

Word List 20

1) **Abjure** (ab·jure) verb; to give up something, to renounce

Greg **abjured** chocolate in an effort to give up luxuries. Gale disagreed; feeling chocolate was definitely a necessity. Some religions **abjure** alcohol, others from pork or caffeine.

On the witness stand, the witness unexpectedly **abjured** the defendant stating that she knew he was guilty.

Synonyms: repudiate, retract, recant, avoid, shun

Antonyms: support, indulge, enjoy

2) **Affirmation** (af·fir·ma·tion) noun; a positive assertion, stating that something is true

Each morning Mike made an **affirmation** that he would do his best to be nice to everyone he met during the day. When political officials take office they usually pledge an **affirmation** under oath to do their best in fulfilling the needs of their new position.

Synonyms: avowal, declaration, oath

Antonyms:

3) **Ameliorate** (a·mel·io·rate) verb; to make feel better or improve

The anti-itch lotion **ameliorated** the unnerving itch and ache of the child's poison ivy.

The teacher's kind words **ameliorated** the student's sad mood.

Synonyms: amend, better, improve

Antonyms: worsen, harm

4) **Auspicious** (aus·pi·cious) adjective; promising success, a good omen

The sunny clear morning was an **auspicious** sign to the beginning of the camping trip.

Nate thought that Kate's smile was an **auspicious** sign that if he asked her out, she'd probably say yes.

Synonyms: favorable, promising, propitious, fortunate

Antonyms: inauspicious, ominous, foreboding, threatening

5) **Balk** (balk) verb; to refuse to proceed

The horse **balked** when he came to the wide fast-moving river; he was reluctant to cross.

Leo **balked** when his guidance counselor suggested that he had better pass his classes or he might not graduate—he didn't want to hear this depressing news.

"Talk to the hand" the tween **balked** forcing her open hand towards her mother.

Synonyms: check, obstruct, impede, prevent

Antonyms: proceed, carry on, move forward

6) **Benefactor** (ben·e·fac·tor) noun; one who gives money or gifts

Many great artists including Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo were supported by wealthy **benefactors**.

Sydney thanked the **benefactor** who gave her scholarship to college.

Synonyms: philanthropist

7) **Benign** (be·nign) adjective; not threatening

The dermatologist thought the mole was **benign**; he did not perceive it as a skin cancer threat.

There are few **benign** dictators; most are threatening and violent. Mallory thought the comment about her hair was **benign** and she should not be offended.

Synonyms: kind, humane

Antonyms: sinister, threatening

8) **Bifurcate** (bi·fur·cate) verb; to divide into two branches

The road **bifurcated** into two, one heading west and the other heading east.

High school curriculum tends to **bifurcate** into college bound and non-college bound paths.

The century old tree was **bifurcated** in the center with half twisting west and the other twisting east.

9) Capricious (ca-pri-cious) adjective; changing, fickle

Jon became frustrated with his girlfriend's **capricious** habits; it seemed as though she was never pleased by anything. The **capricious** weather snowed Monday, rained Tuesday, and was sunny on Wednesday.

Synonyms: erratic, fickle, mercurial, variable, flighty

Antonyms: consistent, steady, stable

10) Censure (cen-sure) verb; to criticize openly

The judge **censured** the young man in his courtroom warning him that he should go back to school to avoid getting into further trouble. The President's staff was openly **censured** in all the papers.

Synonyms: chastise, blame, condemn, reproach, rebuke chide, reprimand

Antonyms: praise, adulation

11) Concede (con-cede) verb; to accept as true

Towards the end of the chess game, Ted finally had to **concede** the game was Sherry's victory.

It was difficult for the parents to **concede** that their son was terminally ill.

Synonyms: agree, concur

Antonyms: deny, refuse

12) Collateral (col-lat-er-al) adjective; additional or (noun) security for debt

Collateral is derived from the Latin, collateralis, which means "side by side". The military rangers suffered **collateral** casualties in the raid. The family put their house up as **collateral** for a loan they needed to start a business.

Synonyms: additional, auxiliary, accompanying

13) Denizen (den-i-zen) noun; resident, one who inhabits

Whales are enormous **denizens** of the deep oceans.

As a **denizen** of a small town in the Midwest, Ted was unprepared for the fast-pace life in New York City.

The **denizens** of the north eastern Hamptons are all very wealthy.

Synonyms: inhabitant, resident

14) Dissonance (dis-so-nance) noun; lack of harmony

There was a **dissonance** between Dan's compliment and the sour expression on his face.

There was a terrible **dissonance** the first time the sixth grade band played the new music.

Synonyms: discord, cacophony

Antonyms: harmony, agreement

15) Embezzle (em-bez-zle) verb; to steal money or falsify records

The accountant managed to **embezzle** millions from the large company before anyone noticed.

The congressman resigned after his **embezzling** of state funds was exposed in the press.

Synonyms: defraud, misappropriate

16) Disenfranchise (dis-en-fran-chise) verb; to take away a right

The students felt **disenfranchised** when they were not allowed to text on their cell phones in class.

The Nineteenth Amendment **enfranchised** women with the right to vote.

Antonyms: enfranchise

17) Expiate (ex-pi-ate) verb; to make amends, to atone

My mother always told me that saying "I'm sorry" is not enough to expiate a mistake; one should also offer to fix or help with the mistake that was made.

Working in the media center **expiated** the fines the student owed from losing his textbooks.

Synonyms: compensate, remunerate

18) Munificence (mu-nif-i-cence) giving money

The starving artist was grateful for the wealthy patron's **munificent** donation to his art project.

Bill Gates is not only known for creating Microsoft, but also for his **munificence** in donating money for famine and disease relief in Africa.

Synonyms: generous, charitable

Antonyms: penurious, stingy

19) Oblique (o·blique) adjective; diverging from a straight line

The teacher's oblique comments made no sense in the context of our lesson on

Synonyms: indirect

Antonyms: straight

20) Paradox (par·a·dox) noun; a contradictory statement that appears to be true

It is a **paradox** that regular vigorous exercise can make one feel more energetic, while laying in bed all day can make one feel tired.

Synonyms: puzzle

21) Predilection (pre·di·lec·tion) noun; a preference

Synonyms: leaning, inclination, predisposition

22) Tenable (ten·a·ble) adjective; defensible, maintainable

The general decided that the city was **tenable** with a minimum of soldiers. The engineers thought the old bridge would be structurally **tenable** for another five years, but they set a lighter weight limit for heavy trucks and informed the county they would have to prepare to build a new bridge.

Synonyms: workable, viable.

23) Variegated (var·i·e·gat·ed) adjective; distinctly marked

Mega Blocks and Legos building blocks are too **variegated** to use together; they are different enough that the pieces don't fit together well. Tammy asked her hairstylist to **variegate** her hair for summer; she wanted highlighted streaks of blonde and red within her naturally brunette hair.

Synonyms: varied, different, diverse

Antonyms: same, homogenous

24) Venerate (ven·er·ate) verb; to respect, to treat with deference

Mary was taught that she should always **venerate** her elders and ask for their wise advice.

The **venerated** history teacher knew just about everything regarding his subject.

Synonyms: revere

Antonyms: disrespect

25) Vituperation (vi·tu·per·a·tion) noun; to condemn

Synonyms: denounce, scold, defame, censure, vilify

Antonyms: praise, extol, applaud

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