



SCHOLAR COACH, INC.

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE · FREE RESOURCE

Academic Vocabulary from Released Exams - 300 Words

Three hundred high-value words of the kind that fill AP Lang passages and answer choices, organized into 15 weekly lists of 20. Each word has a part of speech, a definition, and an example sentence. Each week ends with a 10-item matching self-quiz; answers are in the Answer Key at the end. Work one list per week and review earlier lists every Friday.

How to Use This Book

Released AP Lang exams reward readers who know words like *magnanimity*, *didactic*, *pedantic*, *polemic*, *sanguine*, *capricious*, and *obsequious*. They appear in the passages (often in archaic or specialized senses) and in the answer choices that describe tone, purpose, and function. The words below were chosen to match that vocabulary: the register of the 18th-, 19th-, and 20th-century essays and speeches that College Board favors, plus the contemporary analytic words found in answer choices. All definitions and example sentences are original.

A weekly routine (about 20 minutes a day)

DAY	TASK
Monday	Read the list aloud. Cover the definitions and guess each; mark the ones you missed.
Tuesday	Write your own sentence for 10 words, using each in a context from your reading or life.
Wednesday	Write your own sentence for the other 10. Find one of the words in a text you are reading this week.
Thursday	Make flashcards for only the words you missed. Sort by part of speech.
Friday	Take the matching quiz without notes. Re-study misses; add them to the cumulative review pile.
Weekend	Review all earlier lists in 10 minutes using the cumulative review prompts at the end of this document.

Tips for archaic and tricky senses

- Older passages use words in senses that have shifted. In released exams, *wanting* meant *lacking*, *offices* meant *duties*, and *prejudice* meant *a fixed prior judgment*. When a word seems odd in context, try the older sense.
- Watch for words that look alike: *ingenious* (clever) and *ingenuous* (innocent), *disinterested* (impartial) and *uninterested* (bored), *inference* (a conclusion you draw) and *implication* (what a text suggests).
- Learn a word with its opposite when you can: *candid/disingenuous*, *laconic/verbose*, *austere/opulent*, *ephemeral/perennial*.

Week 1: Character and Temperament

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	magnanimity	n.	generosity of spirit, especially toward a rival or someone weaker	The senator's magnanimity in victory won over even her fiercest critics.
2	didactic	adj.	intended to teach, often in a preachy way	The novel's didactic closing chapter lectured readers on thrift.
3	pedantic	adj.	overly concerned with minor rules or displays of learning	His pedantic corrections of every comma exhausted the committee.
4	sanguine	adj.	cheerfully confident, especially in difficulty	She remained sanguine about the vote despite the poor polls.
5	capricious	adj.	given to sudden, unpredictable changes of mood or mind	The capricious editor approved the plan on Monday and rejected it on Tuesday.
6	obsequious	adj.	excessively eager to please or obey	The obsequious aide laughed at every one of the mayor's jokes.
7	garrulous	adj.	excessively talkative	The garrulous host kept his guests at the door for an hour.
8	taciturn	adj.	habitually silent or reserved in speech	The taciturn farmer answered every question with a nod.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
9	irascible	adj.	easily angered	The irascible coach slammed his clipboard after every missed pass.
10	phlegmatic	adj.	calm and not easily excited	Her phlegmatic reply to the crisis steadied the room.
11	stoic	adj.	enduring hardship without complaint	The stoic nurse worked through the night without a word of grievance.
12	fastidious	adj.	very attentive to detail; hard to please	The fastidious editor rewrote each footnote three times.
13	meticulous	adj.	showing great care about detail	Her meticulous notes made the archive easy to search.
14	aloof	adj.	distant and uninvolved	He stayed aloof from the quarrels of the department.
15	diffident	adj.	shy and lacking confidence	The diffident student rarely raised her hand, though her answers were excellent.
16	imperious	adj.	arrogantly commanding	The imperious director waved away every suggestion.
17	dogmatic	adj.	asserting opinions as undeniable truths	His dogmatic tone left no room for discussion.
18	affable	adj.	friendly and easy to talk to	The affable clerk chatted with every customer.
19	cantankerous	adj.	bad-tempered and argumentative	The cantankerous neighbor complained about the sunshine.
20	sycophant	n.	a person who flatters the powerful for advantage	The mayor surrounded himself with sycophants who never disagreed.

Week 1 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. magnanimity	_____
2. didactic	_____
3. pedantic	_____
4. sanguine	_____
5. capricious	_____
6. obsequious	_____
7. garrulous	_____
8. taciturn	_____
9. irascible	_____
10. phlegmatic	_____

Definitions

- **A.** easily angered
- **B.** cheerfully confident, especially in difficulty
- **C.** intended to teach, often in a preachy way
- **D.** given to sudden, unpredictable changes of mood or mind
- **E.** habitually silent or reserved in speech
- **F.** generosity of spirit, especially toward a rival or someone weaker
- **G.** calm and not easily excited
- **H.** excessively talkative
- **I.** overly concerned with minor rules or displays of learning
- **J.** excessively eager to please or obey

Week 2: Speech, Argument, and Persuasion

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	polemic	n.	a strong written or spoken attack on a belief or policy	Her polemic against standardized testing circulated widely.
2	rhetoric	n.	the art of effective or persuasive language	The senator's soaring rhetoric masked a thin proposal.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
3	eloquent	adj.	fluent, forceful, and persuasive in speech	The eloquent defense moved even the skeptical jurors.
4	cogent	adj.	clear, logical, and convincing	The student offered a cogent argument for later start times.
5	specious	adj.	seeming plausible but actually wrong	The specious claim fell apart under a simple check of the data.
6	sophistry	n.	clever but misleading reasoning	His defense was sophistry dressed up as logic.
7	exhort	v.	to urge strongly	The coach exhorted the team to finish the season with pride.
8	concede	v.	to admit that something is true after resisting	The writer concedes that costs will rise before benefits appear.
9	refute	v.	to prove wrong	The new data refute the earlier estimate.
10	rebuke	v.	to criticize sharply	The principal rebuked the students for the prank.
11	vindicate	v.	to clear of blame; to prove right	The final report vindicated the whistleblower.
12	advocate	v.	to publicly support a cause	She advocates for stronger library funding.
13	assail	v.	to attack verbally or physically	Critics assailed the plan as reckless.
14	tirade	n.	a long, angry speech	His tirade about parking lasted twenty minutes.
15	diatribe	n.	a bitter, abusive verbal attack	The editorial became a diatribe against all politicians.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
16	harangue	v.	to lecture at length in an aggressive manner	The speaker harangued the crowd about taxes.
17	oratory	n.	the art of public speaking	The convention remembered his oratory long after the vote.
18	rhetorical	adj.	related to persuasive language; asked for effect	His rhetorical question demanded no answer.
19	equivocate	v.	to use ambiguous language to avoid commitment	The spokesman equivocated when asked about layoffs.
20	unequivocal	adj.	leaving no doubt	The judge issued an unequivocal ruling.

Week 2 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. polemic	_____
2. rhetoric	_____
3. eloquent	_____
4. cogent	_____
5. specious	_____
6. sophistry	_____
7. exhort	_____
8. concede	_____
9. refute	_____
10. rebuke	_____

Definitions

- **A.** the art of effective or persuasive language
- **B.** fluent, forceful, and persuasive in speech
- **C.** seeming plausible but actually wrong
- **D.** to urge strongly
- **E.** clever but misleading reasoning

- **F.** to criticize sharply
- **G.** to admit that something is true after resisting
- **H.** a strong written or spoken attack on a belief or policy
- **I.** clear, logical, and convincing
- **J.** to prove wrong

Week 3: Praise, Blame, and Attitude

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	laudatory	adj.	expressing praise	The review was laudatory from its first line to its last.
2	censure	v.	to criticize formally and severely	The board censured the director for misusing funds.
3	disparage	v.	to belittle or speak of with contempt	He disparaged the volunteers' effort.
4	extol	v.	to praise enthusiastically	Reviewers extolled the film's courage.
5	deride	v.	to mock; to laugh at contemptuously	Rivals derided the plan as childish.
6	lampoon	v.	to mock or ridicule in writing	The cartoon lampooned the governor's speech.
7	excoriate	v.	to criticize very harshly	The columnist excoriated the committee for its delay.
8	eulogize	v.	to praise highly, especially in a tribute	She eulogized her mentor with humor and grief.
9	venerate	v.	to regard with deep respect	The community venerates its oldest teachers.
10	revere	v.	to feel deep respect or awe for	Students revere the poet for her honesty.
11	scorn	n.	open contempt	He treated the offer with scorn.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
12	disdain	n.	a feeling that someone is unworthy of respect	She regarded the gossip with disdain.
13	contempt	n.	the feeling that something is beneath consideration	His contempt for the rules was plain.
14	derogatory	adj.	showing a low opinion	Derogatory remarks were removed from the record.
15	pejorative	adj.	expressing disapproval or contempt	"Hack" is a pejorative term for a writer.
16	reproach	n.	an expression of disapproval or disappointment	His silence was a quiet reproach.
17	admonish	v.	to warn or reprimand gently but firmly	The teacher admonished the class to read carefully.
18	upbraid	v.	to scold severely	She upbraided the clerk for losing the file.
19	commend	v.	to praise formally	The mayor commended the rescuers.
20	accolade	n.	an award or expression of praise	The novel earned many accolades.

Week 3 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. laudatory	_____
2. censure	_____
3. disparage	_____
4. extol	_____
5. deride	_____
6. lampoon	_____

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
7. excoriate	_____
8. eulogize	_____
9. venerate	_____
10. revere	_____

Definitions

- **A.** to praise enthusiastically
- **B.** to mock or ridicule in writing
- **C.** to belittle or speak of with contempt
- **D.** to criticize formally and severely
- **E.** to praise highly, especially in a tribute
- **F.** to mock; to laugh at contemptuously
- **G.** to feel deep respect or awe for
- **H.** expressing praise
- **I.** to criticize very harshly
- **J.** to regard with deep respect

Week 4: Knowledge, Thought, and Judgment

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	erudite	adj.	having or showing great learning	The erudite lecture drew on five languages.
2	sagacious	adj.	wise; showing keen judgment	Her sagacious advice saved the project.
3	astute	adj.	clever at seeing what is advantageous	An astute investor, he sold before the crash.
4	prudent	adj.	acting with care and thought for the future	It is prudent to save part of every paycheck.
5	judicious	adj.	showing good judgment	A judicious editor cut only what was needed.
6	discerning	adj.	having good taste and judgment	A discerning reader will notice the irony.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
7	perspicacious	adj.	having a ready insight into things	A perspicacious critic spotted the flaw at once.
8	naive	adj.	lacking experience or caution	The naive tourist trusted every stranger.
9	credulous	adj.	too ready to believe	Credulous readers accepted the forged letter.
10	skeptical	adj.	doubtful about claims	The skeptical audience demanded evidence.
11	cynical	adj.	believing people act only from selfish motives	His cynical remark ended the discussion.
12	ingenuous	adj.	innocent and unsuspecting	The ingenuous child asked the question no adult would.
13	ingenious	adj.	clever and original	The inventor's ingenious design cut costs in half.
14	pragmatic	adj.	practical rather than idealistic	The pragmatic mayor chose the cheaper plan.
15	idealistic	adj.	guided by high principles rather than practicality	The idealistic volunteers hoped to end hunger in a year.
16	empirical	adj.	based on observation or experiment	The study offered empirical proof of the effect.
17	conjecture	n.	an opinion formed without complete evidence	The theory was little more than conjecture.
18	axiom	n.	a statement accepted as true	Equality is an axiom of the declaration.
19	paradigm	n.	a typical model or pattern	The experiment became a paradigm for later studies.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
20	inference	n.	a conclusion drawn from evidence	From the empty desk, she drew an inference about the meeting.

Week 4 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. erudite	_____
2. sagacious	_____
3. astute	_____
4. prudent	_____
5. judicious	_____
6. discerning	_____
7. perspicacious	_____
8. naive	_____
9. credulous	_____
10. skeptical	_____

Definitions

- **A.** having good taste and judgment
- **B.** clever at seeing what is advantageous
- **C.** acting with care and thought for the future
- **D.** too ready to believe
- **E.** showing good judgment
- **F.** lacking experience or caution
- **G.** wise; showing keen judgment
- **H.** having or showing great learning
- **I.** having a ready insight into things
- **J.** doubtful about claims

Week 5: Style, Language, and Expression

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	concise	adj.	giving much information in few words	A concise memo is easier to read than a long one.
2	terse	adj.	abrupt and sparing in words	His terse reply ended the email thread.
3	laconic	adj.	using very few words	The laconic cowboy answered in one syllable.
4	verbose	adj.	using more words than needed	The verbose report hid its one useful finding.
5	prolix	adj.	tediously lengthy	The prolix speech lasted past midnight.
6	succinct	adj.	briefly and clearly expressed	A succinct summary opened the report.
7	lucid	adj.	clearly expressed; easy to understand	Her lucid explanation cleared up the confusion.
8	ornate	adj.	elaborately decorated; flowery	The ornate prose slowed the story.
9	florid	adj.	excessively elaborate in style	Florid compliments filled the toast.
10	bombastic	adj.	high-sounding but with little meaning	The bombastic speech promised everything and said nothing.
11	grandiloquent	adj.	pompous in language	The grandiloquent mayor never used a short word.
12	colloquial	adj.	characteristic of ordinary conversation	The author's colloquial voice made the essay inviting.
13	vernacular	n.	everyday language of a region or group	The poet wrote in the vernacular of her neighborhood.
14	idiom	n.	an expression whose meaning is not literal	"Break a leg" is an idiom for good luck.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
15	jargon	n.	specialized words of a profession or group	The manual was thick with technical jargon.
16	cliche	n.	an overused expression	"Time heals all wounds" is a cliche.
17	euphemism	n.	a mild word used in place of a blunt one	"Passed away" is a euphemism for died.
18	nuance	n.	a subtle difference in meaning or tone	The translation missed the nuance of her phrase.
19	connotation	n.	an idea or feeling a word suggests beyond its meaning	"Frugal" has a more positive connotation than "stingy."
20	lexicon	n.	the vocabulary of a language or field	The lexicon of the trade was foreign to newcomers.

Week 5 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. concise	_____
2. terse	_____
3. laconic	_____
4. verbose	_____
5. prolix	_____
6. succinct	_____
7. lucid	_____
8. ornate	_____
9. florid	_____
10. bombastic	_____

Definitions

- **A.** using more words than needed
- **B.** briefly and clearly expressed
- **C.** giving much information in few words
- **D.** elaborately decorated; flowery

- **E.** clearly expressed; easy to understand
- **F.** high-sounding but with little meaning
- **G.** tediously lengthy
- **H.** abrupt and sparing in words
- **I.** excessively elaborate in style
- **J.** using very few words

Week 6: Honesty, Deception, and Ethics

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	candid	adj.	truthful and straightforward	The candid review pointed out every weakness.
2	veracity	n.	truthfulness or accuracy	The editor checked the veracity of every quotation.
3	duplicity	n.	deceitfulness; double-dealing	His duplicity came to light when the emails surfaced.
4	mendacious	adj.	untruthful	The mendacious witness contradicted himself.
5	disingenuous	adj.	not sincere; pretending to know less	It was disingenuous to claim he had not read the memo.
6	feign	v.	to pretend	She feigned surprise at the news.
7	dissemble	v.	to hide one's true feelings or motives	He dissembled, smiling while he planned the move.
8	subterfuge	n.	deceit used to achieve a goal	They used subterfuge to enter the closed meeting.
9	probity	n.	strong moral principles; honesty	The judge's probity was never questioned.
10	integrity	n.	the quality of being honest and having strong principles	She resigned rather than compromise her integrity.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
11	scrupulous	adj.	diligent and extremely careful about right and wrong	A scrupulous accountant, he reported every cent.
12	unscrupulous	adj.	without moral principles	Unscrupulous sellers inflated the prices.
13	venal	adj.	open to bribery; corrupt	The venal official sold permits to the highest bidder.
14	nefarious	adj.	wicked or criminal	The nefarious scheme defrauded the pensioners.
15	pernicious	adj.	having a harmful effect, especially gradually	Rumors had a pernicious effect on morale.
16	benevolent	adj.	well-meaning and kindly	The benevolent donor funded the library.
17	altruistic	adj.	unselfishly concerned for others	Her altruistic work earned the town's thanks.
18	culpable	adj.	deserving blame	The company was culpable for the spill.
19	exonerate	v.	to clear of blame	DNA evidence exonerated the prisoner.
20	hypocrisy	n.	claiming virtues one does not have	Critics charged the campaign with hypocrisy.

Week 6 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. candid	_____
2. veracity	_____
3. duplicity	_____
4. mendacious	_____
5. disingenuous	_____

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
6. feign	_____
7. dissemble	_____
8. subterfuge	_____
9. probity	_____
10. integrity	_____

Definitions

- **A.** the quality of being honest and having strong principles
- **B.** deceitfulness; double-dealing
- **C.** untruthful
- **D.** deceit used to achieve a goal
- **E.** to hide one's true feelings or motives
- **F.** truthful and straightforward
- **G.** not sincere; pretending to know less
- **H.** strong moral principles; honesty
- **I.** truthfulness or accuracy
- **J.** to pretend

Week 7: Change, Time, and Persistence

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	ephemeral	adj.	lasting a very short time	The ephemeral fame of the viral video faded in days.
2	transient	adj.	lasting only briefly	The town's transient population changes with the seasons.
3	perennial	adj.	lasting through many years; recurring	The perennial debate over school start times returned again.
4	chronic	adj.	persisting for a long time	Chronic underfunding weakened the schools.
5	inexorable	adj.	impossible to stop	The inexorable rise of the river forced the evacuation.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
6	inevitable	adj.	certain to happen	With so little time, defeat seemed inevitable.
7	burgeon	v.	to grow or flourish rapidly	Small businesses burgeoned along the new road.
8	languish	v.	to lose strength or fail to make progress	The bill languished in committee for two years.
9	atrophy	v.	to waste away through disuse	Muscles atrophy without exercise.
10	proliferate	v.	to increase rapidly in number	Streaming services proliferated in a decade.
11	dwindle	v.	to diminish gradually	The crowd dwindled as the rain began.
12	wane	v.	to decrease in strength or size	Interest in the project began to wane.
13	flourish	v.	to grow or develop in a healthy way	Gardens flourished after the rain.
14	stagnate	v.	to cease to develop; become inactive	The economy stagnated for years.
15	vacillate	v.	to waver between opinions or actions	The council vacillated between two plans.
16	tenacious	adj.	holding firmly; persistent	A tenacious reporter, she chased the story for months.
17	resilient	adj.	able to recover quickly	Resilient communities rebuild after floods.
18	obsolete	adj.	no longer in use; out of date	The typewriter became obsolete.
19	nascent	adj.	just beginning to develop	The nascent movement had few members.
20	vestige	n.	a trace of something that no longer exists	The old wall is a vestige of the fort.

Week 7 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. ephemeral	_____
2. transient	_____
3. perennial	_____
4. chronic	_____
5. inexorable	_____
6. inevitable	_____
7. burgeon	_____
8. languish	_____
9. atrophy	_____
10. proliferate	_____

Definitions

- **A.** persisting for a long time
- **B.** lasting a very short time
- **C.** to increase rapidly in number
- **D.** impossible to stop
- **E.** lasting only briefly
- **F.** to grow or flourish rapidly
- **G.** lasting through many years; recurring
- **H.** to waste away through disuse
- **I.** to lose strength or fail to make progress
- **J.** certain to happen

Week 8: Conflict, Authority, and Power

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	hegemony	n.	dominance of one group over others	The empire's hegemony lasted two centuries.
2	autonomy	n.	freedom to govern oneself	The region demanded greater autonomy.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
3	sovereign	adj.	possessing supreme power	The sovereign nation set its own laws.
4	authoritarian	adj.	enforcing strict obedience to authority	The authoritarian regime banned public protest.
5	tyranny	n.	cruel and oppressive government	The colonists feared tyranny.
6	dissent	n.	disagreement with an official view	The court protected the right of dissent.
7	subversive	adj.	seeking to undermine an established system	The pamphlet was dismissed as subversive.
8	insurgent	n.	a person who rises in revolt	Insurgents seized the capital.
9	coerce	v.	to force someone to act by using threats	Managers tried to coerce the workers into signing the waiver.
10	mandate	n.	an official order; authority granted by voters	The election gave the mayor a clear mandate.
11	edict	n.	an official order	The king issued an edict banning the festival.
12	decree	n.	an official order with the force of law	The governor's decree took effect at midnight.
13	sanction	n.	a penalty for breaking a rule; official approval	Economic sanctions pressured the government.
14	mediate	v.	to settle a dispute between others	A neutral judge mediated the dispute.
15	adversary	n.	an opponent	The two adversaries shook hands.
16	partisan	adj.	strongly supporting one side or party	The partisan crowd booed the referee.
17	bipartisan	adj.	involving two parties	The bill drew bipartisan support.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
18	dominion	n.	sovereignty; control	The territory fell under foreign dominion.
19	usurp	v.	to take a position by force or without right	The general usurped the throne.
20	fealty	n.	loyalty sworn to a ruler	The knights swore fealty to the king.

Week 8 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. hegemony	_____
2. autonomy	_____
3. sovereign	_____
4. authoritarian	_____
5. tyranny	_____
6. dissent	_____
7. subversive	_____
8. insurgent	_____
9. coerce	_____
10. mandate	_____

Definitions

- **A.** an official order; authority granted by voters
- **B.** dominance of one group over others
- **C.** to force someone to act by using threats
- **D.** seeking to undermine an established system
- **E.** enforcing strict obedience to authority
- **F.** disagreement with an official view
- **G.** possessing supreme power
- **H.** a person who rises in revolt
- **I.** cruel and oppressive government
- **J.** freedom to govern oneself

Week 9: Emotion and Mood

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	elated	adj.	extremely happy	The team was elated by the win.
2	jubilant	adj.	feeling great joy	Jubilant crowds filled the square.
3	euphoria	n.	intense happiness	Euphoria swept the stadium.
4	melancholy	n.	deep, lingering sadness	A gentle melancholy colored her memoir.
5	despondent	adj.	in low spirits from loss of hope	Despondent after the defeat, he left early.
6	morose	adj.	sullen and gloomy	The morose clerk ignored the line of customers.
7	forlorn	adj.	pitifully sad and lonely	The forlorn dog waited by the door.
8	poignant	adj.	evoking sharp sadness or regret	The poignant letter moved her to tears.
9	pathos	n.	a quality that evokes pity or sadness	The scene's pathos silenced the audience.
10	indignant	adj.	angry at unfair treatment	Indignant parents demanded an explanation.
11	irate	adj.	very angry	The irate customer demanded a refund.
12	apathy	n.	lack of interest or concern	Voter apathy kept turnout low.
13	ennui	n.	listless boredom	Ennui settled over the long afternoon.
14	wistful	adj.	having a gentle, sad longing	She gave a wistful look at the old photograph.
15	nostalgia	n.	sentimental longing for the past	Nostalgia colored his memory of childhood summers.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
16	trepidation	n.	fear about what may happen	She entered the interview with trepidation.
17	elation	n.	great joy and pride	Elation filled the room.
18	solace	n.	comfort in sadness	He found solace in music.
19	compassion	n.	sympathetic concern for others' suffering	Her compassion drew the volunteers together.
20	rancor	n.	bitterness; deep-seated resentment	Years of rancor divided the family.

Week 9 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. elated	_____
2. jubilant	_____
3. euphoria	_____
4. melancholy	_____
5. despondent	_____
6. morose	_____
7. forlorn	_____
8. poignant	_____
9. pathos	_____
10. indignant	_____

Definitions

- **A.** sullen and gloomy
- **B.** extremely happy
- **C.** in low spirits from loss of hope
- **D.** deep, lingering sadness
- **E.** evoking sharp sadness or regret
- **F.** intense happiness
- **G.** angry at unfair treatment

- **H.** pitifully sad and lonely
- **I.** a quality that evokes pity or sadness
- **J.** feeling great joy

Week 10: Quantity, Degree, and Extent

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	ubiquitous	adj.	present everywhere	Smartphones are ubiquitous on campus.
2	copious	adj.	abundant	She took copious notes.
3	meager	adj.	small in quantity or quality	A meager meal was all the shelter could offer.
4	paltry	adj.	very small or worthless	A paltry sum was offered for her work.
5	profuse	adj.	plentiful; exuberant	He offered profuse apologies.
6	sparse	adj.	thinly spread	Sparse vegetation covered the plateau.
7	exorbitant	adj.	unreasonably high	Exorbitant fees kept students away.
8	inordinate	adj.	unusually or excessively large	The project took an inordinate amount of time.
9	immense	adj.	extremely large	An immense crowd gathered.
10	infinitesimal	adj.	extremely small	The risk was infinitesimal.
11	negligible	adj.	so small as to be not worth considering	The cost was negligible.
12	exhaustive	adj.	including all possibilities; thorough	An exhaustive search found nothing.
13	paramount	adj.	more important than anything else	Safety is paramount.
14	cardinal	adj.	of the greatest importance	Honesty is a cardinal virtue.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
15	salient	adj.	most noticeable or important	The salient point of the report was cost.
16	peripheral	adj.	of secondary importance; on the edge	Peripheral issues distracted the committee.
17	trivial	adj.	of little value or importance	He apologized for the trivial error.
18	superfluous	adj.	unnecessary; more than needed	Cut the superfluous adjectives.
19	redundant	adj.	no longer needed; repetitive	The final paragraph was redundant.
20	quintessential	adj.	the most perfect example of a quality	She is the quintessential teacher.

Week 10 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. ubiquitous	_____
2. copious	_____
3. meager	_____
4. paltry	_____
5. profuse	_____
6. sparse	_____
7. exorbitant	_____
8. inordinate	_____
9. immense	_____
10. infinitesimal	_____

Definitions

- **A.** present everywhere
- **B.** extremely small
- **C.** plentiful; exuberant
- **D.** very small or worthless
- **E.** unreasonably high

- **F.** unusually or excessively large
- **G.** small in quantity or quality
- **H.** thinly spread
- **I.** extremely large
- **J.** abundant

Week 11: Society, Culture, and Institutions

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	egalitarian	adj.	believing in equality for all	An egalitarian society shares opportunity.
2	elitist	adj.	favoring a privileged few	The club's elitist rules shut out newcomers.
3	affluent	adj.	wealthy	Affluent suburbs funded larger libraries.
4	destitute	adj.	without the basic necessities of life	Destitute families lined up at the shelter.
5	indigent	adj.	poor; needy	The clinic serves indigent patients.
6	philanthropy	n.	the practice of giving to promote others' welfare	The library was built through philanthropy.
7	patronage	n.	support given by a patron; political favoritism	Patronage kept the arts alive.
8	bureaucracy	n.	a system of government with many rules and officials	Bureaucracy slowed the permit process.
9	status quo	n.	the existing state of affairs	Critics defended the status quo.
10	conformity	n.	compliance with rules or standards	Conformity ruled the small town.
11	nonconformist	n.	a person who does not follow accepted ideas	The nonconformist dressed as she pleased.
12	taboo	n.	a social prohibition	Money was a taboo topic at dinner.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
13	ritual	n.	a ceremony with fixed actions	The family kept a ritual of reading aloud.
14	heritage	n.	traditions passed down	The festival celebrates the town's heritage.
15	posterity	n.	future generations	The letters were saved for posterity.
16	legacy	n.	something handed down from the past	Her legacy lives in the library.
17	demographic	n.	a section of the population	The ad targeted a young demographic.
18	populace	n.	the people living in a place	The populace voted for change.
19	insular	adj.	isolated; narrow in outlook	The insular village distrusted outsiders.
20	cosmopolitan	adj.	familiar with many parts of the world	The cosmopolitan city welcomed travelers.

Week 11 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. egalitarian	_____
2. elitist	_____
3. affluent	_____
4. destitute	_____
5. indigent	_____
6. philanthropy	_____
7. patronage	_____
8. bureaucracy	_____
9. status quo	_____
10. conformity	_____

Definitions

- **A.** support given by a patron; political favoritism

- **B.** the existing state of affairs
- **C.** wealthy
- **D.** a system of government with many rules and officials
- **E.** believing in equality for all
- **F.** the practice of giving to promote others' welfare
- **G.** without the basic necessities of life
- **H.** poor; needy
- **I.** compliance with rules or standards
- **J.** favoring a privileged few

Week 12: Description and Appearance

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	austere	adj.	severe or strict; plain	The austere room held only a table.
2	opulent	adj.	ostentatiously rich	The opulent hotel gleamed with gold.
3	lavish	adj.	rich and elaborate	A lavish banquet followed the speeches.
4	ostentatious	adj.	designed to impress or attract notice	The ostentatious mansion towered above the street.
5	spartan	adj.	simple and without comfort	The soldiers lived in spartan barracks.
6	dilapidated	adj.	in a state of disrepair	A dilapidated barn leaned in the field.
7	serene	adj.	calm and peaceful	A serene lake lay below the hills.
8	desolate	adj.	bleak and empty	The desolate road stretched for miles.
9	verdant	adj.	green with grass or vegetation	Verdant hills rolled to the sea.
10	resplendent	adj.	splendid and dazzling	The bride looked resplendent in white.
11	luminous	adj.	full of light	A luminous moon lit the field.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
12	somber	adj.	dark and gloomy	A somber mood followed the news.
13	garish	adj.	obtrusively bright; gaudy	Garish posters covered the wall.
14	tawdry	adj.	showy but cheap	The tawdry carnival lights flickered.
15	stark	adj.	severe or bare in appearance	A stark contrast separated the two neighborhoods.
16	quaint	adj.	attractively old-fashioned	They stayed in a quaint cottage.
17	pristine	adj.	in its original condition	The pristine snow was untouched.
18	squalid	adj.	dirty and unpleasant from neglect	Squalid conditions in the tenement appalled the reformer.
19	sublime	adj.	of such excellence as to inspire awe	The sublime view silenced the hikers.
20	mundane	adj.	dull; ordinary	She wrote about the mundane details of daily life.

Week 12 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. austere	_____
2. opulent	_____
3. lavish	_____
4. ostentatious	_____
5. spartan	_____
6. dilapidated	_____
7. serene	_____
8. desolate	_____
9. verdant	_____

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
10. resplendent	_____

Definitions

- **A.** calm and peaceful
- **B.** green with grass or vegetation
- **C.** ostentatiously rich
- **D.** severe or strict; plain
- **E.** rich and elaborate
- **F.** designed to impress or attract notice
- **G.** in a state of disrepair
- **H.** simple and without comfort
- **I.** bleak and empty
- **J.** splendid and dazzling

Week 13: Actions and Verbs of Effort

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	ameliorate	v.	to make better	New funding ameliorated conditions at the clinic.
2	exacerbate	v.	to make worse	Delays exacerbated the shortage.
3	mitigate	v.	to lessen the severity of	Sandbags mitigated the flooding.
4	alleviate	v.	to relieve pain or difficulty	Medicine alleviated her symptoms.
5	foster	v.	to encourage the growth of	Teachers foster curiosity.
6	hinder	v.	to create difficulties for	Rain hindered the search.
7	impede	v.	to delay or obstruct	A fallen tree impeded traffic.
8	thwart	v.	to prevent from accomplishing something	The guard thwarted the escape.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
9	bolster	v.	to support or strengthen	New data bolstered her argument.
10	undermine	v.	to weaken gradually	Rumors undermined trust in the leader.
11	galvanize	v.	to shock or excite into action	The speech galvanized the volunteers.
12	precipitate	v.	to cause to happen suddenly	The scandal precipitated his resignation.
13	elicit	v.	to draw out a response	The question elicited laughter.
14	cultivate	v.	to nurture or develop	She cultivated friendships across departments.
15	espouse	v.	to adopt or support a cause	He espoused the cause of reform.
16	relinquish	v.	to give up	She relinquished her seat on the board.
17	renounce	v.	to formally give up or reject	He renounced his claim to the land.
18	supplant	v.	to replace by force or by being better	Email supplanted the letter.
19	curtail	v.	to reduce or cut short	The budget curtailed the program.
20	augment	v.	to make greater by adding	She augmented her income with tutoring.

Week 13 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. ameliorate	_____
2. exacerbate	_____
3. mitigate	_____
4. alleviate	_____
5. foster	_____

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
6. hinder	_____
7. impede	_____
8. thwart	_____
9. bolster	_____
10. undermine	_____

Definitions

- **A.** to relieve pain or difficulty
- **B.** to delay or obstruct
- **C.** to encourage the growth of
- **D.** to create difficulties for
- **E.** to weaken gradually
- **F.** to support or strengthen
- **G.** to make better
- **H.** to prevent from accomplishing something
- **I.** to make worse
- **J.** to lessen the severity of

Week 14: Relationships Between Ideas

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	juxtapose	v.	to place side by side for contrast	The exhibit juxtaposes ruins with skyscrapers.
2	dichotomy	n.	a division into two opposed parts	The essay challenges the dichotomy between work and play.
3	paradox	n.	a seemingly contradictory statement that may be true	It is a paradox that silence can be loud.
4	irony	n.	a gap between expectation and reality	The irony was that the fire station burned down.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
5	analogous	adj.	comparable in certain respects	The brain is analogous to a city's traffic system.
6	antithetical	adj.	directly opposed	The two policies are antithetical.
7	congruent	adj.	in agreement or harmony	His actions were congruent with his words.
8	incongruous	adj.	out of place or not in harmony	A neon sign looked incongruous on the old church.
9	discrepancy	n.	a lack of compatibility between facts	A discrepancy between the two accounts raised doubts.
10	ambiguous	adj.	open to more than one interpretation	The ambiguous ending split the audience.
11	contradictory	adj.	opposing; mutually inconsistent	The witnesses gave contradictory statements.
12	corollary	n.	a natural consequence	Longer lives are a corollary of better medicine.
13	correlation	n.	a mutual relationship between things	Researchers found a correlation between sleep and grades.
14	premise	n.	a statement on which an argument is based	The premise of the essay is that attention is limited.
15	implication	n.	a conclusion that can be drawn but is not stated	The implication was that she would resign.
16	extrapolate	v.	to extend known information to guess at the unknown	They extrapolated future sales from last year's growth.
17	synthesize	v.	to combine into a coherent whole	She synthesized five sources into one argument.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
18	reciprocal	adj.	given or felt in return	Trust must be reciprocal.
19	symbiotic	adj.	mutually beneficial	The shops and the school have a symbiotic relationship.
20	inherent	adj.	existing as a permanent part	Risk is inherent in any investment.

Week 14 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. juxtapose	_____
2. dichotomy	_____
3. paradox	_____
4. irony	_____
5. analogous	_____
6. antithetical	_____
7. congruent	_____
8. incongruous	_____
9. discrepancy	_____
10. ambiguous	_____

Definitions

- **A.** a lack of compatibility between facts
- **B.** directly opposed
- **C.** a seemingly contradictory statement that may be true
- **D.** comparable in certain respects
- **E.** a gap between expectation and reality
- **F.** a division into two opposed parts
- **G.** to place side by side for contrast
- **H.** out of place or not in harmony
- **I.** open to more than one interpretation
- **J.** in agreement or harmony

Week 15: High-Frequency Passage Words

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	ardent	adj.	passionate; enthusiastic	An ardent supporter, he attended every game.
2	arbitrary	adj.	based on random choice rather than reason	The rule seemed arbitrary.
3	candor	n.	openness and honesty	She spoke with disarming candor.
4	circumspect	adj.	careful to consider all consequences	Circumspect in her replies, she avoided questions about money.
5	complacent	adj.	smugly satisfied and unaware of danger	A complacent team lost the lead.
6	conspicuous	adj.	easily seen; attracting attention	A conspicuous stain covered the carpet.
7	contrite	adj.	feeling remorse	The contrite student apologized to the class.
8	disparity	n.	a great difference	The disparity in funding was striking.
9	plausible	adj.	seeming reasonable or probable	The plausible excuse fooled no one who knew him well.
10	eccentric	adj.	unconventional and slightly strange	The eccentric professor wore mismatched shoes.
11	fervent	adj.	passionate and intense	The fervent crowd chanted all night.
12	futile	adj.	incapable of producing any useful result	Their efforts to bail out the boat were futile.
13	gregarious	adj.	fond of company	The gregarious host loved a full house.
14	haughty	adj.	arrogantly superior	The haughty clerk ignored the line.

#	WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
15	impetuous	adj.	acting quickly without thought	His impetuous decision cost the team the game.
16	indifferent	adj.	having no interest or concern	The indifferent crowd barely clapped.
17	obstinate	adj.	stubbornly refusing to change one's mind	The obstinate negotiator rejected every compromise.
18	ostensible	adj.	apparent but not necessarily real	The ostensible reason for the meeting was budget review.
19	reticent	adj.	not revealing one's thoughts readily	He was reticent about his past.
20	zealous	adj.	having great energy for a cause	The zealous recruit volunteered for every shift.

Week 15 Self-Quiz: Matching

Match each word (1-10) with its definition (A-J). Write the letter on the line.

WORD	YOUR ANSWER
1. ardent	_____
2. arbitrary	_____
3. candor	_____
4. circumspect	_____
5. complacent	_____
6. conspicuous	_____
7. contrite	_____
8. disparity	_____
9. plausible	_____
10. eccentric	_____

Definitions

- **A.** based on random choice rather than reason
- **B.** a great difference
- **C.** passionate; enthusiastic

- **D.** seeming reasonable or probable
- **E.** unconventional and slightly strange
- **F.** careful to consider all consequences
- **G.** easily seen; attracting attention
- **H.** smugly satisfied and unaware of danger
- **I.** feeling remorse
- **J.** openness and honesty

Cumulative Review Prompts

1. Sort the 300 words into three piles: *know cold*, *recognize*, *new*. Re-study only the third pile.
2. Choose ten words describing a person and write a character sketch. Choose ten describing an argument and write a paragraph evaluating a speech.
3. For each week, pick the three words most likely to appear in an answer choice about tone, and use each in a sentence about a passage you have read.
4. Find five words from this book in this week's reading (an op-ed, a speech, a magazine essay). Copy the sentence and explain the word's job in it.

Answer Key

Each row lists the correct letter for items 1 through 10 of that week's matching quiz.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	F	C	I	B	D	J	H	E	A	G
2	H	A	B	I	C	E	D	G	J	F
3	H	D	C	A	F	B	I	E	J	G
4	H	G	B	C	E	A	I	F	D	J
5	C	H	J	A	G	B	E	D	I	F
6	F	I	B	C	G	J	E	D	H	A
7	B	E	G	A	D	J	F	I	H	C
8	B	J	G	E	I	F	D	H	C	A
9	B	J	F	D	C	A	H	E	I	G
10	A	J	G	D	C	H	E	F	I	B
11	E	J	C	G	H	F	A	D	B	I
12	D	C	E	F	H	G	A	I	B	J
13	G	I	J	A	C	D	B	H	F	E

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	G	F	C	E	D	B	J	H	A	I
15	C	A	J	F	H	G	I	B	D	E

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