SHSAT Grade 9 Vocabulary List: 500 Words

Word · meaning · synonyms. For 9th graders taking the SHSAT for 10th-grade admission. Free from Dr. Stuart Donnelly, doctorshsat.com, where you can also get the matching Anki and Quizlet flashcards.

Core 200 (start here)

abstain *v.*	to choose not to do something, especially not to vote or not to have something you want	refrain, hold back
acute *adj.*	(1) sharp, severe, or sudden; (2) very keen or sensitive, as in hearing or sight	keen, severe
adept *adj.*	very skilled at something	skilled, expert
adverse *adj.*	harmful or unfavorable; working against you	unfavorable, harmful
aesthetic *adj.*	having to do with beauty or with how something looks	artistic, visual
affirm *v.*	to state firmly and publicly that something is true, or to show support for it	declare, confirm
alienate *v.*	to make someone feel unwelcome or turn away from you	estrange, drive away
allocate *v.*	to set aside or hand out something (money, time, space) for a particular purpose	assign, distribute
aloof *adj.*	cool and distant; not friendly or involved	distant, standoffish
ambiguous *adj.*	able to be understood in more than one way; unclear	unclear, vague
ambivalent *adj.*	having mixed or conflicting feelings about something	torn, uncertain
amend *v.*	to change something, such as a law or document, in order to correct or improve it	revise, modify
analogy *n.*	a comparison between two things that shows how they are alike, often used to explain something	comparison, parallel
apathy *n.*	a lack of interest, concern, or feeling	indifference, unconcern
appease *v.*	to calm someone down or satisfy them, often by giving them what they want	pacify, soothe
appropriate *v.*	(verb) to take something for your own use, usually without permission	seize, take over
arduous *adj.*	very difficult and tiring; requiring great effort	grueling, strenuous
arresting *adj.*	(adj) so striking that it grabs your attention	striking, eye-catching
assimilate *v.*	(1) to become part of a new group or culture; (2) to take in and fully understand information	integrate, absorb
attribute *v.*	(verb) to say that something was caused by or belongs to someone or something	credit, ascribe
audacious *adj.*	extremely bold and daring, sometimes recklessly so	daring, bold
augment *v.*	to make something greater by adding to it	increase, supplement
authoritative *adj.*	(1) reliable because it comes from an expert source; (2) commanding and confident	reliable, commanding
autonomy *n.*	the freedom to govern or control yourself; independence	independence, self-rule
benign *adj.*	(1) harmless, not dangerous (often of a medical condition); (2) gentle and kind	harmless, mild

bent *n.*	(noun) a natural talent or tendency	inclination, aptitude
bolster *v.*	to support or strengthen something	reinforce, boost
brevity *n.*	shortness, especially in speech or writing	shortness, conciseness
burgeon *v.*	to grow or expand quickly	flourish, boom
catalyst *n.*	(1) in chemistry, a substance that speeds up a reaction without being used up; (2) a person or event that causes change	spark, trigger
censure *v.*	(verb) to criticize someone strongly and officially	reprimand, condemn
charge *n.*	(noun) (1) a person or thing someone is responsible for; (2) a price or fee; (3) a formal accusation	ward, responsibility
chronicle *v.*	(verb) to record events in the order they happened	record, document
circumvent *v.*	to find a way around a rule, obstacle, or problem	bypass, evade
coerce *v.*	to force someone to do something by using threats or pressure	compel, pressure
cognitive *adj.*	having to do with thinking, learning, and remembering	mental, intellectual
cohesive *adj.*	united and working well together as a whole	unified, connected
commend *v.*	to praise someone, often formally or publicly	praise, applaud
compelling *adj.*	(1) very convincing or persuasive; (2) so interesting it holds your attention	convincing, gripping
concede *v.*	(1) to admit, often unwillingly, that something is true; (2) to give up or surrender	admit, yield
concise *adj.*	brief but complete; saying a lot in few words	brief, succinct
condone *v.*	to accept or allow behavior that is wrong	excuse, tolerate
connotation *n.*	the feeling or idea a word suggests beyond its basic meaning	implication, association
conspicuous *adj.*	easy to notice; standing out	noticeable, obvious
constrain *v.*	to limit or restrict	restrict, hold back
contemporary *adj.*	(1) belonging to the same period of time; (2) modern, of the present day	modern, of the same era
contrived *adj.*	obviously planned or artificial; not natural	forced, artificial
corroborate *v.*	to support or confirm with evidence	confirm, verify
culminate *v.*	to reach the highest point or final climax	climax, conclude
curtail *v.*	to cut short or reduce	reduce, cut back
daunting *adj.*	so difficult or large that it makes you feel nervous or discouraged	intimidating, overwhelming
dearth *n.*	a shortage or lack of something	scarcity, lack
debilitate *v.*	to make someone or something very weak	weaken, cripple
deem *v.*	to judge or consider something in a particular way	judge, consider
deference *n.*	respect shown by giving way to someone's wishes, opinions, or position	respect, regard
deficit *n.*	(1) an amount by which something falls short, such as money; (2) the amount by which a team is behind	shortfall, gap
delineate *v.*	(1) to describe or explain something precisely; (2) to mark or draw the outline of something	outline, define
deplore *v.*	to strongly disapprove of or condemn something	condemn, denounce

detrimental *adj.*	causing harm or damage	harmful, damaging
didactic *adj.*	meant to teach a lesson, especially a moral one, sometimes in a preachy way	instructive, preachy
diffident *adj.*	shy and lacking self-confidence	timid, unassertive
digress *v.*	to wander away from the main topic when speaking or writing	stray, ramble
disdain *n.*	(noun) a feeling that someone or something is beneath your respect	scorn, contempt
disparage *v.*	to speak about someone or something as if it has little value	belittle, criticize
disparity *n.*	a large difference, often an unfair one	gap, inequality
disseminate *v.*	to spread information or ideas widely	spread, circulate
dogmatic *adj.*	insisting that your beliefs are right and refusing to consider other views	rigid, opinionated
eclectic *adj.*	made up of many different styles, sources, or types	varied, diverse
efficacy *n.*	the ability to produce the intended result; effectiveness	effectiveness, power
elicit *v.*	to draw out a response, reaction, or information	evoke, draw out
embody *v.*	to be a clear example or expression of an idea or quality	represent, personify
empirical *adj.*	based on observation, measurement, or experiment rather than theory alone	observed, experimental
emulate *v.*	to copy someone you admire, trying to equal or surpass them	imitate, mirror
endorse *v.*	(1) to publicly support or approve; (2) to sign the back of a check	support, back
entertain *v.*	(1) to amuse; (2) to be willing to consider an idea; (3) to host guests	consider, amuse
ephemeral *adj.*	lasting a very short time	fleeting, short-lived
equitable *adj.*	fair and just to everyone involved	fair, impartial
eradicate *v.*	to destroy or remove something completely	eliminate, wipe out
erroneous *adj.*	wrong or mistaken	incorrect, false
esoteric *adj.*	understood by or meant for only a small group with special knowledge	obscure, specialized
exacerbate *v.*	to make a problem or bad situation worse	worsen, aggravate
exacting *adj.*	(adj) demanding great care, effort, and precision	demanding, meticulous
exemplify *v.*	to be a typical or excellent example of something	illustrate, represent
expedient *adj.*	(adj) convenient and quick, though not always fair or right	convenient, practical
explicit *adj.*	stated clearly and directly, leaving no doubt	clear, direct
extraneous *adj.*	not relevant or not needed	irrelevant, unnecessary
facet *n.*	(1) one side or part of something, an aspect; (2) one of the flat cut surfaces of a gem	aspect, side
fallacy *n.*	a mistaken belief, or an error in reasoning	misconception, error
flag *v.*	(verb) (1) to mark something for attention; (2) to become tired or weaker	weaken, mark
frivolous *adj.*	silly and not serious; lacking any real purpose or value	trivial, silly
galvanize *v.*	(1) to shock or excite someone into taking action; (2) to coat metal with zinc to prevent rust	spur, rouse
gregarious *adj.*	very sociable; enjoying the company of others	sociable, outgoing
hamper *v.*	(verb) to slow down or get in the way of progress	hinder, obstruct

heed *v.*	(verb) to pay careful attention to advice or a warning	obey, mind
hierarchy *n.*	a system in which people or things are ranked one above another	ranking, chain of command
hollow *adj.*	(adj) (1) empty inside; (2) without real meaning or sincerity	empty, insincere
hypocrisy *n.*	claiming to have beliefs or standards that you do not actually follow	insincerity, double standard
ideology *n.*	a set of beliefs or ideas that guides a group or movement	belief system, philosophy
immutable *adj.*	unable to be changed	unchangeable, fixed
impassive *adj.*	showing no emotion	expressionless, unmoved
imperative *adj.*	absolutely necessary; extremely important and urgent	essential, crucial
impetus *n.*	a force or event that pushes something to happen or move forward	motivation, driving force
implicit *adj.*	suggested without being said directly; also, complete and unquestioning (as in "implicit trust")	implied, unspoken
inadvertent *adj.*	not done on purpose; accidental	unintentional, accidental
incongruous *adj.*	strange because it does not fit with its surroundings; out of place	out of place, mismatched
inconsequential *adj.*	not important; too small to matter	unimportant, trivial
indispensable *adj.*	absolutely necessary; impossible to do without	essential, vital
inert *adj.*	not moving or acting; in chemistry, not reacting with other substances	motionless, inactive
ingenious *adj.*	very clever and inventive	inventive, resourceful
inherent *adj.*	existing as a natural, permanent part of something; built in	intrinsic, built-in
insinuate *v.*	to hint at something unpleasant indirectly; also, to work oneself gradually into a position	imply, worm one's way in
insular *adj.*	narrow-minded and cut off from outside ideas; also, relating to an island	narrow-minded, isolated
integral *adj.*	necessary to make something whole or complete	essential, fundamental
intrepid *adj.*	fearless and adventurous	fearless, daring
inundate *v.*	to flood; to overwhelm with a huge amount of something	overwhelm, swamp
invoke *v.*	to call on or cite something, such as a rule or authority, for support	cite, appeal to
irony *n.*	a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens, often in a surprising or amusing way	contradiction, paradox
jargon *n.*	special words used by a particular group or profession that are hard for others to understand	technical language, lingo
judicious *adj.*	showing good judgment; wise and sensible	sensible, prudent
juxtapose *v.*	to place two things side by side, especially to compare or contrast them	contrast, set side by side
kindle *v.*	to set on fire; to stir up a feeling or interest	ignite, spark
latent *adj.*	present but hidden or not yet active	dormant, hidden
lethargic *adj.*	sluggish and lacking energy	sluggish, listless
lucid *adj.*	clear and easy to understand; also, able to think clearly	clear, coherent
magnanimous *adj.*	generous and forgiving, especially toward a rival or someone less powerful	generous, gracious
malleable *adj.*	able to be bent or shaped easily; also, easily influenced	flexible, pliable

marginal *adj.*	small and not very important; also, written in the margin of a page	minor, slight
measured *adj.*	careful, slow and controlled; not hasty or emotional	deliberate, restrained
meticulous *adj.*	showing extreme care about every small detail	thorough, painstaking
mitigate *v.*	to make something less severe or harmful	lessen, ease
negate *v.*	to cancel out the effect of something; to make it useless	cancel out, nullify
nonchalant *adj.*	calm and relaxed, as if not worried at all	casual, unconcerned
nuance *n.*	a small, subtle difference in meaning, feeling or tone	subtlety, shade of meaning
obstinate *adj.*	stubbornly refusing to change one's mind or behavior	stubborn, unyielding
optimal *adj.*	best or most favorable	ideal, best
orthodox *adj.*	following the usual, accepted way of doing things; traditional	conventional, traditional
ostentatious *adj.*	showy in a way meant to impress others	showy, flashy
paramount *adj.*	more important than anything else	supreme, foremost
partial *adj.*	not complete; also, favoring one side unfairly, or especially fond of something ("partial to")	incomplete, fond of
pedestrian *adj.*	ordinary and dull; also, relating to people who walk	dull, unoriginal
perceptive *adj.*	quick to notice and understand things	observant, insightful
perfunctory *adj.*	done quickly as a routine, without real care or interest	routine, halfhearted
peripheral *adj.*	of minor importance; not central; also, at the outer edge	minor, secondary
pervasive *adj.*	spreading widely through every part of something	widespread, all-pervading
pivotal *adj.*	extremely important because other things depend on it	crucial, decisive
pragmatic *adj.*	dealing with problems in a practical, realistic way	practical, realistic
precarious *adj.*	dangerously unstable or insecure	unstable, risky
precedent *n.*	an earlier event or decision used as an example or guide for later ones	example, model
preclude *v.*	to make something impossible; to prevent	prevent, rule out
predominant *adj.*	most common, strongest or most noticeable	dominant, prevailing
premise *n.*	an idea or statement that an argument, story or plan is based on	assumption, basis
prerogative *n.*	a special right or privilege that belongs to a particular person or group	right, privilege
pressing *adj.*	urgent; needing attention right away	urgent, critical
pretext *n.*	a false reason given to hide the real one	excuse, cover
prodigious *adj.*	remarkably great in size, amount or degree; amazing	enormous, extraordinary
proliferate *v.*	to increase rapidly in number; to multiply	multiply, spread
prolific *adj.*	producing a great amount of work, fruit or offspring	productive, fertile
propensity *n.*	a natural tendency to behave in a certain way	tendency, inclination
provincial *adj.*	having narrow, limited views; also, relating to a province or the area outside a capital	narrow-minded, unsophisticated
provisional *adj.*	arranged for now but likely to change later; temporary	temporary, tentative
qualify *v.*	to meet the requirements for something; also, to limit or soften a statement	be eligible, limit

quandary *n.*	a situation where it is hard to decide what to do; a dilemma	dilemma, predicament
rationale *n.*	the reasons or logic behind a decision or action	reasoning, justification
reciprocate *v.*	to give or do something in return for what someone has given or done	return, repay
rectify *v.*	to correct something that is wrong	correct, remedy
redundant *adj.*	not needed because it repeats something; also, built as a backup in case something fails	unnecessary, repetitive
reiterate *v.*	to say something again, often for emphasis	repeat, restate
relegate *v.*	to move someone or something to a lower or less important place	demote, banish
render *v.*	to cause to become; also, to give or provide; to depict in art	make, provide
repercussion *n.*	an effect or result of an action, especially an unwelcome one	consequence, aftereffect
repudiate *v.*	to reject or refuse to accept; to deny	reject, disown
reservation *n.*	a doubt or concern; also, an arrangement to save a seat, room or table	doubt, booking
resignation *n.*	quiet acceptance of something unpleasant that cannot be changed; also, the act of quitting a job	acceptance, surrender
reticent *adj.*	unwilling to talk much or share one's thoughts and feelings	reserved, tight-lipped
rhetoric *n.*	language used to persuade, sometimes in a way that sounds impressive but lacks substance	persuasive speech, empty talk
sanction *v.*	to officially approve or allow; also, to officially penalize	authorize, penalize
scrutinize *v.*	to examine very closely and carefully	examine, inspect
sober *adj.*	serious and calm; also, plain and not bright (of colors)	serious, solemn
solicit *v.*	to ask for something, such as help, money or opinions	request, seek
stoic *adj.*	enduring pain or trouble without complaining or showing feelings	uncomplaining, patient
strident *adj.*	loud, harsh and unpleasant; also, forceful in a way that grates on people	harsh, shrill
subjective *adj.*	based on personal feelings or opinions rather than facts	personal, biased
subordinate *adj.*	lower in rank or importance	secondary, lesser
subsequent *adj.*	coming after something else in time or order	following, later
tacit *adj.*	understood without being said	unspoken, implied
tangible *adj.*	able to be touched; also, clear and real enough to be measured	concrete, real
telling *adj.*	revealing something important, often without meaning to	revealing, significant
tenable *adj.*	able to be defended or held as reasonable	defensible, reasonable
tenuous *adj.*	very weak or thin; easily broken	flimsy, shaky
trepidation *n.*	a feeling of fear or nervousness about something that might happen	fear, apprehension
trying *adj.*	hard to put up with; difficult and tiring	difficult, exhausting
ubiquitous *adj.*	found everywhere	everywhere, omnipresent
undermine *v.*	to weaken gradually, often in a hidden way; also, to wear away the base of something	weaken, erode
unprecedented *adj.*	never done or known before	unheard-of, unparalleled
validate *v.*	to confirm that something is true or correct; also, to recognize someone's feelings as reasonable	confirm, support

viable *adj.*	able to work or succeed; also, able to live and grow	workable, feasible
vindicate *v.*	to clear someone of blame or show that they were right	clear, justify
volatile *adj.*	likely to change suddenly; also, evaporating quickly	unstable, unpredictable
wane *v.*	to decrease gradually in size, strength or importance	decline, fade
wanting *adj.*	lacking something needed; not good enough	lacking, inadequate

Extension 300

abhor *v.*	to hate something very strongly	detest, loathe
abridge *v.*	to shorten a piece of writing or speech while keeping its main ideas; also, to limit or reduce a right	shorten, condense
abstruse *adj.*	very difficult to understand; obscure	obscure, complex
accolade *n.*	an award or expression of high praise	honor, tribute
accrue *v.*	to build up or increase gradually over time	accumulate, pile up
acerbic *adj.*	sharp and biting in tone; harshly critical	biting, caustic
acquiesce *v.*	to accept or agree to something quietly, often without wanting to	give in, comply
acumen *n.*	the ability to make good, quick judgments, especially in a particular field	shrewdness, insight
admonish *v.*	to scold someone firmly but calmly; also, to warn or strongly advise	reprimand, caution
adulation *n.*	extreme or excessive praise and admiration	worship, adoration
advent *n.*	the arrival or beginning of something important	arrival, dawn
adversary *n.*	an opponent or enemy	opponent, rival
affable *adj.*	friendly, good-natured, and easy to talk to	friendly, genial
affinity *n.*	a natural liking for something; also, a natural tendency of one substance to combine with another	fondness, attraction
aggregate *n.*	a whole formed by combining many parts; also, the sand and crushed stone mixed into concrete	total, sum
alacrity *n.*	cheerful eagerness and speed	eagerness, readiness
allay *v.*	to calm or reduce fear, worry, or suspicion	ease, soothe
allegory *n.*	a story in which characters and events stand for larger ideas, often moral ones	parable, fable
altruism *n.*	unselfish concern for the well-being of others	selflessness, generosity
ameliorate *v.*	to make a bad or difficult situation better	improve, relieve
amenable *adj.*	willing to agree, cooperate, or accept a suggestion	agreeable, cooperative
amorphous *adj.*	without a clear shape or form; vague and unorganized	shapeless, formless
anachronism *n.*	something that belongs to a different time period, especially one placed too early	misplacement in time
anecdote *n.*	a short, interesting or funny story about a real event	story, tale
animosity *n.*	strong dislike or hostility	hostility, hatred
annotate *v.*	to add notes or comments to a text	mark up, comment on
anomaly *n.*	something that differs from what is normal or expected	irregularity, oddity
antagonize *v.*	to make someone hostile or angry	provoke, irritate

antithesis *n.*	the direct opposite of something	opposite, reverse
apex *n.*	the highest point of something; also, the pointed tip of a shape	peak, tip
appraise *v.*	to judge the value, quality, or worth of something	evaluate, assess
apprise *v.*	to inform or tell someone about something	inform, notify
arbiter *n.*	a person with the power to settle a dispute; also, someone whose opinions set standards	judge, authority
archaic *adj.*	very old or old-fashioned; no longer in common use	outdated, antiquated
ardor *n.*	great enthusiasm or passion	passion, zeal
ascertain *v.*	to find out for certain	determine, verify
ascetic *adj.*	living a strict, simple life without comforts or pleasures	austere, self-denying
assiduous *adj.*	showing great care, attention, and steady effort	diligent, meticulous
astute *adj.*	clever at noticing and understanding things; shrewd	perceptive, shrewd
attest *v.*	to state that something is true; also, to serve as evidence of something	confirm, demonstrate
auspicious *adj.*	suggesting that the future will be successful; favorable	promising, favorable
avarice *n.*	extreme greed for money or wealth	greed, covetousness
aversion *n.*	a strong dislike	dislike, distaste
avid *adj.*	very enthusiastic and eager	enthusiastic, keen
axiom *n.*	a statement accepted as true without proof; a basic principle	principle, truism
banal *adj.*	so ordinary or overused that it is boring; unoriginal	trite, dull
beguile *v.*	to charm or delight, sometimes in order to trick	charm, deceive
belie *v.*	to give a false impression of; to hide or contradict the truth	disguise, contradict
belligerent *adj.*	hostile and aggressive; eager to fight	hostile, combative
benefactor *n.*	a person who gives money or other help to a person or cause	patron, donor
berate *v.*	to scold someone angrily and at length	scold, rebuke
blight *n.*	a disease that damages plants; also, anything that spoils or ruins a place or thing	plague, eyesore
bombastic *adj.*	using grand, puffed-up language that sounds important but says little	pompous, grandiose
bravado *n.*	a bold show of courage meant to impress others, often hiding fear	swagger, boasting
brazen *adj.*	bold and shameless, without embarrassment	shameless, audacious
bureaucracy *n.*	a system of government or organization with many rules, offices, and officials; often, slow official procedures	red tape, administration
cacophony *n.*	a harsh, jarring mixture of sounds	din, racket
cajole *v.*	to persuade someone gently with flattery or coaxing	coax, sweet-talk
callous *adj.*	showing no concern for other people's feelings or suffering	heartless, unfeeling
capitulate *v.*	to give up resisting; to surrender	surrender, yield
capricious *adj.*	changing suddenly and without reason; unpredictable	fickle, erratic
cardinal *adj.*	of the greatest importance; chief	chief, fundamental
catharsis *n.*	the release of strong emotions that brings a feeling of relief	release, purging
caveat *n.*	a warning or condition attached to something	warning, condition

chagrin *n.*	annoyance or embarrassment caused by failure or disappointment	embarrassment, mortification
charlatan *n.*	a person who falsely claims to have special knowledge or skill; a fake	fraud, impostor
circumspect *adj.*	careful to consider all risks before acting; cautious	cautious, prudent
clandestine *adj.*	done secretly, especially because it is not allowed	secret, covert
coalesce *v.*	to come together to form one mass or whole	merge, unite
cognizant *adj.*	aware or having knowledge of something	aware, conscious
colloquial *adj.*	informal; used in everyday conversation rather than formal writing	informal, conversational
commensurate *adj.*	matching in size, amount, or degree; in proportion	proportionate, equivalent
compendium *n.*	a collection of detailed information about a subject, gathered in one place	collection, compilation
complement *v.*	to complete or improve something by adding what it lacks; to go well with	enhance, round out
complicit *adj.*	involved with others in doing something wrong	guilty, involved
compound *v.*	to make a problem worse; also, to combine parts into a whole	worsen, aggravate
conceit *n.*	too much pride in oneself; also, in literature, a clever or extended comparison	vanity, extended metaphor
conciliatory *adj.*	meant to make peace or calm someone's anger	peacemaking, appeasing
concoct *v.*	to make something by mixing ingredients; also, to invent a story or excuse	invent, devise
concur *v.*	to agree; also, to happen at the same time	agree, coincide
condescend *v.*	to treat others as if one is better than them; also, to do something one considers beneath oneself	patronize, stoop
conducive *adj.*	making a certain result likely or possible	favorable, helpful
confound *v.*	to confuse or puzzle; also, to prove wrong	baffle, refute
conjecture *n.*	a guess or opinion formed without complete evidence	speculation, guess
connoisseur *n.*	an expert judge of fine things, such as food, art, or music	expert, authority
consternation *n.*	sudden alarm, worry, or dismay	dismay, alarm
construe *v.*	to interpret or understand something in a particular way	interpret, read
consummate *adj.*	complete or perfect in every way; also, extremely skilled	complete, accomplished
contentious *adj.*	likely to cause argument; also, tending to argue	controversial, disputed
contingent *adj.*	depending on something else happening	dependent, conditional
contract *v.*	to shrink or become smaller; also, to catch an illness; also, to agree by contract	shrink, catch
contrite *adj.*	feeling deeply sorry for having done something wrong	remorseful, apologetic
convoluted *adj.*	extremely complicated and hard to follow	complicated, tangled
copious *adj.*	in large amounts; plentiful	abundant, plentiful
corollary *n.*	a natural result or consequence of something	consequence, result
countenance *v.*	to tolerate or allow something	tolerate, permit
credence *n.*	belief or acceptance that something is true	belief, trust
cryptic *adj.*	mysterious or puzzling; also, serving to hide or camouflage	mysterious, enigmatic

culpable *adj.*	deserving blame	blameworthy, responsible
debunk *v.*	to show that a belief or claim is false	disprove, refute
decorum *n.*	behavior that is proper, polite, and right for a formal situation	propriety, dignity
deduce *v.*	to figure out a conclusion by reasoning from facts or clues	infer, conclude
defunct *adj.*	no longer existing, working, or in use	obsolete, extinct
demur *v.*	to politely object or show unwillingness	object, hesitate
denounce *v.*	to publicly declare that something is wrong; to criticize harshly in public	condemn, criticize
desolate *adj.*	empty and lonely; also, feeling very sad and alone	barren, forlorn
despondent *adj.*	very unhappy and without hope	hopeless, dejected
deviate *v.*	to move away from a usual or planned path, rule, or standard	stray, diverge
dexterity *n.*	skill and quickness in using the hands (or the mind)	deftness, nimbleness
dichotomy *n.*	a sharp division or contrast between two things	division, contrast
diffuse *adj.*	spread out over a large area, not concentrated; (of writing or speech) wordy and unfocused	scattered, rambling
disconcerting *adj.*	unsettling; making someone feel uneasy or confused	unsettling, disturbing
discreet *adj.*	careful not to attract attention or reveal private things; also, modest and not showy	tactful, unobtrusive
disillusion *v.*	to show someone that something they believed in or admired is not as good as they thought	disenchant, disappoint
disinterested *adj.*	not influenced by personal gain; fair and impartial (often misused to mean "uninterested")	impartial, neutral
dismissive *adj.*	showing that you think something is not worth considering	scornful, disdainful
disposition *n.*	a person's usual mood or nature; also, the way something is arranged, handled, or given away	temperament, nature
dissent *n.*	disagreement with an official or widely held opinion	disagreement, objection
dissipate *v.*	to scatter and fade away; also, to waste foolishly	disperse, squander
dissonance *n.*	a harsh, clashing mix of sounds; also, a clash or lack of agreement between ideas or actions	discord, clash
divergent *adj.*	differing from each other; moving or going in different directions	differing, contrasting
divulge *v.*	to reveal information, especially a secret	reveal, disclose
duplicity *n.*	deceitfulness; saying one thing while secretly doing another	deceit, double-dealing
effusive *adj.*	expressing feelings, like praise or thanks, in an overflowing, unrestrained way	gushing, lavish
elucidate *v.*	to make something clear; to explain	clarify, explain
eminent *adj.*	famous and respected within a field	distinguished, renowned
encompass *v.*	to include completely; also, to surround or enclose	include, surround
endemic *adj.*	native to and found only in a certain place; also, common and widespread within a group or area	native, prevalent
engender *v.*	to cause or produce a feeling or situation	cause, generate
entrenched *adj.*	firmly established and difficult to change	ingrained, deep-rooted
enumerate *v.*	to name things one by one; to list	list, itemize

epiphany *n.*	a sudden, powerful realization or insight	revelation, realization
epitome *n.*	a perfect example of something	embodiment, model
equanimity *n.*	calmness and composure, especially in a stressful situation	composure, calm
equivocate *v.*	to use vague or unclear language to avoid giving a direct answer	hedge, evade
erudite *adj.*	having or showing great knowledge gained from study	learned, scholarly
espouse *v.*	to adopt and support a cause, belief, or way of life	support, champion
euphemism *n.*	a mild or indirect word used in place of one that seems harsh or unpleasant	polite term, softened phrase
exalt *v.*	to praise very highly; also, to raise to a higher rank or position	glorify, elevate
exorbitant *adj.*	far too high in price or amount	excessive, outrageous
expedite *v.*	to make something happen faster	speed up, hasten
extrapolate *v.*	to estimate or predict something by extending known facts or trends	project, infer
extricate *v.*	to free someone or something from a difficult situation or tangle	free, disentangle
exuberant *adj.*	full of energy, excitement, and cheer; also, growing thickly and plentifully	enthusiastic, lush
fancy *n.*	a liking or desire, often a sudden one; also, imagination	liking, whim
fastidious *adj.*	very careful about accuracy, detail, or cleanliness; hard to please	meticulous, fussy
fathom *v.*	to understand something difficult; also, to measure the depth of water	comprehend, grasp
feign *v.*	to pretend to feel, have, or be something	pretend, fake
fidelity *n.*	faithfulness and loyalty; also, accuracy in copying or reproducing something	loyalty, accuracy
flagrant *adj.*	obvious and shocking (used for something wrong done openly)	blatant, glaring
flippant *adj.*	not showing proper seriousness; joking about something that deserves respect	glib, offhand
flout *v.*	to openly ignore or disobey a rule or custom	defy, disregard
fluid *adj.*	able to flow easily; also, smooth and graceful, or likely to change	flowing, changeable
foible *n.*	a minor weakness or odd habit in someone's character	quirk, weakness
forestall *v.*	to prevent or delay something by acting ahead of time	prevent, preempt
forgo *v.*	to give up or go without something	give up, relinquish
forthright *adj.*	direct and honest in what one says	frank, candid
fortuitous *adj.*	happening by lucky chance	lucky, accidental
founder *v.*	to fail or collapse; also, of a ship, to fill with water and sink	fail, sink
fractious *adj.*	irritable and quarrelsome; hard to control	unruly, quarrelsome
frenetic *adj.*	fast, energetic, and wild in an uncontrolled way	frantic, hectic
gamut *n.*	the complete range of something	range, spectrum
garner *v.*	to gather or collect, especially support, praise, or attention	gather, earn
garrulous *adj.*	extremely talkative, especially about unimportant things	chatty, talkative
gratuitous *adj.*	unnecessary and without good reason; uncalled-for (also, given free)	unnecessary, uncalled-for
guile *n.*	sly cleverness used to trick people	cunning, craftiness

hapless *adj.*	unlucky	unlucky, unfortunate
harrowing *adj.*	extremely distressing; frightening and painful to go through	agonizing, terrifying
homogeneous *adj.*	made of parts that are all the same kind; evenly mixed or uniform	uniform, consistent
hubris *n.*	excessive pride or self-confidence that leads to trouble	arrogance, overconfidence
hyperbole *n.*	deliberate exaggeration used for effect	exaggeration, overstatement
iconoclast *n.*	a person who attacks or rejects cherished beliefs or traditions	rebel, nonconformist
idiosyncrasy *n.*	an odd habit or way of behaving that is special to one person	quirk, peculiarity
illusory *adj.*	seeming real but not actually real; based on an illusion	deceptive, false
imminent *adj.*	about to happen very soon	impending, approaching
impassioned *adj.*	filled with or showing strong feeling	fervent, heartfelt
impeccable *adj.*	perfect; without any flaws	flawless, perfect
imperious *adj.*	arrogant and bossy; expecting to be obeyed	domineering, overbearing
impervious *adj.*	not letting liquid or anything else pass through; also, not affected by something	impenetrable, unaffected
impetuous *adj.*	acting quickly without thinking; impulsive	impulsive, rash
implacable *adj.*	impossible to calm, satisfy, or win over; relentless	relentless, unforgiving
impoverish *v.*	to make poor; also, to drain something of its richness or strength	bankrupt, deplete
impunity *n.*	freedom from punishment or bad consequences	exemption, immunity
inane *adj.*	silly and pointless; lacking sense	silly, senseless
incisive *adj.*	clear, sharp, and direct in thinking or expression	sharp, penetrating
incite *v.*	to stir up or provoke strong feelings or action, often trouble	provoke, stir up
incredulous *adj.*	unable or unwilling to believe something	disbelieving, skeptical
incumbent *adj.*	required as a duty (incumbent on someone); also, currently holding an office	obligatory, required
indelible *adj.*	impossible to remove or forget	permanent, unforgettable
indiscriminate *adj.*	done without careful choice; random and unselective	random, unselective
indomitable *adj.*	impossible to defeat or discourage	unconquerable, unyielding
inept *adj.*	lacking skill; clumsy and incompetent	incompetent, clumsy
inexorable *adj.*	impossible to stop or prevent	relentless, unstoppable
infallible *adj.*	never wrong; incapable of making mistakes	unerring, foolproof
ingenuous *adj.*	innocent, trusting, and sincere; naive	naive, guileless
ingrained *adj.*	firmly fixed and hard to change	deep-rooted, deep-seated
insipid *adj.*	lacking flavor; also, dull and uninteresting	bland, dull
insurmountable *adj.*	too great to be overcome	overwhelming, impossible
interminable *adj.*	seemingly endless; boringly long	endless, never-ending
intractable *adj.*	hard to control, manage, or solve	stubborn, unmanageable
inure *v.*	to make someone used to something unpleasant, so it no longer bothers them	accustom, harden

invective *n.*	harsh, insulting, or abusive language	insults, abuse
irascible *adj.*	easily made angry; quick-tempered	cranky, hot-tempered
irreverent *adj.*	showing a playful or cheeky lack of respect for things people usually treat seriously	disrespectful, cheeky
irrevocable *adj.*	impossible to change, reverse, or take back	permanent, final
juncture *n.*	a particular point in time, especially an important one; also, a place where things join	point, crossroads
latitude *n.*	freedom to act or choose as one wishes; also, distance north or south of the equator	freedom, leeway
lofty *adj.*	very high; also, noble and grand, or proud and acting superior	elevated, haughty
magnitude *n.*	great size, extent, or importance	size, importance
malevolent *adj.*	wishing or intending to harm others; evil	wicked, spiteful
mar *v.*	to spoil or damage the appearance or quality of something	spoil, blemish
misnomer *n.*	a name that is wrong or misleading	wrong name, mislabel
modicum *n.*	a small amount of something	bit, trace
myopic *adj.*	nearsighted; also, not thinking about the future	short-sighted, narrow-minded
nebulous *adj.*	vague, unclear, or not well defined	vague, hazy
negligent *adj.*	failing to take proper care or do what one is responsible for	careless, neglectful
nominal *adj.*	existing in name only; also, very small in amount	token, minimal
oblique *adj.*	indirect or not straightforward; also, slanting at an angle	indirect, slanted
obsequious *adj.*	too eager to please or obey; overly flattering	fawning, servile
opulent *adj.*	rich, expensive, and luxurious	luxurious, lavish
ostracize *v.*	to exclude someone from a group or society	exclude, shun
panacea *n.*	a cure or solution for all problems	cure-all, universal remedy
parody *n.*	a humorous imitation of a work, style, or person	spoof, send-up
perennial *adj.*	lasting for a very long time or happening again and again; (of plants) living for several years	recurring, enduring
perpetuate *v.*	to make something, often something bad, continue for a long time	prolong, keep alive
pertinent *adj.*	relevant; directly related to the subject	relevant, applicable
philanthropy *n.*	the desire to help others, especially by giving money to good causes	charity, generosity
platitude *n.*	a remark that has been used so often it has lost its meaning	cliché, truism
plethora *n.*	a very large amount, often more than needed	abundance, glut
plumb *v.*	to measure the depth of water; also, to explore something deeply	probe, fathom
poised *adj.*	calm and self-controlled; also, ready to act at any moment	composed, ready
polarize *v.*	to divide people into two sharply opposed groups	divide, split
posterity *n.*	all future generations of people	future generations, descendants
precipitate *v.*	to make something happen suddenly; in chemistry, to make a solid separate out of a liquid	trigger, hasten
precocious *adj.*	showing skills or interests much earlier than usual for one's age	advanced, gifted

predecessor *n.*	a person who held a job or position before someone else	forerunner, former holder
presumptuous *adj.*	too bold; taking liberties without permission	overbold, forward
prodigy *n.*	a young person with exceptional talent	genius, wonder child
proponent *n.*	a person who supports or argues for an idea or cause	advocate, supporter
prosaic *adj.*	ordinary and dull; lacking imagination	mundane, commonplace
protagonist *n.*	the main character in a story; also, a leading supporter of a cause	main character, champion
proximity *n.*	nearness in space, time, or relationship	nearness, closeness
quell *v.*	to put an end to something, such as a disturbance or a feeling	suppress, calm
rebuttal *n.*	an argument or statement that answers and tries to disprove another	counterargument, refutation
recluse *n.*	a person who lives alone and avoids other people	hermit, loner
recount *v.*	to tell the story of something in detail	narrate, describe
redress *v.*	to set right a wrong or unfair situation	remedy, correct
relate *v.*	to tell a story or report events; also, to show a connection between things	tell, connect
remiss *adj.*	careless about doing one's duty	negligent, lax
renounce *v.*	to formally give up a right, claim, or belief	give up, relinquish
reprehensible *adj.*	deserving strong blame or disapproval	shameful, disgraceful
respite *n.*	a short break or relief from something difficult or unpleasant	relief, break
resurgence *n.*	a rise or return of something after a period of decline	revival, comeback
retiring *adj.*	shy and preferring to avoid attention; also, leaving one's job for good	shy, reserved
retract *v.*	to take back a statement; also, to pull something back in	withdraw, pull back
reverberate *v.*	to echo again and again; also, to have effects that spread widely	echo, resound
salient *adj.*	most noticeable or important; also, sticking out	prominent, key
sanguine *adj.*	cheerfully optimistic, especially in a difficult situation	optimistic, hopeful
satire *n.*	the use of humor, exaggeration, or mockery to criticize people or ideas	mockery, spoof
scale *v.*	to climb up something steep; also, to change the size of something (as in "scale back")	climb, reduce
sedentary *adj.*	involving a lot of sitting and little exercise; also, staying in one place rather than moving around	inactive, settled
semblance *n.*	an outward appearance of something, often when the reality is missing; a small degree	appearance, trace
serendipity *n.*	the luck of finding something good by accident	happy accident, fortunate chance
singular *adj.*	remarkable or unusual; also, referring to just one (as in grammar)	extraordinary, unique
solace *n.*	comfort during a time of sadness or trouble	comfort, consolation
sporadic *adj.*	happening now and then, at irregular times	occasional, irregular
spurn *v.*	to reject with scorn or contempt	reject, snub
squalid *adj.*	extremely dirty and unpleasant, usually because of poverty or neglect	filthy, wretched

static *adj.*	not moving or changing; also, relating to electric charge	unchanging, stationary
staunch *adj.*	very loyal and committed	loyal, steadfast
stigma *n.*	a mark of shame or disgrace connected with something	disgrace, shame
stipulate *v.*	to state clearly as a requirement, especially in an agreement	require, specify
stock *adj.*	commonly used and predictable; standard and unoriginal	standard, stereotyped
sublime *adj.*	so beautiful or grand that it fills one with awe	awe-inspiring, magnificent
supplant *v.*	to take the place of something or someone, often by force	replace, displace
synthesis *n.*	the combining of separate parts or ideas into a whole	combination, fusion
tantamount *adj.*	equal in effect or meaning to something else	equivalent, the same as
temperate *adj.*	mild in climate; also, showing self-control and moderation	moderate, restrained
tender *v.*	to formally offer something, such as a resignation or payment	offer, submit
tenet *n.*	a principle or belief held as true by a group	principle, belief
terse *adj.*	using very few words, in a way that seems rude or unfriendly	curt, abrupt
thwart *v.*	to prevent someone from doing something they plan	block, frustrate
tirade *n.*	a long, angry speech of criticism	rant, outburst
transcend *v.*	to go beyond the usual limits of something	surpass, rise above
turbulent *adj.*	full of disorder or sudden change; also, (of air or water) moving roughly	chaotic, stormy
unequivocal *adj.*	completely clear, with no doubt about the meaning	clear, absolute
upheaval *n.*	a sudden, major change or disruption; also, the lifting up of part of the earth's crust	disruption, uplift
usurp *v.*	to take a position of power by force or without the right to it	seize, take over
vacillate *v.*	to keep going back and forth between choices or opinions	waver, hesitate
vehement *adj.*	showing strong, forceful feeling	passionate, forceful
venerable *adj.*	deserving great respect because of age, wisdom, or long service	respected, revered
veracity *n.*	truthfulness; accuracy	truthfulness, accuracy
verbose *adj.*	using more words than needed	wordy, long-winded
vestige *n.*	a small trace of something that once existed	trace, remnant
vex *v.*	to annoy, frustrate, or puzzle someone	annoy, frustrate
vicarious *adj.*	felt or experienced through another person's actions rather than one's own	secondhand, indirect
vilify *v.*	to speak or write about someone in a very harsh, insulting way	slander, denounce
virtuoso *n.*	a person with outstanding skill, especially in music or art	master, maestro
voracious *adj.*	wanting or consuming great amounts of something; very eager	insatiable, ravenous
whimsical *adj.*	playful, fanciful, and charmingly unusual	playful, fanciful

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