the debating contest because she had laryngitis.

lateral

adjective /ˈlætərəl/

of, at, towards, or from the side or sides

The plant takes up water through its lateral roots.

lavatory

noun /ˈlævət[ə]ri/

a toilet

He asked for directions to the lavatory.

league

noun /liːg/

a group of people or nations who agree to work together for a common purpose

The superheroes decided to form a league in order to fight against injustice around the globe.

lector

noun /ˈlektə[r]/

a lecturer at a university

He was appointed a lector at a very young age.

ledger

noun /ˈledʒə[r]/

a book or collection of financial accounts

The accountant regularly updated the ledger with new information.

legalize

verb /ˈliːgəlaɪz/

to make something that was previously illegal permissible by law

Some nations want to legalize the hunting of whales.



12 to 14 age group

legible

adjective /'ledʒɪbəl/

clear enough to be read

Use legible handwriting when writing your essay.

legislature

noun /'ledʒɪsleɪʃən/

the law-making body of a state

The public is calling out for a democratically elected legislature.

lepton

noun /'leptən/

a subatomic particle which does not take part in the strong interaction

The first charged lepton, the electron, was theorized in the mid-19th century by several scientists.

leukaemia

noun /lu:'ki:mɪə/

a serious disease in which too many white blood cells are produced, causing weakness and sometimes death

She was diagnosed with leukaemia and had to undergo treatment.

lexicology

noun /ˌleksɪ'kɒlədʒi/

the study of the form, meaning, and behaviour of words

Lexicology is a branch of linguistics which focuses on words.

libation

noun /laɪ'beɪʃn/

a drink poured out as an offering to a deity

He poured the libation on the ground.

lied

noun /li:d, li:t/

a type of German song, especially of the Romantic period, typically for solo voice with piano accompaniment

The lied is strongly associated with Franz Schubert, who wrote more than six hundred.

lien

noun /li:n, 'li:ən/

a claim on the property of another as security for the payment of a just debt

The lien as a legal principle was a recognized property right in early Roman law.

lieu

noun /lu:, 'lju:/

instead

The company issued additional shares to shareholders in lieu of a cash dividend.

ligature

noun /'lɪɡətʃəl/

a thing used for tying or binding something tightly

The doctor used a ligature to shut off the blood vessel.

liminal

adjective /'lɪmɪnəl/

relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process

At death, the body enters upon a brief liminal stage which ends at the committal.

limpet

noun /'lɪmpɪt/

a small shellfish that attaches itself firmly to rocks

linguine

plural noun /lɪŋ'ɡwi:nɪ/

small pieces of pasta in the form of narrow ribbons

I prefer linguine over spaghetti.

linguistic

adjective /lɪŋ'ɡwɪstɪk/

pertaining to language

Linguistic skills are valuable in the pursuit of almost any career.

lipase

noun /'laɪpeɪs, 'lɪpeɪs/

an enzyme that breaks down fat

Too much idle time decreases the production of lipase which is vital to the healthy processing of fat.



liquidate

verb /'lɪkwɪdeɪt/

to wind up the affairs of a business by selling assets and paying off debts
Bankruptcy forced the business to liquidate.

liquidizer

noun /'lɪkwɪdaɪzə/

a machine for liquidizing food or other material
The next step in the recipe was to put the fruit in the liquidizer.

liquorice

noun /'lɪkərɪʃ, 'lɪkərɪs/

a sweet, chewy, aromatic black substance made by evaporation from the juice of a root and used as a sweet and in medicine
Liquorice was one of the most widely known medicines in ancient history.

litany

noun /'lɪtəni/

a tedious recital or repetitive series
The company received a litany of complaints about the new policy.

litigious

adjective /lɪ'tɪdʒəs/

having a tendency to go to the law to settle disputes
He was a litigious person and was frequently in court.

litmus

noun /'lɪtməs/

a substance that turns red when it touches an acid and blue when it touches an alkali
Paper infused with litmus is used to test acids and bases.

loam

noun /ləʊm/

soil composed of a mixture of sand, clay, silt, and organic matter
Loam is a good quality soil for gardening.

localize

verb /'ləʊkəlaɪz/

to restrict something to a particular place
The authorities did their best to localize the malaria outbreak.

longevity

noun /lɒn'dʒevɪti/

a long duration of individual life
That family is known for its longevity, with at least three members living well into their nineties.

longitudinal

adjective /ˌlɒŋɡɪ'tjuːdɪnəl, ˌlɒndʒɪ'tjuːdɪnəl/

extending lengthwise
The surveyor measured the longitudinal distance between the two points.

longueur

noun /lɒŋ'ɡʊːr/

a tedious passage in a book, piece of music, or other work
You might love the movie West Side Story, except for the longueur of the dream sequence that features a ballet dance.

lozenge

noun /'lɒzɪndʒ/

a small medicinal tablet taken for sore throats and dissolved in the mouth
She had a lozenge to ease her sore throat.

lucrative

adjective /'luːkrətɪv/

making a large profit
He has a lucrative business, allowing him to accommodate his expensive hobbies.

ludicrous

adjective /'luːdɪkrəs/

ridiculous and unreasonable
The board members rejected the ludicrous plan.



12 to 14 age group

lumbago

noun /lʌmˈbeɪɡəʊ/

pain in the muscles and joints of the lower back
The lumbago was worst during extreme winters.

luncheonette

noun /ˌlʌntʃəˈnet/

a café or small informal restaurant where light meals and snacks are served
After shopping for hours, the girls decided to have a light meal at the luncheonette.

lustre

noun /ˈlʌstə[r]/

a soft glow or shine
The polish gave the car a new lustre.

luxurious

adjective /lʌgˈʒʊəriəs/

very comfortable, elegant, and expensive
I stayed at a luxurious hotel when I went to Spain.

macadamia

noun /ˌmækəˈdeɪmiə/
the edible nut of an Australian tree
She roasted the macadamia nuts and seasoned them with salt before serving.

macaroni

noun /ˌmækəˈreɪni/
pasta in the shape of hollow tubes
Children love to eat macaroni and cheese.

machismo

noun /məˈtʃɪzməʊ, məˈkɪzməʊ/
strong or aggressive male pride
Steve McQueen was famous for his machismo.

macrofossil

noun /ˈmækroʊˌfɒsəl/
a fossil large enough to be examined without a microscope
The farmer spotted the macrofossil while digging in his field.

maggot

noun /ˈmæɡət/
a soft-bodied legless larva of a fly or other insect

magma

noun /ˈmæɡmə/
very hot liquid rock found below the earth's surface
Magma becomes lava once it escapes from the surface of a volcano.

magnanimous

adjective /mæɡˈnæniməs/
generous or forgiving, especially towards a rival or less powerful person
In a magnanimous gesture, he offered his ticket to the child.

magnetize

verb /ˈmæɡnɪtaɪz/
to give magnetic properties to something
The teacher showed us how to magnetize an iron bar.

magniloquent

adjective /mæɡˈnɪləkwənt/
using high-flown or bombastic language
The jurors were not swayed by the magniloquent speech of the defense attorney.

magnitude

noun /ˈmæɡnɪtjuːd/
the great size or extent of something
The sheer magnitude of the task seemed overwhelming.

malapropism

noun /ˈmæləprɒpɪzəm/
the usually unintentional and humorous misuse or distortion of a word or phrase
This line will be rather difficult to translate because it contains a malapropism.

malarkey

noun /məˈlɑːki/
meaningless talk
I have no time for his malarkey.

malevolent

adjective /məˈlevələnt/
having or showing a wish to do evil to others
The villain was a purely malevolent character.

malice

noun /ˈmælɪs/
the desire to harm someone
There was malice in his harsh words.

malicious

adjective /məˈlɪʃəs/
having or showing a desire to harm somebody
Malicious gossip ruined her chances of being elected as the class president.

malodorous

adjective /ˌmælˈəʊdəəs/
having an unpleasant smell
Malodorous piles of trash lined the streets during the sanitation strike.

M

12 to 14
age group

mandatory

adjective /'mændətəri/

required by law

The offence carries a mandatory life sentence.

mandrel

noun /'mændrəl/

a rod round which metal or other material is forged or shaped

Manufacturers use a mandrel to shape metal exhaust pipes.

mannequin

noun /'mænikɪn/

a model of a human body, used for displaying clothes in shops

The dress looked beautiful on the mannequin, but not as good when she tried it on.

manoeuvrable

adjective /mə'nu:vəbl/

able to be moved or steered easily

This new car is not as manoeuvrable as our old one.

manticore

noun /'mæntɪkɔ:[r]/

a mythical animal typically depicted as having the body of a lion, the head of a man, and the sting of a scorpion

The historian aimed to document all mythological creatures including the manticore.

marauding

adjective /mə'rɔ:dɪŋ/

going about in search of things to steal or people to attack

Marauding barbarians were always a threat to ancient settlements.

marimba

noun /mə'rɪmbə/

a Latin American percussion instrument consisting of a set of hardwood plates

He teamed up with Kate Adam, who plays the marimba, for his world wide musical shows.

marination

noun /mæri'neɪʃən/

the process of soaking meat, fish, or other food in a sauce

Marination allows flavours to penetrate deep into the meat.

marmalade

noun /'mɑ:məleɪd/

a preserve or jam made from oranges

Dad loves marmalade with his morning toast.

marouflage

noun /,mæru:'flɑ:ʒ/

a technique in which canvas is pasted to a wall as a base for mural painting

Marouflage is a 3,000-year-old technique.

marplot

noun /'mɑ:plɒt/

one who frustrates or ruins a plan or undertaking by meddling

Amir was such a nosy marplot that he ruined our plan to surprise Sarah with a party on her birthday.

marsupial

noun /mɑ:'su:pɪəl/

any mammal that carries its young in a pocket of skin or pouch

The koala is my favourite marsupial.

martyr

noun /'mɑ:tə[r]/

a person who is killed because of his political or religious beliefs

A martyr is given a very high position in Islam.

marvellous

adjective /'mɑ:vələs/

causing great wonder

Lake Saif-ul-Muluk is one of the most marvellous places in the world.

Marxism

noun /'mɑːksɪzəm/

the political and economic theories of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

Marxism was later developed to form the basis of communism.

masculinity

noun /ˌmæskjʊˈlɪnɪti/

possession of the qualities traditionally associated with men

People are impressed by Sylvester Stallone's masculinity.

masseuse

noun /mæ'sɜːz/

a woman whose job is to massage people

The actress had a personal masseuse.

mastodon

noun /'mæstədɒn/

a large extinct elephant-like mammal

matrimony

noun /'mætrɪməni/

marriage

They were joined in matrimony by a priest.

matrix

noun /'meɪtrɪks/

the cultural, social, or political environment in which something develops

Our individual personalities are partly the result of a complex social matrix.

maunder

verb /'mɔːndə/

to talk in a rambling manner

Ask her a question and she'll maunder for half an hour.

mauve

noun /məʊv/

pale purple

She painted the walls of her room mauve.

maxim

noun /'mæksɪm/

a phrase that expresses a commonly held belief

"If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well" was our new CEO's maxim.

meagreness

noun /'miːgə[r]nəs/

a lack of quantity or quality

The meagreness of their offering was lamentable.

meddlesome

adjective /'medəlsəm/

fond of interfering

Her meddlesome behaviour has caused enough trouble already.

median

adjective /'miːdiən/

of or relating to, situated in, or directed towards the middle

The median number of copies sold per week for the average book on the New York Times Best Seller list was 3,600.

Mediterranean

adjective /ˌmedɪtə'reɪniən/

of or characteristic of the Mediterranean Sea, the countries bordering it, or their inhabitants

Many nutritionists advocate the Mediterranean diet.

melanism

noun /'meləˌnɪzəm/

the darkening of body tissues caused by excessive production of melanin, especially as a form of colour variation in animals

Melanism is often the result of genetic mutation.

mellifluous

adjective /me'ɪflʊəs/

pleasingly smooth and musical to hear

She had a very mellifluous speaking voice.

M

12 to 14
age group

melodious

adjective /mɪˈləʊdiəs/

relating to or characterized by melody
Noor Jahan's melodious voice left listeners spellbound.

meme

noun /mi:m/

an element of a culture or system of behaviour passed from an individual or society through imitation
The way we greet someone is a meme we learn from other members of our society.

memorabilia

plural noun /ˌmemərəˈbɪliə/

objects kept or collected because of their associations with memorable events
His collection of sports memorabilia is impressive.

mercantile

adjective /ˈmɜːkəntaɪl/

relating to trade or commerce
As industry in Pakistan grows, mercantile laws will have to be revised.

meringue

noun /məˈræŋ/

a sweet white mixture made from beaten egg whites and sugar and baked until crisp
Lemon is a popular flavour for meringue.

mesic

adjective /ˈmiːzɪk, ˈmezɪk/

of, relating to, or growing in conditions of medium water supply
The mesic habitat was characterized by beech and oak trees.

mesquite

noun /meˈskɪt/

a North American tree, often used for making charcoal for grilling food
The mesquite tree is covered in long thorns.

messiah

noun /məˈsaɪə, mɪsaɪə/

a liberator or saviour of oppressed people
He is seen by many as a political messiah.

metabolism

noun /məˈtæbəˌlɪzəm/

a chemical process in living things that changes food into energy
An athlete has a faster metabolism than an ordinary person.

metaphorically

adverb /ˌmetəˈfɔːrɪkli/

not literally
I hope you are speaking metaphorically.

metastasis

noun /mɪˈtæstəˌsɪs/

the development of secondary malignant growths at a distance from a primary site of cancer
Metastasis is the primary danger from skin cancers.

meteorology

noun /ˌmiːtɪəˈrɒlədʒi/

the study of processes and phenomena in the atmosphere, especially as a means of forecasting the weather
She spent three years at university studying meteorology.

methionine

noun /mɪˈθaɪəniːn/

a sulphur-containing amino acid which is a constituent of most proteins
Honey bees must collect pollen containing methionine to survive.

methodologically

adverb /meθəˈdɒləˌdʒɪkəli/

relating to a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activity
After the data was analysed, the report was found to be methodologically correct.

meticulous

adjective /mɪ'tɪkjələs/

very careful about minute detail

Their room had been prepared with meticulous care.

microcellular

adjective /maɪkrəʊ'seljələ/

containing or made up of minute cells

Microcellular foam has a pore size around 10 micrometers.

microfiche

noun /'maɪkrəʊfiːʃ/

a piece of film with written information on it in very small print

He used a special machine to read the small print of the microfiche.

mien

noun /miːn/

a person's appearance or manner, especially as an indication of their character or mood

He has a cautious, academic mien.

migraine

noun /'miːgreɪn, 'maɪgreɪn/

a very severe type of headache that often makes a person feel sick and have difficulty seeing

My father gets a migraine whenever he is stressed.

milieu

noun /miː'ljɜː, mɪ'ljɜː/

a person's social environment

The milieu of the big city has an unmistakable allure.

millennium

noun /mɪ'lenɪəm/

a period of 1000 years

I wish I could travel forward in time and visit the next millennium.

mimesis

noun /mɪ'miːsɪs/

the close external resemblance of an animal or plant to another animal, plant, or inanimate object

The mimesis of the cuckoo egg in relation to host eggs was estimated from the slides.

mimicry

noun /'mɪmɪkri/

the action or skill of being able to copy the voice, actions, and movements of others

He has a real talent for mimicry.

minuscule

adjective /'mɪnəskjuːl/

extremely small

The minuscule ant was carrying a piece of food five times its own weight.

minute

adjective /maɪ'njuːt/

extremely small

Minute objects have to be studied under the microscope.

mischievous

adjective /'mɪstʃɪvəs/

causing or showing a fondness for causing trouble in a playful way

The mischievous children were always up to something.

mithridate

noun /'mɪθrɪdeɪt/

a medicine believed to be a universal antidote to or preservative against poison and disease

To procure sweat, use cardamom water with mithridate.

moccasin

noun /'mɒkəsɪn/

a soft leather slipper or shoe in a style originating among North American Indians

The upper part of the moccasin was often decorated with beads or embroidery.

monetarily**adverb** /ˈmɒnɪtərɪli/

relating to money or currency

*Being monetarily wealthy does not always lead to happiness.***monologue****noun** /ˈmɒnəlɒɡ/

a long speech spoken by one actor

*The monologue in Hamlet is very famous.***montessori****noun** /ˌmɒntɪˈsɔːri/

a system of education for young children that seeks to develop natural interests

*She has decided to enroll her child in a montessori school.***moose****noun** /muːs/

a large, North American deer having large flattened antlers

mortgage**noun** /ˈmɔːɡɪdʒ/

the amount of money lent to a person for buying a house, which has to be paid back over a particular number of years

*One job was not enough for him to pay his mortgage every month.***motley****adjective** /ˈmɒtli/

incongruously varied in appearance or character

*It was a motley crowd of supporters, drawn from all walks of life.***mozzarella****noun** /ˌmɒtsəˈrelə/

a firm white Italian cheese made from buffalo or cow's milk

*She sprinkled a handful of mozzarella on the pizza before baking it.***mucoid****adjective** /ˈmjʊːkɔɪd/

of, relating to, or resembling mucus

*Experts recommend that you use a natural colon cleanse supplement to get rid of mucoid plaque.***mudguard****noun** /ˈmʌdgɑːd/

a curved cover over the wheel of a cycle or vehicle

*The mudguard of his car was scratched at the car park.***mulct****noun** /mʌkt/

a fine or penalty

*He decided to pay the mulct as soon as possible.***multifarious****adjective** /ˌmʌltɪˈfeəriəs/

having great variety

*We have to accommodate the multifarious needs of all the citizens.***multiplicity****noun** /ˌmʌltɪˈplɪsɪti/

a great number or variety

*He was overwhelmed by the multiplicity of things he had to do before setting out on his adventure.***musket****noun** /ˈmʌskɪt/

a shoulder gun carried by infantry between the 16th and 18th centuries

*A guardsman stepped forward and shoved the muzzle of his musket through the grille.***mutation****noun** /mjuːˈteɪʃn/

a change in the form or structure

The process of mutation is necessary in order for species to evolve.

myeloma

noun /ˌmaɪəˈləʊmə/

a malignant tumour of the bone marrow
He was diagnosed with multiple myeloma.

myriad

noun /ˈmɪrɪəd/

a countless or extremely great number of people or things
A myriad of insects danced around the light above my head.

nadir**noun** /'neɪdɪə[r], 'nædɪə[r]/

the worst moment of a particular situation
Company losses reached their nadir in 1999.

nauseous**adjective** /'nɔːsiəs, 'nɔːziəs/

feeling inclined to vomit
The nauseous boy winced every time the bus hit a bump.

nautical**adjective** /'nɔːtɪkl/

of or concerning navigation, sailors, or the sea
We had to travel 300 nautical miles to get to our destination.

nebulizer**noun** /'nebjʊlaɪzə[r]/

a device for producing a fine spray of liquid, used for inhaling a medicinal drug
He never leaves home without his nebulizer.

nebulous**adjective** /'nebjʊləs/

vague, hazy, or cloudy
The moon was surrounded by a nebulous glow.

necrosis**noun** /ne'krəʊsɪs/

the death of tissue due to disease or injury
Severe frostbite causes necrosis of the affected tissue.

nectarine**noun** /'nektəriːn/

a variety of peach with smooth red and yellow skin
The nectarine is best eaten when it is slightly soft.

negate**verb** /nɪ'geɪt/

to stop something from having any effect
A sudden surge of adrenaline can negate the effects of fatigue.

neologism**noun** /nɪ'blɒdʒɪzəm/

a new word or expression
Social media seems to produce a neologism nearly every day.

neoplasia**noun** /,niːəʊ'pleɪziə/

the process of abnormal and uncontrolled growth of cells
Neoplasia results in both cancerous and noncancerous cells.

nephritis**noun** /nɪ'frʌɪtɪs/

inflammation of the kidneys
Large kidneys may indicate acute nephritis which requires urgent treatment.

neritic**adjective** /ne'ɪtɪk/

relating to or denoting the shallow part of the sea near a coast and overlying the continental shelf
The majority of sea life lives in the neritic zone.

neural**adjective** /'njuərəl/

pertaining to the nerves or nervous system
She is lucky that her accident didn't result in neural damage.

nimrod**noun** /'nɪmrɒd/

a skillful hunter
He published his recollections of his days as a nimrod in the deep woods of Michigan.

nocturnal**adjective** /nɒk'tɜːnl/

happening during the night
Nocturnal animals are most active at night.

nocuous**adjective** /'nɒkjʊəs/

noxious, harmful, or poisonous
The nocuous gases in the air made us all sick.

noisome

adjective /'nɔɪsəm/

having an extremely offensive smell

The noisome vapours emanating from the oil refinery bothered everyone living in the area.

nosh

noun /'nɒʃ/

food or a meal

He filled the freezer with all kinds of nosh.

nostalgically

adverb /nɒ'stældʒɪkli/

with sentimental yearning for the past

She thought back on her childhood nostalgically.

notorious

adjective /nəʊ'tɔːriəs/

well-known for being bad

The boy was a notorious bully.

novice

noun /'nɒvɪs/

a person who is new and has little experience in a certain job or situation

Even a novice can succeed if he has a good mentor.

numeral

noun /'njuːmərəl/

a sign or symbol that represents a number

The numeral seven occurs frequently in mythology.

nuthatch

noun /'nʌθætʃ/

a small songbird with a stiffened tail, which climbs up and down tree trunks and feeds on nuts, seeds, and insects

nutrient

noun /'njuːtriənt/

a substance that is needed to keep a living thing alive and to help it to grow

Calcium is an essential nutrient for the growth and maintenance of strong bones.

nutritious

adjective /nju'trɪʃəs/

nourishing

Milk is a nutritious drink.

nymph

noun /nɪmf/

a mythological spirit of nature imagined as a beautiful maiden inhabiting rivers, woods, or other locations

He finally glimpsed the elusive creature - a beautiful sea nymph, who had crossed into our world from her own.



12 to 14 age group

obese

adjective /əʊ'bi:s/

very fat, in a way that is not healthy

Our obese friend needs to cut down on his food intake.

obituary

noun /əʊ'bitʃuəri/

an article about a person's life and achievements that is printed in a newspaper soon after his or her death

I felt really sad after reading my uncle's obituary in the paper.

oblique

adjective /ə'bli:k/

not expressed or done in a direct way

Her oblique references to literature make it very difficult for her students to understand her.

obliterate

verb /ə'blɪtəreɪt/

to destroy completely so that all signs of something are removed

A hurricane can obliterate entire neighborhoods.

oblivious

adjective /ə'blɪvɪəs/

not aware of what is happening around oneself

They sang and danced the night away oblivious to the approaching thunderstorm.

obscene

adjective /əb'si:n/

indecent in a very offensive way

One should not use obscene language.

obscurantism

noun /ɒbskjʊ'ræntɪzəm/

the practice of deliberately preventing the facts or full details of something from becoming known

Government obscurantism has resulted in several conspiracy claims.

observatory

noun /əb'zɜ:vətəri/

a building designed for systematic astronomical studies

The telescope is kept in the observatory.

obsolescence

noun /ɒbsə'lesns/

the process of becoming obsolete or outdated and no longer used

Computers are infamous for their rapid obsolescence.

obsolete

adjective /'ɒbsəli:t/

no longer practised, used, or accepted

Computers made typewriters obsolete.

obstinate

adjective /'ɒbstɪnət/

stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or chosen course of action

The obstinate ruler persisted despite the pleas of his advisers.

obstruction

noun /əb'strʌkʃn/

an obstacle or blockage

The train had to stop because there was an obstruction on the track.

oceanic

adjective /ˌəʊʃɪ'ænik, ˌəʊsɪ'ænik/

of or relating to the ocean

Cool oceanic winds moderate inland temperatures.

octangular

adjective /ɒk'tæŋɡjʊlə/

having eight angles

Octangular buildings are more resistant to earthquakes.

octuplet

noun /ɒk'tju:plət/

each of eight children born at one birth

The octuplet had 3 brothers and 4 sisters.



oddity

noun /'ɒdɪti/

a person or thing that is strange or unusual
I was puzzled by the oddity of her remark.

odious

adjective /'əʊdiəs/

extremely unpleasant or repulsive
His odious behaviour changed her feelings toward him.

odyssey

noun /'ɒdɪsi/

a long, eventful journey
The refugee's odyssey from Cambodia to the USA was a terrifying experience for him.

oedema

noun /ɪ'di:mə/

a condition in which the liquid collects in the spaces inside the body and makes it swell
Severe cases of oedema may require surgery.

ohm

noun /əʊm/

a unit for measuring electrical resistance
One ohm is equal to one volt per ampere.

oleander

noun /,əʊlɪ'ændə[r]/

a poisonous evergreen Old World shrub
The oleander, like other flowering plants, is in full bloom this time of the year.

oligarchy

noun /'ɒlɪgə:ki/

a small group of people having control of a country
The Soviet Union was actually ruled by an oligarchy.

olio

noun /'əʊliəʊ/

a highly spiced stew of various meats and vegetables originating from Spain and Portugal
We were served olio for dinner.

ominous

adjective /'ɒmɪnəs/

suggesting that something bad is going to happen
The sky was an ominous shade of grey.

opaque

adjective /əʊ'peɪk/

not able to be seen through
Opaque pencil cases were not allowed during the examination.

opera

noun /'ɒprə/

a dramatic work in which all or most of the words are sung to music
We went to see an opera by Verdi.

operational

adjective /ɒpə'reɪʃənəl/

in or ready for use
The new power plant will be fully operational next year.

opinionated

adjective /ə'pɪnjənɪtɪd/

characterized by conceited assertiveness and dogmatism
It is useless to argue with an opinionated person.

oppressive

adjective /ə'presɪv/

cruel or unfair
The citizens protested against the general's oppressive regime.

optimum

adjective /'ɒptɪməm/

most favourable
There is an optimum temperature for each enzyme reaction.



12 to 14 age group

optometrist

noun /ɒp'tɒmətrɪst/

one whose job is to examine eyes and fit glasses to remedy visual defects

Her vision is becoming blurry, so she is making an appointment with her optometrist.

oratory

noun /'ɒrət[ə]ri/

the art or practice of formal speaking in public
The crowd was entranced by her oratory.

orchestral

adjective /ɔ:'kestrəl/

pertaining to a large group of musicians trained to play together

His orchestral work is a lot better than his solo recordings.

ordnance

noun /'ɔ:dnəns/

mounted guns or artillery

The gun was a brand new piece of ordnance.

oregano

noun /,ɒrɪ'ɡɑ:nəʊ, ə'regənəʊ/

a plant with leaves that have a sweet smell and are used in cooking as a herb

She sprinkled oregano on her sandwich.

orphanage

noun /'ɔ:fənɪdʒ/

a home which cares for children whose parents are dead

The little boy was brought to the orphanage after his parents died.

orthodox

adjective /'ɔ:θədɒks/

generally accepted or approved of

She always sticks to her orthodox beliefs.

orthologs

plural noun /'ɔ:θəʊlɒgz/

genes found in two or more species that can be traced to a common ancestor

The beta globin chain genes in humans and chimpanzees are examples of orthologs.

oscilloscope

noun /ə'sɪləskəʊp/

a piece of equipment that shows changes in electrical current as waves in a line on a screen

Electronic engineers use the oscilloscope to study wave patterns.

ostentatious

adjective /,ɒsten'teɪʃəs/

expensive or noticeable in a way intended to impress people

The bride's mother was dressed in a very ostentatious style.

ostinato

noun /,ɒstri'nɑ:təʊ/

a continually repeated musical phrase or rhythm

The cellos have the tune above a bass ostinato.

outrageous

adjective /aʊt'reɪdʒəs/

very shocking and unacceptable

They spent an outrageous amount of money on the mansion.

overwrought

adjective /,əʊvə'rɔ:t/

in a state of nervous excitement or anxiety

She was too overwrought to listen to reason.

oxygenate

verb /'ɒksɪdʒənert/

to supply with oxygen

Deforestation is a cause for concern, given that trees significantly oxygenate the environment.

pacifism

noun /'pæsɪfɪzəm/

the belief that war and violence are always wrong
Pacifism is normally considered a good attitude, but people also have to defend their nation and rights.

paddock

noun /'pædək/

a small field where horses are kept
Most homes in northern Pakistan have a paddock.

pageantry

noun /'pædʒəntri/

an elaborate display or ceremony
The pageantry of the independence day celebration demonstrated the nation's pride.

palaeomagnetism

noun /peɪləʊ'mæɡnɪtɪzəm, ˌpæləʊ'mæɡnɪtɪzəm/
the branch of geophysics concerned with the magnetism in rocks that was induced by the earth's magnetic field at the time of their formation
Conglomerate tests are applied to mechanically disaggregated clasts of a formation whose palaeomagnetism is under investigation.

palate

noun /'pæɪt/

the top part of the inside of the mouth
A cleft palate can usually be fixed with surgery.

palette

noun /'pæɪt/

a thin board on which an artist lays and mixes colours
The artist took his easel and palette to the beach and started painting a sea-scape.

palpable

adjective /'pælpəbl/

so intense a feeling or atmosphere as to seem almost tangible
After the examination, there was a palpable sense of relief among the students.

palpitate

verb /'pælpɪteɪt/

to beat rapidly, strongly, or irregularly
His heart began to palpitate when he spotted a shadowy figure standing in the alley.

panacea

noun /ˌpænə'siə/

a cure for all diseases or problems
Even though aspirin is the world's most popular drug, it is not a panacea.

pangolin

noun /ˌpæŋ'ɡəʊlɪn/

an African and Asian mammal that has a body covered with horny overlapping scales, also called a scaly anteater

panorama

noun /ˌpænə'rɑ:mə/

a view of a wide area of land
Tourists never forget the first impact of the panorama of the Grand Canyon.

pantomime

noun /'pæntəmaɪm/

theatrical entertainment involving music, jokes, and slapstick comedy
Television and other forms of entertainment are undermining the tradition of pantomime in Britain.

panzer

noun /'pænzə/

a German armoured unit
Grouped into corps, the panzer divisions proved tactically decisive.

paparazzo

noun /ˌpæpə'rætsəʊ/

a freelance photographer who pursues celebrities to take photographs of them
The paparazzo hid in the bushes to get better shots of the actor.

P

12 to 14
age group

papoose

noun /pə'pu:s/

a type of bag used to carry a child on one's back
I put my daughter in a papoose when we went hiking.

paradigm

noun /'pærədaim/

a typical example or pattern of something
The computer is a popular paradigm for how the brain works.

parallelogram

noun /'pærə'lelɒgrəm/

a flat shape with four straight sides, the opposite sides being parallel and equal to each other
It is hard to draw an accurate parallelogram by hand.

paralyse

verb /'pærəlaɪz/

to cause a person or part of the body to become partly or wholly incapable of movement
The venom of the snake is so powerful that it can paralyse a man within minutes of the bite.

paranoid

adjective /'pærənɔɪd/

wrongly believing that other people are trying to harm you
He has paranoid delusions that his neighbour is trying to kill him.

paraphernalia

noun /'pærəfə'neɪliə/

miscellaneous equipment
We shall require a kettle and all the other paraphernalia to make and serve tea.

paraplegia

noun /'pærə'pli:dʒiə/

paralysis of the legs and lower body
Paraplegia restricts him to a wheelchair.

parentage

noun /'peərəntɪdʒ/

the identity and origins of one's father and mother
He is of mixed parentage.

parlay

verb /'pɑ:leɪ/

to turn an initial stake or winnings from a previous bet into a greater amount by gambling
He was able to parlay his small win into a huge amount of money.

parliamentarian

noun /'pɑ:ləmən'teəriən/

a member of parliament
He is a veteran parliamentarian whose views enjoy widespread respect.

parmesan

noun /'pɑ:mɪzæn/

a hard, dry Italian cheese used chiefly in grated form
She used grated parmesan to make the sauce.

parsimonious

adjective /'pɑ:sɪ'məʊniəs/

extremely unwilling to spend money
His parsimonious nature did not permit him to enjoy any luxuries.

particular

adjective /pə'tɪkjʊlə[r]/

referring to one individual person, thing, or type of thing and not to others
The court did not agree with any particular opinion.

passim

adverb /'pæsɪm/

used in the notes to a book or an article to show that a particular name or subject appears in several places in it
The scholarly article referred to a recent study passim.

pastoral

adjective /'pɑ:stərəl/

expressive of the life of country people especially in an idealised and conventionalised manner
When I am in the city I long for the quiet pastoral lifestyle.

paternalism

noun /pə'tɜːnəlɪzəm/

father-like behaviour

The company president's paternalism made some of his employees happy and some of them angry.

patriarchal

adjective /ˌpeɪtrɪ'ɑːkl/

ruled or controlled by men

In the past decade, changes in our patriarchal society have resulted from greater awareness of gender equality.

paunch

noun /pɔːntʃ/

a stomach that is large and sticks out

His paunch was quite obvious, even in loose clothes.

pauper

noun /'pɔːpə[r]/

a very poor person

Being a pauper, he seldom gets to eat a hearty meal.

pavane

noun /pə'veɪn, pə'vɑːn/

a slow and stately dance of the 16th and 17th centuries

The decorous sweep of the pavane suited the courtly manners of 16th century Italy.

pawnbroker

noun /'pɔːnbrəʊkə[r]/

a person who lends money in exchange for articles left with him

When he had used up all his income, he was forced to take his wife's wedding ring to a pawnbroker.

payola

noun /peɪ'əʊlə/

the practice of bribing someone in return for the unofficial promotion of a product in the media

That song is so bad that it must have taken a lot of payola for it to be so popular.

peculiarity

noun /pɪˌkjuːlɪ'ærɪti/

an unusual or distinctive feature or habit

A sharp ringing in the ears is a peculiarity of the disease.

pedantic

adjective /pɪ'dæntɪk/

obsessed by book learning and theory

His pedantic nature makes him incapable of thinking out of the box.

peerless

adjective /'piələs/

better than all others

The audience gave the singer a standing ovation for his peerless performance.

pellucid

adjective /pe'luːsɪd/

extremely clear

They drank the pure and pellucid water from the spring.

penance

noun /'penəns/

an act performed to show regret at having done wrong

I must perform some penance for treating my mother so cruelly.

pendulous

adjective /'pendjʊləs/

hanging down loosely

Pendulous branches of fruit look beautiful in the summer sun.

penicillin

noun /ˌpenɪ'sɪlɪn/

an antibiotic

The discovery of penicillin was hailed as one of the greatest medical breakthroughs of the 19th century.

P

12 to 14
age group

peninsula

noun /pɪˈnɪnsjələ/

a piece of land almost surrounded by water but joined to a larger piece of land

The Arabian peninsula has become a hub of trade and commerce in the past five years.

penultimate

adjective /penˈʌltɪmət/

the second to last

They scored a boundary off the penultimate delivery.

peon

noun /ˈpiːən/

a person who does unskilled work

The peon at our office is very organised and efficient.

peppercorn

noun /ˈpepəkɔːn/

a dried berry from a tropical plant that is ground to make pepper

She used crushed peppercorn to season the soup.

peremptory

adjective /pəˈremptəri/

insisting on immediate attention or obedience

She dreaded his peremptory orders.

perforation

noun /ˌpɜːfəˈreɪʃn/

a hole made by boring or piercing

A perforation in the ear drum can result in a serious ear infection.

perfumery

noun /pəˈfjuːməri/

the action or business of producing or selling perfumes

Her perfumery business is flourishing in the Gulf countries.

perfunctorily

adverb /pəˈfʌŋktərɪli/

carried out without real interest, feeling, or effort

Others clapped perfunctorily while loyal supporters gave him a standing ovation.

perigee

noun /ˈperɪdʒiː/

the point in the orbit of the moon at which it is nearest to the Earth

The students in the science class calculated the distance of the perigee.

peripheral

adjective /pəˈrɪfərəl/

relating to or situated on the edge of something

Peripheral vision is good at spotting movement.

perishable

adjective /ˈperɪʃəbəl/

likely to decay or go bad quickly

Don't stock up on groceries, particularly perishable items, before heading off on holidays.

periwinkle

noun /ˈperɪwɪŋkəl/

an Old World plant with flat five-petalled flowers and glossy leaves

Rows of white periwinkle plants bordered the garden.

permafrost

noun /ˈpɜːməˌfrɒst/

ground that is permanently frozen, often to great depths

In many high mountainous regions, permafrost may be present.

permeate

verb /ˈpɜːmiət/

to spread to every part of an object or a place

If you do not open the window, the smell of cooking will permeate the entire house.

permissible

adjective /pəˈmɪsəbl/

allowable

The tube-well water contained permissible levels of nitrates.

perpetual

adjective /pəˈpetʃʊəl/

continuing for ever

They have a perpetual fear of losing their jobs.

perplexity

noun /pə'pleksɪti/

a feeling of being confused and frustrated because you do not understand something
Her perplexity on hearing the news was obvious.

persona

noun /pɜː'səʊnə/

the aspect of a person's character that is presented to others
One should never be misled by a politician's public persona.

perspicuity

noun /pɜːsɪ'kʊɪti/

clearness of expression
His speech was praised for its perspicuity.

persuasion

noun /pə'sweɪʒn/

the action of causing someone to believe something through reasoning or argument
I doubt my attempts at persuasion would work on him.

pesticide

noun /'pestɪsaɪd/

a chemical used for killing pests, especially insects
Too much pesticide can be harmful for the crops.

pestilence

noun /'pestɪləns/

a deadly epidemic disease
From 1257 to 1260, both the city and the country suffered from severe rains, floods, and pestilence.

petrify

verb /'petrɪfaɪ/

to paralyse with fear
If you want to petrify him, just tell him there is a spider in the room.

petulant

adjective /'petʃələnt/

childishly sulky or bad-tempered
He behaved like a petulant child and refused to cooperate.

phantasm

noun /'fæntəzəm/

an illusion, apparition, or ghost
According to a local legend, the old mansion is inhabited by the phantasm of an 18th-century resident.

pharmaceutical

adjective /,fɑːmə's[j]uːtɪkl/

relating to medicinal drugs
Pharmaceutical companies should reduce the cost of drugs in poorer countries.

phenomenal

adjective /fə'nɒmɪnəl/

outstanding
Her phenomenal performance received rave reviews.

phlegm

noun /'fleɪm/

thick mucus which forms in the nose and throat, especially when one has a cold
Hot tea can help loosen phlegm.

Phobos

noun /'fəʊbəs/

the inner and larger of the two satellites of Mars
Phobos was discovered by Hall in 1877.

phoenix

noun /'fiːnɪks/

a mythical bird that lives for several hundred years before burning itself and then rising again from its own ashes

photomontage

noun /,fəʊtəʊmɒn'tɑːʒ/

a picture consisting of photographs placed together or overlapping
She posted a photomontage of her vacation on Facebook.

P

12 to 14
age group

phototaxis

noun /ˌfəʊtəʊˈtæksɪs/

the movement of an entire organism in response to light

Wild-type flies showing normal phototaxis consistently move towards the light.

phyllite

noun /ˈfɪlaɪt/

a rock that forms sheets, similar to slate

If slate minerals further recrystallize, giving the rocks a shiny appearance, the new rock is phyllite.

physiognomy

noun /ˌfɪzɪˈɒɡnəmi/

the shape and features of a person's face

He was proud of his ability to analyse a person's character by studying their physiognomy.

phytosanitary

adjective /ˌfaɪtəʊˈsænɪt[ə]ri/

relating to the health of plants, with respect to import and export

The plant nursery was to abide by phytosanitary regulations.

pica

noun /ˈpaɪkəl/

a unit for measuring the size of printed letters and the length of a line of printed text

To ensure accuracy, the letterheads have to be measured using pica as a scale.

picayune

adjective /ˌpɪkəˈjuːn/

of little value or significance

We shouldn't argue over picayune matters.

piccolo

noun /ˈpɪkələʊ/

a small flute

He is learning how to play the piccolo.

pier

noun /pɪə[r]/

a structure built in a lake, river or the sea and joined to the land at one end, where boat passengers get on and off

The boat was moored at the end of the pier.

piety

noun /ˈpaɪti/

religious devotion

The priest was renowned for his piety.

pillage

verb /ˈpɪlɪdʒ/

to rob a place using violence, especially in wartime

The locals were afraid the rebels would pillage their village as they passed through.

pimento

noun /pɪˈmentəʊ/

a small red pepper with a mild taste

She added pimento to the raw vegetable salad.

pious

adjective /ˈpaɪəs/

having or showing deep respect for God and religion

The old woman is known for her pious acts.

pipsqueak

noun /ˈpɪpskwɪk/

an unimportant person

The pipsqueak always receives rough treatment in films.

piquancy

noun /ˈpɪ:kənsi/

spiciness

I liked the soup because of its piquancy.

pique

verb /pɪ:k/

to arouse interest or curiosity

Your story is starting to pique my interest.

piscine

adjective /ˈpɪsaɪn/

of or concerning fish

The piscine creature was found floating in the lake, but no one could identify the species.

piste

noun /piːst/

a track of firm snow prepared for skiing

She skilfully skied down the piste.

pitchblende

noun /ˈpɪtʃˌblend/

a blackish mineral that is a type of uraninite and occurs in veins, frequently associated with silver

The first discovery of pitchblende in the United States was associated with gold ores at the Wood mine in Gilpin County.

pivotal

adjective /ˈpɪvətl/

of crucial importance in relation to the development or success of something else

Saeed Anwar played a pivotal role in the team's victory.

placenta

noun /pləˈsentə/

a flattened circular organ in the uterus, nourishing and maintaining the fetus through the umbilical cord

This transformation is essential to ensure a normal blood supply to the fetus and placenta throughout pregnancy.

plagiarize

verb /ˈpleɪdʒəraɪz/

to take the work of someone else and pretend it is one's own

The student was warned by the teacher not to plagiarize.

plague

noun /pleɪɡ/

a dangerous illness that spreads very quickly

A lot of children died during the outbreak of plague in the city.

plaintiff

noun /ˈpleɪntɪf/

a person who makes a formal complaint against somebody in court

The plaintiff demanded compensation for the damage to his house.

plankton

noun /ˈplæŋktən/

tiny organisms living in the sea or fresh water

plasticine

noun /ˈplæstɪsɪn/

a soft modelling material

Plasticine was my favourite plaything as a child.

platinum

noun /ˈplætɪnəm/

a silver grey precious metal that is often used for making expensive jewellery

She ordered a bracelet of platinum and silver.

platypus

noun /ˈplætɪpəs/

an amphibious egg-laying Australian mammal with a duck-like bill and webbed feet

playa

noun /ˈplæɪjə/

an area of flat, dried-up land, especially a desert basin from which water evaporates quickly

When it rains, the river deposits water in the playa where it quickly evaporates.

pleasantries

plural noun /ˈplezəntriːz/

unimportant remarks made as part of a polite conversation

After exchanging pleasantries, they got down to serious discussion.

plebiscite

noun /ˈplebɪsaɪt/

the direct vote of all the members of an electorate on an important public question

The plebiscite has not yet been held.

P

12 to 14
age group

plectrum

noun /'plektrəm/

a thin flat piece of plastic or metal used to pluck the strings of a musical instrument
The material used to make a plectrum greatly affects the sound produced.

pliable

adjective /'plaiəbl/

easy to bend
Plasticine is a very pliable material.

plough

verb /plau/

to dig and turn over a field or area of land
It took them a week to plough the large field.

plume

noun /plu:m/

a long, soft feather or set of feathers
She wore a black hat with a red plume.

pneumonia

noun /nju:'məʊniə/

a serious illness affecting one or both lungs that makes breathing difficult
The doctor revealed that the cause of his death was pneumonia.

podium

noun /'pəʊdiəm/

a small platform that a person stands on when giving a speech or conducting an orchestra
His legs started shaking in nervous excitement as he made his way to the podium.

poignant

adjective /'pɔɪnjənt/

evoking a keen sense of sadness or regret
The photo was a poignant reminder of happier times.

polyglot

adjective /'pɒlɪglɒt/

containing or using several languages
Switzerland is a polyglot nation.

polystyrene

noun /'pɒlɪ'staɪrɪn/

a synthetic resin which is a polymer of styrene
She bought some cups made of polystyrene.

pomander

noun /pəʊ'mændə[r], 'pɒmændər/

A ball or perforated container of aromatic substances, used to perfume the air
A homemade pomander tucked in a gift basket will lend it a wonderful aroma.

ponderous

adjective /'pɒndərəs/

slow and clumsy because of great weight
The ponderous man didn't stand a chance of catching the agile child.

pontiff

noun /'pɒntɪf/

the Pope
The new pontiff has a challenging task ahead of him.

porpoise

noun /'pɔ:pəs/

a small, toothed whale with a low triangular dorsal fin and a blunt, rounded snout

porridge

noun /'pɒrɪdʒ/

a type of soft, thick white food made by boiling oats in milk or water
He often has porridge for breakfast.

portend

verb /pɔ:'tend/

to be a sign or warning that something is likely to happen
The cold wind and gray sky portend an early winter this year.

posse

noun /'pɒsɪ/

a group of people summoned by a sheriff to enforce the law or help him catch a criminal
The posse caught the thief after a long search.

potassium

noun /pə'tæsiəm/

a soft silver-white metal that exists mainly in compounds which are used in industry and farming
A small amount of potassium is essential to our diet.

precedence

noun /'presɪdəns/

priority in time or importance
His desire for power took precedence over everything else.

precious

adjective /'preʃəs/

having great value
The crown was set with precious jewels.

precision

noun /prɪ'sɪʒn/

extreme accuracy
Neurosurgery requires a great deal of precision.

precursor

noun /prɪ'kɜ:sə/

a person or thing that comes before another of the same kind
Colonial opposition to unfair taxation by the British was a precursor of the American Revolution.

predatory

adjective /'predətəri/

living by killing and eating other animals
The hawk is a predatory bird.

predictable

adjective /prɪ'dɪktəbl/

behaving as expected
The disease follows a highly predictable pattern.

preen

verb /pri:n/

to spend a lot of time making yourself look attractive and then admiring your appearance
They were amused to see the bride preen herself in front of the mirror before her photoshoot.

prehensile

adjective /pri'hensail/

adapted for seizing or grasping by wrapping around
Many monkeys have long, prehensile tails which they use to move through the trees.

premier

adjective /'premiə[r], 'pri:miə[r]/

first in importance, order, or position
He is one of France's premier chefs.

preponderance

noun /prɪ'pɒndərəns/

the quality or fact of being greater in number, quantity, or importance
The rebels used guerilla tactics to overcome the preponderance of government forces.

prerequisite

noun /,pri:'rekwɪzɪt/

a thing that is required as a prior condition for something else to happen or exist
A bachelor's degree is a prerequisite for this position.

prescient

adjective /'presɪənt/

having or showing knowledge of events before they take place
His prescient advice to take an umbrella kept us from getting wet in the sudden rain shower.

pressurize

verb /'preʃəraɪz/

to produce or maintain raised pressure artificially in a gas or its container
The crew will pressurize the astronaut's spacesuit before his walk in space.

preternatural

adjective /,pri:tə'nætʃrəl/

inexplicable by natural laws
He has a preternatural gift for knowing what others are thinking.

P

12 to 14
age group

priority

noun /praɪ'ɒrɪti/

being put first

Priority was given to David as he was a senior citizen.

probabilistic

adjective /ˌprɒbəbɪ'lɪstɪk/

based on probability

The probabilistic risk involved in the experiment was minimal.

probe

noun /prəʊb/

an unmanned spacecraft sent to collect data from space

The probe took years to reach Pluto.

problematic

verb /ˈprɒbləmətaɪz/

to make into or regard as a problem requiring a solution

Cultural differences are not something that we should problematize.

procure

verb /prə'kjʊə[r]/

to obtain something, especially with difficulty

She managed to procure a ticket for the concert.

professionalism

noun /prə'feʃənəlɪzəm/

the competence or skill expected of a professional
Hamid brought a professionalism to the office that hadn't been there before.

prognosis

noun /prɒɡ'nəʊsɪs/

a prediction of the 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.

prognosticate

verb /prɒɡ'nɒstɪkeɪt/

to foretell or prophesy a future event

It is notoriously difficult to prognosticate the future.

prohibit

verb /prəʊ'hɪbɪt/

to formally forbid something

The university has decided to prohibit smoking on campus.

proliferation

noun /prə'lɪfə'reɪʃn/

a rapid increase in the number or amount of something

The proliferation of mobile phones has had a profound effect on society.

promenade

noun /ˌprɒmə'neɪd/

a paved public walk, typically one along the seafront at a resort

Since the weather was so nice, grandfather and I walked along the promenade.

promontory

noun /ˈprɒməntəri/

a long narrow area of high land that goes out into the sea

We crowded onto the promontory in order to catch a glimpse of the battleship.

promulgate

verb /ˈprɒməlɡeɪt/

to promote or make widely known

We should promulgate these objectives within the organisation.

pronto

adverb /ˈprɒntəʊ/

promptly or quickly

I expect to see you back here, pronto!

prophecy

noun /ˈprɒfəsi/

a statement about what is going to happen in the future

The prophecy has yet to come true.

propinquity

noun /prə'pɪŋkwɪti/

the state of being close to someone or something
His office's propinquity to his home means that he can walk to work.

propolis

noun /'prɒpəlɪs/

a red or brown resinous substance collected by honeybees from tree buds
Honeybees will fill any gap or crack in the hive with propolis.

prorogue

verb /prə'reʊg/

to discontinue a session of a parliament or other legislative assembly without dissolving it
The president had no option but to prorogue the National Assembly.

prosaic

adjective /prə'zeɪk/

ordinary and showing no imagination
He has a prosaic writing style.

prosperous

adjective /'prɒspərəs/

rich and successful
He was a prosperous businessman.

protestant

noun /'prɒtɪstənt/

a member of any of the Western Christian Churches that are separate from the Roman Catholic Church.
The majority of the population of this town is Protestant.

protist

noun /'prəʊtɪst/

an organism of the kingdom Protista which comprises mostly single-celled organisms such as the protozoa, simple algae and fungi, and slime moulds
A protist can live in almost any environment that contains water.

protocol

noun /'prəʊtəkɒl/

the accepted code of formal behaviour used at official meetings or between governments
The officials were careful to follow protocol during their meeting.

providential

adjective /prəvɪ'denʃəl/

occurring at a favourable time
The providential arrival of a doctor saved the woman's life.

prowess

noun /'prəʊəs/

great skill
We admire her prowess in athletics.

prudent

adjective /'pru:dnt/

sensible and careful in making judgements and decisions
The prudent businessman consulted his associates before going ahead with the plan.

pseudonym

noun /'su:dnɪm/

a false name, especially one used by an author
Most writers write under a pseudonym to protect their real identities.

psychedelic

adjective /saɪkə'delɪk/

relating to or denoting drugs that produce hallucinations and apparent expansion of consciousness
The use of psychedelic drugs is strongly associated with the 1960s and 70s.

psychic

adjective /'saɪkɪk/

connected with strange powers of the mind not explainable by natural laws
He claimed he could use his psychic powers to communicate with spirits.

P

12 to 14
age group

puckish

adjective /'pʌkɪʃ/

playful, especially in a mischievous way

Harris is a fun loving guy with a puckish smile.

puerile

adjective /'pjʊərəɪl/

childishly silly

Puerile behaviour only makes one look idiotic.

pugnacious

adjective /pʌg'neɪʃəs/

eager or quick to argue or fight

The pugnacious boy was constantly getting into fights.

puissant

adjective /'pjʊːsənt, 'pwɪsənt/

having great power or influence

Long live the most puissant king.

pulsating

adjective /pʌl'seɪtɪŋ/

producing a regular throbbing sensation or sound

The pulsating music was perfect for dancing.

pungent

adjective /'pʌndʒənt/

having a sharply strong taste or smell

The pungent smell of burning fuel filled the air.

pursuit

noun /pə'sju:t/

the act of pursuing, chasing, or striving after

She travelled the world in pursuit of her dreams.

pustule

noun /'pʌstju:l/

a small blister or pimple on the skin containing pus

She refused to go to the party because she had a pustule on her face.

putrescent

adjective /pju:'tresənt/

undergoing the process of decay

The putrescent apples were full of worms.

pylorus

noun /paɪ'lɔːrəs/

the opening from the stomach into the duodenum

The doctors could not diagnose what had caused the inflammation of the pylorus.



qualm

noun /kwɑ:m/

an uneasy feeling of doubt, worry, or fear, especially about one's own conduct

He had a qualm about leaving his friend alone in a strange place.

quark

noun /kwɑ:k/

any of a number of subatomic particles carrying a fractional electric charge

No one has directly observed a quark, but its existence has been shown experimentally.

quarrelsome

adjective /'kwɒrəlsəm/

argumentative

Her quarrelsome nature has made her many enemies.

quarterly

adjective /'kwɔ:təli/

occurring or made four times a year

He could not attend the quarterly meeting of the board.

quartet

noun /kwɔ:'tɛt/

a group of four people playing music or singing together

A string quartet was playing when I entered the ballroom.

quasar

noun /'kweɪzɑ:/

a massive and extremely remote celestial object which typically has a star-like image in a telescope

A quasar may contain a massive black hole and represent a stage in the evolution of some galaxies.

querulous

adjective /'kwɛr[j]ʊləs/

habitually complaining

My grandmother has become rather querulous since her illness.

quesadilla

noun /,keɪsə'di:ʃə, ,keɪsə'di:lʃə/

a flat piece of bread that is folded around a filling of meat, cheese, or other ingredients

She had to demonstrate how to make a quesadilla for her cookery class.

questionnaire

noun /,kwɛstʃə'neə[r]/

a set of questions produced for a survey

The questionnaire wasn't too long, so she answered it during her break.

quibble

verb /'kwɪbl/

to argue about a small matter

I was told not to quibble over who got the last slice of pizza.

quill

noun /kwɪl/

the hollow stem of a feather

Pens made from quills were used during the middle ages.

quintessence

noun /kwɪn'tesns/

the perfect or most typical example of a quality or class

It was the quintessence of an English manor house.

quisling

noun /'kwɪzlɪŋ/

a person who helps an enemy that has taken control of his or her country

The quisling leaked all the state secrets.

quiver

verb /'kwɪvə[r]/

to shake slightly

An attack of nerves caused her hands to quiver.

Q

12 to 14
age group

quixotic

adjective /kwɪk'sɒtɪk/

enthusiastic but usually not practical

Her quixotic nature made her an unsuitable head of state.

quizzical

adjective /'kwɪzɪkəl/

indicating mild or amused puzzlement

She gave me a quizzical look when I told her I couldn't go.

raillery

noun /ˈreɪləri/
friendly joking
His raillery was not intended to be cruel.

raisin

noun /ˈreɪzn/
a dried grape
I put a raisin on top of each muffin.

rallentando

noun /ˌrælənˈtændəʊ/
a gradual decrease in the speed of the music
The movement ended with a rallentando.

ramen

plural noun /ˈrɑːmen/
quick-cooking noodles, typically served in a broth with meat and vegetables
The ramen was so filling that she skipped the dessert.

ramparts

plural noun /ˈræmpɑːts/
the defensive walls of a castle or walled city, having a broad top with a walkway and typically a stone parapet
Archers lined the ramparts, ready to rain arrows on the invaders.

rancour

noun /ˈræŋkə[r]/
bitter feelings
She accepted the decision without rancour, even though it was unfair.

ransom

noun /ˈrænsəm/
the money demanded by kidnappers to free someone they are keeping prisoner
The kidnappers demanded a large ransom for the boy's release.

rapacious

adjective /rəˈpeɪʃəs/
aggressively greedy or grasping
The rapacious landlord raised the rent as often as possible.

raton

noun /ræˈtuːn/
a new shoot or sprout growing from the roots of a crop plant, especially sugar cane, after harvesting
Healthy roots will produce a raton when the main stem of the plant has been cut.

realization

noun /riːəlaɪˈzeɪʃn/
an act of becoming fully aware of something as a fact
The realization that the world was round led to the Age of Discovery.

realm

noun /reɪlm/
an area of activity, interest, or thought
He seemed to drift into the realm of fantasy towards the end of his speech.

rebuff

noun /rɪˈbʌf/
an abrupt or unkind refusal
Her offer of help was met with a sharp rebuff.

rebuke

verb /rɪˈbjuːk/
to speak severely to a person for doing something wrong
You should rebuke him for sleeping when he should be working.

recalcitrant

adjective /rɪˈkælsɪtrənt/
unwilling to cooperate
A recalcitrant child usually grows up to be a fiercely independent individual.

R

12 to 14
age group

receipt

noun /rɪ'si:t/

a piece of paper showing that goods or services have been paid for

Make sure you get a receipt for your expenses.

recital

noun /rɪ'saɪtəl/

a concert given by an individual musician or dancer
Her piano recital was so successful that she received a standing ovation.

recluse

noun /rɪ'klu:s/

a person who lives alone and avoids other people
After his daughter's death he began to lead the life of a recluse.

reconnoitre

verb /ˌrɛkə'nɔɪtəl/

to make a military observation of a region
It is a good idea to reconnoitre before launching an attack.

reconvene

verb /ˌrɪkən'veɪn/

to meet again, especially after a pause in proceedings
The meeting was to reconvene after lunch.

recruit

noun /rɪ'kru:t/

a person who has just joined the military or another organisation
The sergeant ordered the recruit to strictly follow all the rules.

rectify

verb /ˈrɛktɪfaɪ/

to put right something that is wrong
If he promises to rectify his mistakes, she might consider forgiving him.

recusant

noun /ˈrɛkjʊzənt/

a person who refuses to submit to an authority or to comply with a regulation
He was a known recusant and a disreputable person.

redolent

adjective /ˈrɛdələnt/

strongly reminiscent or suggestive of something
The flag was redolent of the regiment's history.

reef

noun /ri:f/

a ridge of jagged rock, coral, or sand just above or below the surface of the sea
Below is a beautiful coral reef, turtles, sharks and a clean ocean floor.

referendum

noun /ˌrɛfə'rendəm/

a vote by all voters on an important issue
He became the president after a nation-wide referendum.

refinery

noun /rɪ'faɪnəri/

a place where a substance such as oil is refined
Cigarettes were strictly prohibited at the oil refinery.

regalia

noun /rɪ'ɡeɪliə/

the distinctive clothing worn and ornaments carried at formal occasions as an indication of status
They unveiled a portrait of the queen in her full coronation regalia.

regime

noun /rɛɪ'ʒi:m/

a method or system of government
When a Frenchman mentions the old regime, he is referring to the monarchy before the revolution.

regiment

noun /ˈrɛdʒɪmənt/

a large group of soldiers
The colonel led the regiment to the war front.

regolith

noun /ˈregəlɪθ/
the layer of loose material covering the bedrock of a planet.
The moon's regolith was produced by meteorite impacts.

rehearsal

noun /rɪˈhɜːsl/
a practice in preparation for a public performance
The rehearsal went so well that we were given the next three days off.

reign

noun /reɪn/
the period during which a king or queen rules
Queen Victoria's reign was very long.

reimburse

verb /ˌrɪmˈbɜːs/
to repay a person who has spent or lost money
He was told that the firm would reimburse his travel expenses.

reinforce

verb /ˌrɪːnˈfɔːs/
to make something stronger
Such jokes tend to reinforce racial stereotypes.

reiterate

verb /rɪˈɪtəreɪt/
to say again
Let me reiterate that we are fully committed to this policy.

relegate

verb /ˈreɪlɪgeɪt/
to give somebody a lower rank than before
He was forced to relegate her to the role of an assistant.

reliance

noun /rɪˈlaɪəns/
dependence on or trust in someone or something
Our reliance on the mobile phone is increasing day by day.

relic

noun /ˈreɪlɪk/
an object or tradition that has survived from a previous era
This building is a relic of the town's defunct cotton industry.

reluctance

noun /rɪˈlʌktəns/
an unwillingness or disinclination to do something
Sara felt great reluctance to perform in front of a rowdy crowd.

remission

noun /rɪˈmɪʃn/
a lessening of force, effect, or degree
Her illness went into remission following treatment with the latest drug.

remorse

noun /rɪˈmɔːs/
deep regret
I felt guilty and full of remorse for the way I treated her.

remunerative

adjective /rɪˈmjuːnərətɪv/
financially rewarding
He stopped working for charity to pursue more remunerative activities.

renege

verb /rɪˈneɪɡ, rɪˈniːɡ/
to break a promise or agreement
If he tries to renege on the deal, we will take him to court.

renovate

verb /ˈrenəveɪt/
to restore to good condition
We had to spend a lot of money to renovate our house.

R

12 to 14
age group

repartee

noun /ˌrepaˈtiː/

quick, witty comments or replies

The actor is known for his repartee and quick wit.

repatriate

verb /ˌriːˈpætriət, riːˈpeɪtriət/

to send someone back to their own country

We will try to repatriate the refugees now that a peace settlement has been reached.

replica

noun /ˈreplɪkəl/

an exact copy of something

We are going to hang a replica of the Declaration of Independence in our classroom.

repressive

adjective /rɪˈpresɪv/

inhibiting or restraining personal freedom

Since 1962 they have struggled under the rule of a repressive dictator.

reprisal

noun /rɪˈpraɪzəl/

an act of revenge

They did not want to give any evidence for fear of a reprisal.

repulsion

noun /rɪˈpʌlʃən/

a feeling of intense distaste or disgust

I have a repulsion to eating insects.

requiem

noun /ˈrekwiəm, ˈrekwiem/

a solemn chant or dirge for the repose of the dead
Mozart's requiem was only partly finished when he died.

researcher

noun /rɪˈsɜːtʃə[r], ˈriːsɜːtʃə[r]/

a person who makes careful study of a subject in order to discover new information about it

The researcher had to go all the way to Brazil to get a sample of the rare plant.

reservation

noun /rezəˈveɪʃən/

an arrangement whereby something, especially a seat or room, is reserved for a particular person

I had to cancel my reservation at the restaurant.

resonance

noun /ˈrezənəns/

the quality in a sound of being deep, full, and reverberating

The resonance of the church bells in the Alpine Valley added to the magic of the moment.

responsiveness

noun /rɪˈspɒnsɪv nəʃ/

the quality of reacting quickly and positively

They showed a lack of responsiveness to client needs.

restitution

noun /ˌrestɪˈtjuːʃn/

the restoration of something lost or stolen to its proper owner

He was very happy at the restitution of his wallet.

restraint

noun /rɪˈstreɪnt/

calm and controlled behaviour

His ability to show restraint in the face of insults was admirable.

resumption

noun /rɪˈzʌmpʃn/

the action of beginning something again after a pause or interruption

The resumption of work is not possible without additional funds.

retch

verb /retʃ/

to undergo an involuntary spasm of vomiting

The dreadful smell made her retch.

retentive**adjective** /rɪ'tentɪv/

effective in retaining facts and impressions
Ahmed has a sharp and retentive memory and can recall facts and figures easily.

retribution**noun** /ˌretri'bjuːʃn/

punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act
He feared divine retribution for his sins.

revamp**verb** /rɪˈvæmp/

to give new and improved form, structure, or appearance to
Naila decided to revamp the whole script.

revelation**noun** /revəˈleɪʃən/

a surprising and previously unknown fact that has been disclosed to others
At one time, the fact that the world is round was a revelation.

reverie**noun** /ˈrevəri/

a daydream
She was jolted out of her reverie by a knock at the door.

reversal**noun** /rɪˈvɜːsəl/

a change to an opposite direction, position, or course of action
The numerous complaints resulted in a reversal of the unpopular policy.

revolutionize**verb** /revəˈluːʃənəɪz/

to change something radically or fundamentally
The old tycoon offered 5 tips to revolutionize any business.

revue**noun** /rɪˈvjuː/

a light theatrical entertainment consisting of a series of short sketches, songs, and dances, typically dealing satirically with topical issues
The pupils staged an end-of-year revue.

revulsion**noun** /rɪˈvʌlʃən/

a sense of disgust and loathing
We can only react to such ghastly acts with revulsion.

rhodium**noun** /ˈrəʊdiəm/

chemical element number 45, a hard silvery-white metal of the transition series
Rhodium typically occurs in association with platinum.

ribald**adjective** /ˈrɪbəld, ˈrɪbɔːld/

coarse, obscene, or licentious, usually in a humorous or mocking way
The use of ribald humor ruined the entire play.

rickety**adjective** /ˈrɪkɪti/

poorly made and likely to collapse
The hermit lived in a rickety shack that looked like it would fall over in a strong wind.

righteous**adjective** /ˈraɪtʃəs/

morally right and good
Righteous deeds will get you to heaven.

riparian**adjective** /raɪˈpeəriən/

related to or situated on the banks of a river
All the riparian states must sign an agreement.

roseate**adjective** /ˈrəʊziət/

rose-coloured or pink
The window's roseate tint made everything inside look pink.

R

12 to 14
age group

rostrum

noun /'rɒstrəm/
a platform for public speaking
I stood on the rostrum to deliver the speech.

rote

noun /rəʊt/
a habitual or mechanical routine or procedure
You are merely reciting facts that you have learned by rote.

rotor

noun /'rəʊtə/
a hub with a number of aerofoils that is rotated to provide lift for a helicopter
A damaged helicopter rotor caused the crash.

roulette

noun /ru:'let/
a gambling game in which players bet on which compartment of a revolving wheel a small ball will come to rest in
They spent the entire night playing roulette.

rouse

verb /raʊz/
to wake someone up, especially when they are sleeping deeply
If you want to rouse her, you'll have to rap hard on her bedroom door.

rubato

noun /rʊ'bɑ:təʊ/
the temporary disregarding of strict tempo to allow an expressive quickening or slackening
The pianist will want to experiment with rubato.

rubicund

adjective /'ru:bɪkənd/
having a reddish complexion
He has a cheerful, rubicund face.

ruching

noun /'ru:ʃɪŋ/
strips of pleated or frilled lace used to decorate clothing or worn around the neck
The ruching on the blouse was a nice touch.

ruffle

verb /'rʌfl/
to make something untidy or no longer smooth
I watched the breeze ruffle the surface of the lake.

rumbustious

adjective /rʌm'bʌstɪəs, rʌm'bʌstɪəs/
boisterous or unruly
He has three energetic, rumbustious little boys.

ruminant

noun /'ru:mɪnənt/
any animal, such as a cow or sheep, that regurgitates food from its stomach and chews it again
A ruminant has a stomach consisting of four compartments.

sacrilegious**adjective** /sækrɪˈlɪdʒəs/

disrespectful of a sacred place, person, or thing
Leading clerics condemned the book as a sacrilegious attack on their faith.

saffron**noun** /ˈsæfrən/

an orange-yellow flavouring, food colouring, and dye made from the dried stigmas of a crocus
Add saffron to the rice to give it an orange colour.

salamander**noun** /ˈsæləməndə[r]/

a small, thin lizard with four legs and a long tail, of the type that lives both on land and water

salient**adjective** /ˈseɪlɪənt/

most important or most noticeable
The article addressed the salient points of his argument.

sanatorium**noun** /ˌsænəˈtɔːrɪəm/

an establishment for the medical treatment of people who are convalescing or have a chronic illness.
The new sanatorium will help reduce the costs associated with treating chronic illness

sanction**verb** /ˈsæŋkʃn/

to give permission for something to take place
The government refused to sanction a further cut in the interest rate.

sanctuary**noun** /ˈsæŋktʃuəri/

refuge or safety from pursuit, persecution, or other danger
The government offered sanctuary to 4,000 refugees.

sanitizer**noun** /ˈsænɪtaɪzə[r]/

a disinfectant
There is still a controversy raging regarding using water or hand sanitizer.

sapient**adjective** /ˈseɪpɪənt/

having great knowledge or intelligence
My father believes himself to be a sapient man.

saraband**noun** /ˈsærəˌbænd/

a slow, stately Spanish dance in triple time
The dance teacher asked them to pick partners for the saraband.

sardine**noun** /sɑːˈdiːn/

a young pilchard or other young or small herring-like fish

sarong**noun** /səˈrɒŋ/

a long strip of cotton or silk material tied round the middle of the body like a skirt
She bought a Malaysian silk sarong from Kuala Lumpur.

satchel**noun** /ˈsætʃəl/

a leather school bag that can be hung over the shoulder or back
He slung his satchel over his shoulder and made his way to school.

satiate**verb** /ˈseɪfɪet/

to satisfy a desire or an appetite to the full
It is impossible to satiate the man's appetite.

satisfying**adjective** /ˈsætɪsfɑɪɪŋ/

giving fulfillment
The trip to the hills was a very satisfying experience.

satsuma**noun** /sætˈsuːmə/

a tangerine of a hardy loose-skinned variety, originally grown in Japan
She made a delicious dessert with satsuma and kiwi decorated with cherries and cream.

S

12 to 14
age group

savoury

adjective /'seɪvəri/

tasting salty, not sweet

He bought delicious savoury snacks for the tea party.

scabbard

noun /'skæbəd/

the cover for a sword or a similar bladed weapon

The ceremonial sword had a beautifully decorated scabbard.

scaffolding

noun /'skæfəldɪŋ/

a temporary structure made of wooden planks and metal poles, used while constructing, repairing, or cleaning a building

Scaffolding can be assembled and taken apart quickly.

scalpel

noun /'skælpəl/

a knife with a small sharp blade, used by a surgeon

The nurse handed the surgeon a scalpel as he began to operate on the patient.

scandalous

adjective /'skændələs/

shocking and unacceptable

The scandalous story damaged his reputation.

scaremonger

noun /'skeə,mʌŋgə[r]/

a person who spreads frightening or ominous reports or rumours

He dismissed the expert on global warming as nothing but a scaremonger.

scathing

adjective /'skeɪdɪŋ/

severely critical

Amina was almost in tears when she heard the scathing remarks of her boss.

scatterbrain

noun /'skætəbreɪn/

one who cannot think in an organised way

The student was such a scatterbrain that he often forgot his homework and was hardly ever on time.

scavenger

noun /'skævɪndʒə[r]/

an animal that feeds on carrion, dead plant material, or refuse

The raccoon is a well-known example of a scavenger.

scenario

noun /sə'nɑ:riəʊ/

a postulated sequence or development of events

The worst-case scenario is that I have to get a second job.

sceptic

noun /'skeptɪk/

one who doubts the truth of a fact or theory

One of the reasons I am such a sceptic is because I have been lied to so often.

schizophrenia

noun /,skɪtsəʊ'frɪniə/

a long-term mental disorder whose symptoms include inappropriate actions and feelings and withdrawal from reality into fantasy

The patient was diagnosed with schizophrenia.

schloss

noun /ʃlɒs/

a German castle or a stately home or mansion

It's a very pretty, small town, with a large schloss at the far end.

schnapps

noun /ʃnæps/

a Dutch spirit distilled from potatoes

Many people like to drink hot cocoa with peppermint schnapps at Christmas time.

scholastic**adjective** /skə'læstɪk/

pertaining to education or schools

*She received an award for scholastic achievement.***scintigraphy****noun** /sɪn'tɪgrəfi/

a technique used to obtain an image of a bodily organ or a record of its functioning

*Bone scintigraphy can be used to detect distant sites of metastases in the bone.***scion****noun** /'saɪən/

a young shoot or twig of a plant, especially one cut for grafting or rooting

*The rose scion was grafted onto disease resistant root stock.***scoff****verb** /skɒf/

to speak in a scornful way

*I saw him scoff at their immature behaviour.***scrimmage****noun** /'skrɪmɪdʒ/

a confused struggle or fight

*In the scrimmage that ensued, I lost my shoe while he lost a tooth and his wallet.***scriptural****adjective** /'skriptʃərəl/

pertaining to, contained in, or warranted by the holy books of a particular religion

*He has deep knowledge of the scriptural writings of mediaeval times.***scruple****noun** /'skruːpl/

a feeling of doubt or hesitation with regard to the morality or propriety of a course of action

*Without scruple, politicians use fear as a persuasion weapon.***scrutineer****noun** /,skruːtɪ'nɪə[r]/

a person who supervises the conduct of an election or competition

*The scrutineer from the European Union monitored the proceedings of the Afghan elections.***scuttle****verb** /'skʌtl/

to run quickly with short steps or with the body close to the ground

*The crabs scuttle along the seashore.***seance****noun** /'seɪəns, 'seɪənz/

a meeting at which people attempt to make contact with the dead, especially through the agency of a medium

*Anita said that the seance was successful as her dead aunt had contacted her.***secede****verb** /sɪ'siːd/

to withdraw formally from a federation of states or a political or religious organisation

*Chechnya is trying hard to secede from the Russian federation.***secular****adjective** /'sekjələ[r]/

not religious or spiritual

*Ours is not a secular society.***sedition****noun** /sɪ'dɪʃən/

the use of words intended to encourage people to oppose the government

*He was accused of sedition and arrested.***seltzer****noun** /'seltzəl/

carbonated water with a lot of minerals in it

Fruit juice mixed with seltzer makes a refreshing drink.

S

12 to 14
age group

selvedge

noun /ˈselvɪdʒ/

an edge produced on woven fabric during manufacture that prevents it from unravelling
For the neatest finish, cut strips along the selvedge using the selvedge for the seam allowance.

sere

adjective /sɪə/

being dry and withered
The sere winter garden gave no hint of flowers that would bloom in the spring.

serenity

noun /sɪˈrenɪti/

the state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled
The serenity of the town was shattered by a tremendous explosion.

serging

noun /ˈsɜːdʒɪŋ/

the method of overcasting the edges of a piece of fabric to prevent fraying
Serging can both protect edges and be decorative at the same time.

serpentine

adjective /ˈsɜːpəntaɪn/

of or like a serpent or snake
All the tourists love to drive down the serpentine street in San Francisco.

serried

adjective /ˈsɛrɪd/

standing close together
The soldiers marched in serried ranks towards the battlefield.

servile

adjective /ˈsɜːvaɪl/

submissive
His subordinates did not respect him due to his servile behaviour.

severity

noun /sɪˈvɛrɪti/

harshness
I don't think you will be able to bear the severity of the weather there.

shamisen

noun /ˈʃæmɪsen/

a traditional Japanese three-stringed lute with a square body
She played a traditional melody for us on her shamisen.

shindig

noun /ˈʃɪŋ.dɪg/

a social gathering with dancing
We're hosting a little shindig this weekend for some friends.

shingle

noun /ˈʃɪŋɡl/

a mass of small smooth stones lying on a beach
He saw tiny turtles on the shingle.

shriveled

verb /ˈʃrɪvəl/

to wrinkle and contract or cause to wrinkle and contract, especially due to loss of moisture
The near drought conditions have caused plants to shrivel and die.

siege

noun /sɪːdʒ/

an operation in which a police or other force surrounds a building and cuts off supplies
The palace was under seige by the angry citizens of Paris.

siesta

noun /sɪˈestə/

an afternoon rest or nap, especially one taken during the hottest hours of the day in a hot climate
In Mexico, lunch is traditionally followed by a siesta.

skittishly

adverb /'skɪtɪʃli/

in a nervous or excitable manner

The snowy white lamb skittishly ran and stood behind its grazing mother.

slew

verb /slu:/

to turn or slide violently or uncontrollably

The car began to slew when it hit the ice.

slipshod

adjective /'slɪpʃɒd/

describing an action done in a careless way

The hotel had always been run in a slipshod way.

sluggish

adjective /'slʌɡɪʃ/

moving or working more slowly than normal

Economists blame the sluggish economy on a decline in foreign demand.

sluice

noun /slu:s/

a sliding gate or other device for controlling the flow of water out of or into a canal

The water rushed through the sluice towards the mill.

slumber

noun /'slʌmbə[r]/

sleep

She fell into a deep and peaceful slumber.

smarmy

adjective /'smɑ:mi/

unpleasantly polite and flattering

The boss did not appreciate the smarmy employee.

smithereens

plural noun /,smɪðə'ri:nz/

small pieces

The vase smashed into smithereens when it hit the tile.

solace

noun /'sɒlɪs/

comfort or consolation in a time of great distress or sadness

She sought solace in her religion.

solemnity

noun /sə'lemnɪti/

the state or quality of being serious and dignified

The pact was signed with ceremonial solemnity in the grand hall.

soliloquy

noun /sə'li:ləkwɪ/

a dramatic monologue intended to give the illusion of unspoken reflections

She quoted Hamlet's famous soliloquy in the examination paper.

solitaire

noun /'sɒlɪteɪ/

a game for one player played by removing pegs one at a time from a board by jumping others over them from adjacent holes

Zara often relaxes by playing solitaire after everyone has gone to bed.

sonar

noun /'səʊnɑ:/

equipment on a ship which can calculate the depth of the sea or the position of an underwater object

Submarines also use sonar to detect other ships.

sonorous

adjective /'sɒnərəs/

sounding deep and full

The vocalist of the new rock band has a sonorous voice.

sophism

noun /'sɒfɪzəm/

a clever but misleading argument

In ancient Greece sophists practiced sophism to intimidate the audience into agreeing.

sophistication**noun** /səˌfɪstɪˈkeɪʃn/

worldly knowledge about fashion, culture and social etiquette

*Her sophistication probably stems from the many years she spent travelling around Europe and South America.***southerner****noun** /ˈsʌðənə[r]/

a person who comes from or lives in the southern part of a country

*Mahmud is a southerner since he was born in Karachi.***souvenir****noun** /ˌsuːvəˈniə[r]/

something bought or kept as a reminder of a time or place

*On her last day in the Maldives, she bought a souvenir to remind herself of the wonderful time she had.***sparsely****adverb** /ˈspɑːsli/

thinly dispersed or scattered

*We chose to camp in a sparsely populated area of Thar.***speciation****noun** /ˌspiːʃiˈeɪʃən, ˌspiːsiˈeɪʃən/

the formation of new and distinct species in the course of evolution

*Genetic drift may be a minor or major contributor to speciation.***spectacled****adjective** /ˈspektəkəld/

wearing glasses

*Zain, gray haired and spectacled, sat silently with the ancient manuscript in his hand.***spectrograph****noun** /ˈspektrəɡrɑːf/

an instrument that separates an incoming wave into a frequency spectrum

*The plant pigment phytochrome was discovered using a spectrograph.***speculative****adjective** /ˈspekjʊlətɪv/

engaged in, expressing, or based on conjecture rather than knowledge

*His speculative theories were dismissed by his peers.***spendthrift****noun** /ˈspendθrɪft/

a person who spends money in an extravagant, irresponsible way

*It is difficult for him to save money as he is a big spendthrift.***spiccato****noun** /spɪˈkɑːtəʊ/

a style of playing a bowed stringed instrument in which the bow bounces slightly

*Spiccato is an advanced technique on violin.***spiel****noun** /ˈspiːl, spiːl/

an elaborate speech or story, typically one used by a salesperson

*The shoppers were impressed by the salesman's spiel.***spiritualist****noun** /ˈspɪrɪtʃʊəlɪst, ˈspɪrɪtʃʊəlɪst/

a person who believes that people who have died can send messages to the living

*He went to a spiritualist to help him connect with his dead father.***squiggle****noun** /ˈskwɪɡəl/

a short line that curls and loops in an irregular way

The toddler drew a squiggle on the paper.

staccato

adjective /stə'kɑ:təʊ/

with each sound or note sharply detached or separated from the others
His pencil beat a steady staccato rhythm.

stanchion

noun /'stæntʃən/

an upright bar, post, or frame forming a support or barrier
The ball hit the stanchion behind the goal.

staunch

adjective /stɔːntʃ/

very loyal and committed in attitude
I am a staunch believer in the rights of minorities, women and children.

stipulate

verb /'stɪpjuleɪt/

to say exactly and officially what must be done
The law is supposed to stipulate how often schools have to be inspected.

stoical

adjective /'stəʊɪkl/

enduring pain and hardship without showing one's feelings or complaining
The doctor was amazed at his stoical acceptance of death.

strategy

noun /'strætədʒi/

a plan
The company must devise a new strategy to beat the competition.

streusel

noun /'struːsəl, 'strɔɪzəl/

a crumbly topping for rich pastries
The lemon bars were covered with a delicious streusel.

stricture

noun /'striktʃə/

a restriction on a person or activity
The same stricture should apply to both the boys' as well as the girls' school.

stymie

verb /'staimi/

to prevent or hinder the progress of
He was concerned that the financial difficulties would stymie the company's growth.

submersion

noun /səb'mɜːʃn, səb'mɜːʒn/

the action or state of submerging or being submerged
Submersion in water will usually ruin electronic devices.

subsequent

adjective /'sʌbsɪkwənt/

following
In subsequent lessons, we shall try solving more difficult problems.

subsidence

noun /səb'saɪdəns, 'sʌbsɪdəns/

the gradual caving in or sinking of an area of land
Widespread land subsidence is proving to be a threat to the coastline.

subsidiary

adjective /səb'sɪdɪəri/

connected but less important
This information may be used as subsidiary evidence, but it is not sufficient by itself to prove your argument.

substantiate

verb /səb'stænfɪeɪt/

to prove that something is true
I intend to substantiate my statement by producing witnesses.

subterranean

adjective /ˌsʌbtə'reɪniən/

existing, occurring, or done under the earth's surface
The "Karez" is a subterranean canal.

S

12 to 14
age group

subtleness

noun /ˈsʌtəlness/

the property of being so delicate or precise as to be difficult to analyse or describe
The subtleness of his poetry makes it both interesting and difficult to understand.

subtrahend

noun /ˈsʌbtrəˌhend/

the number to be subtracted from another number called the minuend
The mathematics teacher asked the students to identify the subtrahend.

succumb

verb /səˈkʌm/

to give way to
I always succumb to the temptation of eating chocolate when I go to the sweet shop.

supplemental

adjective /ˈsʌplɪmentəl/

added to something else to complete or improve it
The supplemental guide was very helpful when visiting the museum.

surreptitious

adjective /ˌsʌrəpˈtɪʃəs/

secret
The news of their surreptitious meeting gradually leaked out.

surveyor

noun /sɜːˈveɪə[r]/

one who examines and records the details of an area of land
He works as a surveyor in the public works department.

susceptibility

noun /səˌseptɪˈbɪlɪti/

the state of being likely to be influenced by a particular thing
His old age has increased his susceptibility to infection.

sustain

verb /səˈsteɪn/

to support
No one is sure whether Mars contains the right conditions to sustain life.

svelte

adjective /svelt/

slender and attractive
Her svelte figure was enhanced by the black dress.

swivel

verb /ˈswɪvəl/

to turn around a fixed central point
She had to swivel the chair in order to see what I was doing.

sycamore

noun /ˈsɪkəˌmɔː[r]/

a European tree of the maple family
The sycamore shades the house in the summer.

symmetry

noun /ˈsɪmətri/

the arrangement of parts in such a way that balance is obtained
The addition of the second tower will give this edifice the symmetry which it currently lacks.

synod

noun /ˈsɪnəd, ˈsɪnɒd/

a meeting of Christian ministers
The official objective of the synod is to strengthen Christian identity.

synonym

noun /ˈsɪnənɪm/

a word that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another word
I am having trouble coming up with a synonym for 'shaky'.

syntax

noun /ˈsɪntæks/

the grammatical rules for forming sentences

It took her years to become comfortable with the syntax of the English language.

syringe

noun /sɪˈrɪndʒ/

a plastic or glass tube with a long, hollow needle that is used to take out blood or inject medicine into a person's body

The little girl started crying the minute she saw a syringe in the nurse's hand.

syrinx

noun /ˈsɪrɪŋks/

the lower larynx or voice organ in birds

The syrinx of the hummingbird is too weak to produce a sound of this volume.

T

12 to 14
age group

tabulate

verb /'tæbjʊleɪt/

to arrange facts or figures in columns or lists
The election commission had to tabulate the results of the election.

tactile

adjective /'tæktail/

of or connected with the sense of touch
Braille is a tactile system of writing for the sight impaired.

tamale

noun /tə'mɑːli/

a Mexican dish of seasoned meat and maize flour steamed or baked in maize husks
It takes a lot of work to make each tamale.

tandem

noun /'tændəm/

a bicycle for two riders, one behind the other
The child was so fascinated by bicycles that he built a tandem.

tantamount

adjective /'tæntəmaʊnt/

having the same equivalent effect
Ignoring their pathetic condition and not lifting a finger to help them is tantamount to murder.

tarboosh

noun /tɑː'buːʃ/

aman's cap, typically of red felt with a tassel at the top
The Turkish dancer wore a tarboosh.

taut

adjective /tɔːt/

stretched or pulled tight
He pulled the rope taut before anchoring it to the ground.

tavern

noun /'tævən/

an inn or public house
Their car broke down, so they had to stay the night at the old tavern.

taxon

noun /'tæksən/

a category in the classification of living organisms
A particular taxon is comprised of organisms that have certain genetic characteristics in common.

technicality

noun /,teknɪ'kælɪti/

a small detail in a law or set of rules
Although his client was guilty, the lawyer managed to get him off on a technicality.

tedious

adjective /'tiːdiəs/

long and boring
I was given the tedious job of stamping a thousand papers.

teleprompter

noun /'telɪprɒmptə[r]/

a device which displays words as they are to be spoken
When the teleprompter malfunctioned, the newscaster was at a complete loss for words.

tenacious

adjective /tɪ'neɪʃəs/

tending to keep a firm hold of something
The woman kept such a tenacious grip on her handbag that the thief was not able to snatch it.

tendentious

adjective /ten'denʃəs/

expressing or intending to promote a particular cause or point of view
The periodical's readership dropped due to its tendentious editorials.

tendril

noun /'tendrɪl/

a thin curling stem that grows from a climbing plant
Each branch of the ivy was attached to the wall by a tendril.

tetanus

noun /'tɛtənəs/

a bacterial disease marked by rigidity and spasms of the voluntary muscles
Tetanus infection can be introduced by puncture wounds.

Teutonic

adjective /tju:'tɒnɪk/

characteristic of or relating to the German people
Teutonic engineering can best be described as thorough and methodical.

texturize

verb /'tɛkstʃəraɪz/

to impart a particular texture to a product in order to make it more attractive
You can texturize the walls by adding a compound to the paint.

thalamus

noun /'θæləməs/

either of the two contiguous egg-shaped masses of grey matter at the base of the brain
There is evidence that autism affects the function of the thalamus.

theological

adjective /'θi:ə'lɒdʒɪkəl/

relating to the study of religion
Theological debates should be encouraged in order to acquaint people with a wide range of beliefs.

therapeutic

adjective /'θɛrə'pjʊ:tɪkəl/

helpful in treating an illness
The doctors cannot deny the therapeutic properties of herbs.

theremin

noun /'θerəmin/

an electronic musical instrument
The theremin is associated with a very eerie sound.

thermoelectric

adjective /'θɜ:məʊ'lektɪkəl/

producing electricity by a difference of temperatures
A thermoelectric device can convert waste heat into electricity.

thespian

noun /'θɛspɪən/

an actor or actress
Growing up, Suzy Berger would cringe when she was called a thespian.

thoroughbred

adjective /'θʌrəbred/

an animal of pure breed
My daughter owns a thoroughbred horse.

threadbare

adjective /'θredbeə[r]/

well-worn and therefore thin
His threadbare coat does little to keep the cold out.

thriftness

noun /'θrɪftɪnəs/

using money and other resources carefully and not wastefully
The Chinese immigrant considered hard work and thriftness as the keys for survival.

throttle

noun /'θrɒtəl/

a device controlling the flow of fuel or power to an engine
The engines should be at full throttle for take-off.

thwack

noun /θwæk/

a sound made when two objects hit each other
I listened to the thwack of the cricket ball against the bat.

timorous

adjective /'tɪməərəs/
nervous and easily frightened
A squirrel is a timorous animal.

timpani

plural noun /'tɪmpəni/
a set of large metal drums, two or more in number in an orchestra
Modern orchestral music usually requires a set of four timpani played by one musician.

tippet

noun /'tɪpɪt/
a woman's long fur scarf or shawl worn around the neck and shoulders
She wore a tippet to cover her shoulders in the cold theatre.

tirade

noun /taɪ'reɪd/
a long speech of angry criticism
She launched into a tirade against politicians.

titre

noun /'tɪtə, 'taɪtə/
the concentration of a solution as determined by titration
The antibody titre showed a strong immune response to the virus.

toile

noun /twaɪl/
an early version of a finished garment made up in cheap material so that the design can be tested and perfected
The designer checked the fit of the toile on the model.

tolerant

adjective /'tɒlərənt/
accepting of other people's ideas or actions even when not agreeing with them
He has a very tolerant attitude towards other religions.

tomahawk

noun /'tɒmə,hɔ:k/
a fighting axe, with a stone or later an iron head, used by the North American Indians
The tomahawk was a fearsome weapon in the hands of a warrior.

torchere

noun /tɔ:'ʃeər/
a tall narrow stand for holding a candelabrum
The new gold and red torchere added color to the room.

torero

noun /tɒ'reərəʊ/
a bullfighter, especially one who fights on foot
The torero paraded in the arena before the fight.

torment

verb /'tɔ:ment/
to tease excessively
He likes to torment his sister as she is too young to stand up for herself.

tornadoes

plural noun /tɔ:'neɪdəʊz/
a mobile, destructive vortex of violently rotating winds having the appearance of a funnel-shaped cloud
Kansas is notorious for its frequent tornadoes.

torrential

adjective /tə'renʃl/
pouring heavily
Nobody expected such a torrential downpour last night.

torsion

noun /'tɔ:ʃən/
the action of twisting or the state of being twisted
The severe abdominal pain was a result of a rare occurrence of torsion of the intestine.

torso

noun /'tɔ:səʊ/
the trunk of the human body
The boxer took several hits to the torso.

tortilla

noun /tɔ:'ti:ʃə/

a thin, flat pancake made from maize flour common in Mexican cooking

To make a taco you first fill a tortilla with meat, cheese and other fillings then fry it in oil.

totem

noun /'təʊtəm/

an animal or other natural object that is chosen and respected as a special symbol of a community

Among the Gaelic people, the eagle was a powerful totem of many tribes.

toucan

noun /'tu:kən/

a tropical American fruit-eating bird with a massive bill and typically brightly coloured plumage

tourism

noun /'tuərizəm/

the commercial organization and operation of holidays and visits to places of interest

Tourism is a flourishing industry in many countries of Asia.

tourmaline

noun /'tuə[r]mə'li:n/

a typically black or blackish mineral that occurs as prismatic crystals in granitic and other rocks

She was wearing a ring with a clear pink tourmaline set in gold.

tousle

verb /'taʊzl/

to make something, especially a person's hair, untidy

If you tousle my hair one more time I will tickle you.

traditional

adjective /trə'dɪʃənəl/

of a set of customs, beliefs, or methods that have existed for a long time

The Indonesian troupe presented a traditional dance.

transcend

verb /træn'send/

to be or go beyond the range or limits of a field of activity or conceptual sphere

His popular appeal allowed him to transcend party politics.

transgenic

adjective /trænz'dʒenɪk/

having genetic material introduced from another type of plant or animal

Transgenic fruits never taste the same as the original.

transporter

noun /træn'spɔ:tə[r]/

a large vehicle, used for carrying heavy objects

The transporter was loaded with fancy new cars.

trapeze

noun /trə'pi:z/

a short bar hanging from two parallel ropes high above the ground

The audience gasped when the gymnast on the trapeze almost lost his balance.

trapezium

noun /trə'pi:ziəm/

a quadrilateral with one pair of sides parallel

The mathematics teacher asked the students to find the area of the trapezium.

traumatic

adjective /trə:'mætɪk/

deeply disturbing or distressing

Living through the terrible ordeal has been a traumatic experience for her.

treatise

noun /'tri:tɪs/

a long and serious piece of writing on a particular subject

He wrote a treatise on the art of acting.

T

12 to 14
age group

trebuchet

noun /ˈtreɪbjʊʃet, ˈtreɪbəʃet/
a large medieval siege engine for hurling missiles
They saw a picture of the old church ruined by a direct hit from the trebuchet.

trecento

noun /ˈtreɪtʃentəʊ/
the style of Italian art and literature of the 14th century
The trecento was famous as a time of heightened literary activity.

tremolo

noun /ˈtremələʊ/
a wavering effect in a musical tone, produced either by rapid reiteration of a note or by rapid variation in the pitch
She practiced the tremolo on her harp.

tremulous

adjective /ˈtremjʊləs/
shaking or quivering slightly
His tremulous voice told me that he was nervous.

tribulation

noun /ˌtrɪbjʊˈleɪʃn/
great trouble or suffering
The war was a time of tribulation for all of us.

tribunal

noun /ˈtraɪˈbjʊːnl/
a type of court with the authority to deal with a particular problem or disagreement
The tribunal found the defendant guilty of war crimes and sentenced him to life imprisonment.

tributary

noun /ˈtrɪbjʊtəri/
a river or stream flowing into a larger river or lake
The first gold in Australia was discovered in a tributary of the Yarra River.

trigonometry

noun /ˌtrɪɡəˈnɒmətri/
a branch of mathematics
She took trigonometry as an O level subject.

trinket

noun /ˈtrɪŋkɪt/
an ornament or piece of jewellery that is not worth much money
This may be just a trinket, but it is of great sentimental value to me.

trivial

adjective /ˈtrɪviəl/
of little value or importance
My friend treated my accident as a trivial matter, which really upset me.

trommel

noun /ˈtrɒməl/
a revolving cylindrical sieve used for screening
A trommel is typically used for screening or sizing rock, ore, or coal.

truant

noun /ˈtruːənt/
a pupil who stays away from school without permission or explanation
The police asked the truant why he wasn't in school.

trumeau

noun /truːˈməʊ/
a section of a wall or pillar between two openings
In the medieval times a trumeau was often highly decorated.

tsetse

noun /ˈtsetsi/
an African bloodsucking fly which bites humans and other mammals, transmitting sleeping sickness

tumour

noun /'tju:mə[r]/

a mass of cells growing in or on a part of the body where they should not

He was completely shattered when the doctor told him he had a brain tumour.

tumultuous

adjective /tju'mʌltjuəs/

making an uproar or loud, confused noise

The presidential candidate received a hearty welcome from the tumultuous crowd.

tundra

noun /'tʌndrə/

the vast treeless plains of the arctic regions

The soil below the surface of tundra is always frozen.

turbulence

noun /'tɜ:bjuːləns/

a violent or unsteady movement of air or water

Warned of approaching turbulence in the atmosphere, the pilot asked the passengers to fasten their seat belts.

tycoon

noun /taɪ'kuːn/

a rich and influential business person

He was such a successful business tycoon that he made his first million by the age of twenty.

U

12 to 14
age group

ukulele

noun /ju:kə'leɪli/

a small four-stringed guitar of Hawaiian origin
He is a popular ukulele player in his own country as well as in Japan.

unbiased

adjective /ʌn'baɪəst/

fair and not influenced by your own or somebody else's opinions or desires
Her unbiased nature made her a perfect choice for the judicial appointment.

unconscionable

adjective /ʌn'kɒnʃənəbl/

not right or reasonable
His unconscionable actions caused great distress to his family.

uncouth

adjective /ʌn'ku:θ/

rude or socially unacceptable
He was not offered the job because of his uncouth behaviour.

unforeseen

adjective /ʌnfɔ:'si:n/

not anticipated or predicted
He said his insurance policy will protect him against any unforeseen event.

unimpeachable

adjective /ˌʌnɪm'pi:tʃəbl/

unquestionable as to honesty or truth
The lawyer obtained evidence in favour of his client from an unimpeachable source.

unobtrusive

adjective /ˌʌnəb'tru:sɪv/

not obvious or easily noticeable
The unobtrusive behaviour of the bodyguard attracted no attention

unprecedented

adjective /ʌn'presɪdɪntɪd/

never done or known before
The scheme has been hailed as an unprecedented success.

uproarious

adjective /ʌp'rɔ:riəs/

characterized by or provoking loud noise or uproar
The uproarious crowd waved and shouted as the Titanic sailed out of the harbour.

uranium

noun /jʊ'reɪniəm/

a heavy, silver-white, radioactive metal
Uranium is a metal which is used to produce nuclear energy.

utterance

noun /'ʌtərəns/

a spoken word, statement, or vocal sound
She hardly ever gives utterance to her thoughts.

vaccinate

verb /'væksineɪt/

to inject a person or animal to protect them against a disease

It is essential to vaccinate infants against infectious diseases such as measles and hepatitis.

vacuum

noun /'vækju:m/

a space completely empty of substance or gas

Light can travel through a vacuum, but sound cannot.

vagabond

noun /'vægəbɒnd/

one who has no home or job and travels from place to place

He roamed around the streets like a carefree vagabond after quitting college.

valve

noun /vælv/

a device in a pipe or tube which controls the flow of air, liquid, or gas

It is important to have a shut-off valve in case of a gas leak.

vamoose

verb /və'mu:s/

to leave quickly

It is getting late, so we had better vamoose.

vaporizer

noun /'veɪpəraɪzə[r]/

a device that generates a particular substance in the form of vapour, especially for medicinal inhalation

Raheel always takes his vaporizer wherever he goes because he has severe asthma.

varnish

verb /'vɑ:nɪʃ/

to put a clear liquid onto a hard surface to give it a shiny, transparent surface

I always like to varnish my furniture because it gives it a very nice shine.

vascular

adjective /'væskjələ[r]/

made up of or containing vessels or ducts through which blood flows

The doctor diagnosed her with vascular dementia.

vatic

adjective /'vætɪk/

describing or predicting what will happen in the future

Orwell's novel 1984 seems almost vatic when it is read today.

vehemently

adverb /'vi:əməntli/

with strong feeling

The charge was vehemently denied.

velocity

noun /vɪ'lɒsɪti/

the speed of something in a given direction

The physicist measured the velocity of the particle.

velour

noun /və'lʊəl/

a plush woven fabric resembling velvet, used for soft furnishings, casual clothing, and hats

I walked into a lavish bedroom with heavy velour curtains.

venal

adjective /'vɪnəl/

showing or motivated by susceptibility to bribery

He believes in the correct application of the Sharia and has no patience for venal scholars.

venial

adjective /'vɪniəl/

forgivable or pardonable

He wasn't even willing to forgive the venial errors.

venturesome

adjective /'ventʃəsəm/

willing to take risks or embark on difficult or unusual courses of action

A group of venturesome women decided to scale Mount Everest.



12 to 14 age group

verbose

adjective /vɜː'bəʊs/
using too many words
Her verbose style of writing is disliked by many people.

vertebrate

noun /'vɜːtɪbrət/
an animal of a large group distinguished by the possession of a backbone or spinal column
A jellyfish is clearly not a vertebrate.

veterinarian

noun /ˌvetərɪ'neəriən/
a person who cares for the health of animals
She is studying to be a veterinarian.

viable

adjective /'vaɪəbl/
capable of working successfully
It is not a viable option for him to leave the country.

vicereine

noun /'vaɪsreɪn/
the wife of a viceroy
The vicereine will accompany the viceroy on a country wide tour.

vicious

adjective /'vɪʃəs/
violent and cruel
The vicious dog bit my leg.

vigesimal

adjective /vaɪ'dʒesɪmə/
relating to or based on the number 20
The Mayan's had a vigesimal number system.

vigilance

noun /'vɪdʒɪləns/
watchfulness
She stressed the need for constant vigilance.

vigorous

adjective /'vɪɡərəs/
strong and active
The government launched a vigorous campaign against tax fraud.

vile

adjective /vaɪl/
extremely unpleasant
His vile temper has frequently landed him in trouble.

vindictive

adjective /vɪn'dɪktɪv/
tending to seek revenge
His vindictive nature makes it hard for him to forgive.

vineyard

noun /'vɪnjə:d, 'vɪnjəd/
a piece of land where grapes are grown for making wine
We took a tour of the French vineyard.

virago

noun /vɪ'rɑːgəʊ, vɪ'reɪgəʊ/
a domineering, abusive, or ill-tempered woman
Her hostile attitude towards her fellow colleagues earned her the reputation of a virago.

virtually

adverb /'vɜːtʃʊəli/
nearly or almost
He was virtually blinded by the snowstorm.

virtuosity

noun /ˌvɜːtʃʊ'ɒsɪti/
the quality of being a consummate master of musical technique and artistry
Nikki gave a performance of breathtaking virtuosity at the concert.

visibility

noun /ˌvɪzə'bɪlɪti/
the state of being able to see or be seen
The plane could not take off because of poor visibility.

vitiate

verb /ˈvɪʃɪeɪt/

to spoil or impair the quality or efficiency of
The sudden influx of refugees will vitiate public assistance programs.

vitreous

adjective /ˈvɪtriəs/

like glass in appearance or physical properties
The scientist became famous by discovering a vitreous substitute for glass.

viviparous

adjective /vɪˈvɪpərəs/

bringing forth live young which have developed inside the body of the parent
Viviparous offspring require an external food supply once they are born.

vogue

noun /ˈvəʊg/

the current fashion or trend
Pointed shoes have gone out of vogue.

voltmeter

noun /ˈvəʊltmɪtə[r]/

an instrument for measuring voltage
The electrician used a voltmeter to check the flow of electricity.

vortex

noun /ˈvɔːteks/

a whirling mass of fluid or air
Sucked into the vortex, Dorothy and Toto were carried from Kansas to Oz.

vouch

verb /vaʊtʃ/

to express confidence in and accept responsibility for a person's behaviour
I am ready to vouch for his character.

voussoir

noun /ˈvuːswɑː/

a wedge-shaped or tapered stone used to construct an arch
The mason had to shape each voussoir with a chisel.

W

12 to 14
age group

waddy

noun /'wɒdi/

a heavy wooden club used as a weapon by native Australians

He awoke just in time to save himself from being hit by a masked man who was armed with a waddy.

Wagnerian

adjective /vɑːg'nɪəriən/

relating to or characteristic of the operas of Richard Wagner

The composer has mastered the art of Wagnerian leitmotif.

waive

verb /weɪv/

to choose to forgo something to which one has a right
He requested the principal of the school to waive his fee as he could not afford it.

wakame

noun /wæ'kæmi/

an edible brown seaweed, typically in dried form
Wakame can be used as an alternative to lettuce in sandwiches.

waltz

noun /wɔːltz/

a dance in triple-time performed by a couple, who turn rhythmically round and round as they progress around the dance floor

The waltz is an elegant dance.

wampum

noun /'wɒmpəm/

small beads made of shells and used by North American Indians as money or belts

On display was a wampum belt made in the year 1682.

wanderlust

noun /'wɒndəlʌst/

a strong desire to travel

His wanderlust was only curtailed by a shrinking bank balance.

wangle

verb /'wæŋgl/

to get something by scheming

She managed to wangle an invitation to the reception.

wattage

noun /'wɒtɪdʒ/

an amount of electrical power

I need a bulb with a higher wattage for my bedside lamp.

wearisome

adjective /'wiəriəsəm/

causing one to feel tired or bored

No one was interested in listening to her wearisome chatter.

weighbridge

noun /'weɪbrɪdʒ/

a machine that measures the mass of a vehicle

The truck passed over the weighbridge before proceeding.

wellington

noun /'welɪŋtən/

a waterproof boot usually reaching the knee

He lost a wellington in the deep puddle.

whaler

noun /'weɪlə/

a person who hunts whales

The whaler had spent most of his life at sea.

wheelwright

noun /'wiːlraɪt/

one who makes or repairs wheels

John took his donkey cart to the wheelwright to have the spokes of the wheel repaired.

whisker

noun /'wɪskə[r]/

the long, stiff hair growing near the mouth of an animal

After the fight, not a single whisker was left on the face of the cat.

whorl

noun /wɔ:l, wɜ:l/

a set of leaves, flowers, or branches springing from the stem at the same level and encircling it
That vine produces a whorl of five leaves every few inches.

wiles

plural noun /waɪlz/

devious or cunning stratagems employed in manipulating or persuading someone to do what one wants
Mona uses her feminine wiles on him to good effect.

wilful

adjective /'wɪlfʊl/

intentional or deliberate
They caused wilful damage to her shop while she was away.

winnow

verb /'wɪnəʊ/

to blow a current of air through grain in order to remove the chaff
A combine can cut, thresh, and winnow the grain in one operation.

winsome

adjective /'wɪnsəm/

attractive or appealing in a fresh, innocent way
Little Maha's winsome smile won her many friends.

wolverine

noun /'wʊlvərɪn/

a heavily built short-legged carnivorous mammal with a long brown coat and a bushy tail

wreath

noun /rɪ:θ/

a woven circle of flowers or leaves
She placed a beautiful wreath of flowers on her grandfather's grave.

wrinkle

noun /'rɪŋkl/

a small fold or line on the surface of something
Even at the age of fifty, she hardly has a wrinkle on her face.



12 to 14
age group

Xanadu

noun /ˈzænədəʊ/

an idealized place of great or idyllic magnificence and beauty

Three architects and a planner combined to create a Xanadu.

xanthoma

noun /zænˈθəʊmə/

a yellowish-orange, lipid-filled nodule in the skin, often on an eyelid or over a joint

The xanthoma on her elbow was caused by high levels of blood cholesterol.

xebec

noun /ˈziːbek/

a small three-masted Mediterranean sailing ship with lateen and square sails

After a week of smooth sailing, they were becoming accustomed to life aboard the 130 foot long xebec.

xenophobia

noun /ˌzɛnəˈfəʊbiə/

a dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries

The government has decided to start a campaign against racism and xenophobia.

xyloid

noun /ˈzaɪləɪd/

of, relating to, or resembling wood

Xyloid tissue forms the structure of a woody plant.

xylophone

noun /ˈzaɪləfəʊn/

a musical instrument made of two rows of wooden bars of different lengths that you hit with two small sticks

The musician played the xylophone really well.

yew

noun /ju:/

a small tree with dark green leaves and small red berries

Ten yew trees have been planted in the churchyard.

yield

verb /ji:ld/

to produce as a result

The apple trees in our orchard no longer yield fruit.

Z

12 to 14
age group

zany

adjective /'zeɪni/

strange or unusual in an amusing way

I can watch the twin brothers' zany antics for hours.

zooid

noun /'zu:ɔɪd, 'zəʊɔɪd, 'zu:ɪd/

an animal arising from another by budding or division, especially each of the individuals which make up a colonial organism

A single coral organism is a zooid.

zooplankton

noun /'zu:plæŋktən/

plankton consisting of small animals and the immature stages of larger animals