

## cant

### meaning

pious phraseology; jargon of criminals

### example

Angry that the president had slashed the education budget, we dismissed his speech on the importance of education as mere cant.

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## captious

### meaning

faultfinding

### example

His criticisms were always captious and frivolous, never offering constructive suggestions.

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## carping

### meaning

petty criticism; fault-finding

### example

Welcoming constructive criticism, Lexy appreciated her editor's comments, finding them free of carping.

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## colloquial

### meaning

pertaining to conversational or common speech

### example

Your use of colloquial expressions in a formal essay such as the one you have presented spoils the effect you hope to achieve.

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## comport

### meaning

bear one's self; behave

### example

He comported himself with great dignity.

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## compromise

### meaning

adjust; endanger the interests or reputation of

### example

Your presence at the scene of the dispute compromises our claim to neutrality in this matter.

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## consistency

### meaning

absence of contradictions; dependability; uniformity; degree of thickness

### example

Holmes judged puddings and explanations on their consistency; he liked his puddings without lumps and his explanations without improbabilities.

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## correlation

### meaning

mutual relationship

### example

He sought to determine the correlation that existed between ability in algebra and ability to interpret reading exercises.

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## disconsolate

### meaning

sad

### example

The death of his wife left him disconsolate.

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## **dissident**

meaning

dissenting; rebellious

example

In the purge that followed the student demonstrations at Tianamen Square, the government hunted down the dissident students and their supporters.

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## **distract**

meaning

absentminded

example

Because of his concentration on the problem, the professor often appeared distract and unconcerned about routine.

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## **ecclesiastic**

meaning

pertaining to the church

example

The minister donned his ecclesiastic garb and walked to the pulpit.

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## **eclectic**

meaning

selective; composed of elements drawn from disparate sources

example

His style of interior decoration was eclectic: bits and pieces of furnishings from widely divergent periods, strikingly juxtaposed to create a unique color.

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## **elucidate**

meaning

explain; enlighten

example

He was called upon to elucidate the disputed points in his article.

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## **enclave**

meaning

territory enclosed within an alien land

example

The Vatican is an independent enclave in Italy.

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## **garner**

meaning

gather; store up

example

She hoped to garner the world's literature in one library.

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## **idiosyncrasy**

meaning

peculiarity; eccentricity

example

One of his personal idiosyncrasies was his habit of rinsing all cutlery given him in a restaurant.

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## **innocuous**

meaning

harmless

example

Let him drink it; it is innocuous and will have no ill effect.

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## minuscule

meaning

extremely small

example

Why should I involve myself with a project with so minuscule a chance for success?

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## palpitate

meaning

throb; flutter

example

As he became excited, his heart began to palpitate more and more erratically.

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## pinion

meaning

restrain

example

They pinioned his arms against his body but left his legs free so that he could move about.

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## platonic

meaning

purely spiritual; theoretical; without sensual desire

example

Accused of impropriety in his dealings with female students, the professor maintained he had only a platonic interest in the women involved.

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## practical

meaning

based on experience; useful

example

He was a practical man, opposed to theory

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## prelude

meaning

introduction; forerunner

example

I am afraid that this border raid is the prelude to more serious attacks.

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## prevaricate

meaning

lie

example

Some people believe that to prevaricate in a good cause is justifiable and regard the statement as a "white lie."

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## propriety

meaning

fitness; correct conduct

example

I want you to behave at this dinner with propriety; don't embarrass me.

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## proscenium

meaning

part of stage in front of curtain

example

In the theater-in-the-round there can be no proscenium or proscenium arch.

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## pugnacious

meaning

combative; disposed to fight

example

As a child he was pugnacious and fought with everyone.

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## rationalize

meaning

reason; justify an improper act

example

Do not try to rationalize your behavior by blaming your companions.

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## ravine

meaning

narrow valley with steep sides

example

Steeper than a gully, less precipitous than a canyon, a ravine is, like them, the product of years of erosion.

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## soporific

meaning

sleep producing

example

I do not need a sedative when I listen to one of his soporific speeches.

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## staid

meaning

sober; sedate

example

Her conduct during the funeral ceremony was staid and solemn.

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## stem from

meaning

arise from

example

Milton's problems in school stemmed from his poor study habits.

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## suavity

meaning

urbanity; polish

example

He is particularly good in roles that require suavity and sophistication.

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## substantiate

meaning

verify; support

example

I intend to substantiate my statement by producing witnesses.

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## temporal

meaning

not lasting forever; limited by time; secular

example

At one time in our history, temporal rulers assumed that they had been given their thrones by divine right.

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## unfeigned

meaning

genuine; real

example

She turned so pale that I am sure her surprise was unfeigned.

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## unravel

meaning

disentangle; solve

example

With equal ease Miss Marple unraveled tangled balls of yarn and baffling murder mysteries.

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## verdigris

meaning

green coating on copper which has been exposed to the weather

example

Despite all attempts to protect the statue from the elements, it became coated with verdigris.

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## wanton

meaning

unrestrained; willfully malicious; unchaste

example

Pointing to the stack of bills, Sheldon criticized Sarah for her wanton expenditures. In response, Sara accused Sheldon of making an unfounded, wanton attack.

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## advert

meaning

refer to

example

Since you advert to this matter so frequently, you must regard it as important.

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## anachronism

meaning

something or someone misplaced in time

example

Shakespeare's reference to clocks in Julius Caesar is an anachronism; no clocks existed in Caesar's time.

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## appease

meaning

pacify; soothe

example

We have discovered that, when we try to appease our enemies, we encourage them to make additional demands.

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## auxiliary

meaning

offering or providing help; additional or sub-sidiary

example

To prepare for the emergency, they built an auxiliary power station.

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## barrister

meaning

counselor-at-law

example

Galsworthy started as a barrister, but when he found the practice of law boring, turned to writing.

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