

cognitive

meaning

having to do with knowing or perceiving related to the mental processes

example

Though Jack was emotionally immature, his cognitive development was admirable; he was very advanced intellectually.

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crux

meaning

crucial point

example

This is the crux of the entire problem.

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daub

meaning

smear (as with paint)

example

From the way he daubed his paint on the canvas, I could tell he knew nothing of oils.

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daunt

meaning

intimidate

example

Your threats cannot daunt me.

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debris

meaning

rubble

example

A full year after the earthquake in Mexico City, workers were still carting away the debris.

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denigrate

meaning

blacken

example

All attempts to denigrate the character of our late President have failed; the people still love him and cherish his memory.

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disparage

meaning

belittle

example

Do not disparage anyone's contribution; these little gifts add up to large sums.

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ecstasy

meaning

rapture, joy; any overpowering emotion

example

The announcement that the war had ended brought on an ecstasy that resulted in many uncontrolled celebrations.

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emancipate

meaning

set free

example

At first, the attempts of the Abolitionist to emancipate the slaves were unpopular in New England as well as in the South.

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enumerate

meaning

list; mention one by one

example

Huck hung his head in shame as Miss Watson enumerated his many flaws.

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erroneous

meaning

mistaken; wrong

example

I thought my answer was correct, but it was erroneous.

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facile

meaning

easy; expert

example

Because he was a facile speaker, he never refused a request to address an organization.

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falter

meaning

hesitate

example

When told to dive off the high board, she did not falter, but proceeded at once.

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fervor

meaning

generate pus

example

When her finger began to fester, the doctor lanced it and removed the splinter that had caused the pus to form.

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fidelity

meaning

loyalty

example

A dog's fidelity to its owner is one of the reasons why that animal is a favorite household pet.

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idyllic

meaning

charmingly carefree; simple

example

Far from the city, she led an idyllic existence in her rural retreat.

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imprecation

meaning

curse

example

Roused from the bed at what he considered an ungodly hour, Roy muttered imprecations under his breath.

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incarcerate

meaning

imprison

example

The warden will incarcerate the felon after conviction.

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indemnify

meaning

make secure against loss;
compensate for loss

example

The city will indemnify all home owners whose property is spoiled by this project.

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juxtapose

meaning

place side by side

example

Comparison will be easier if you juxtapose the two objects.

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lank

meaning

long and thin

example

lank, gaunt, Abraham Lincoln was a striking figure.

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manifesto

meaning

declaration; statement of policy

example

The Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels proclaimed the principles of modern communism.

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meander

meaning

to wind or turn in its course

example

It is difficult to sail up this stream because of the way it meanders through the countryside.

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meteoric

meaning

swift; momentarily brilliant

example

We all wondered at his meteoric rise to fame.

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narcissist

meaning

conceited person

example

A narcissist is his own best friend.

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nexus

meaning

connection

example

I fail to see the nexus that binds these two widely separated events.

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nonchalance

meaning

indifference; lack of interest

example

Few people could understand how he could listen to the news of the tragedy with such nonchalance; the majority regarded him as callous and unsympathetic.

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patent

meaning

open for the public to read;
obvious

example

It was patent to everyone that the witness spoke the truth.

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peregrination

meaning

journey

example

Auntie Mame was a world traveler whose peregrinations took her from Tijuana to Timbuctoo.

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perspicacious

meaning

having insight; penetrating; astute

example

The brilliant lawyer was known for his perspicacious deductions.

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pliant

meaning

flexible; easily influenced

example

Catherine's disposition was pliant; she was like putty in her suitor's hands.

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quagmire

meaning

soft, wet, boggy land; complex or dangerous situation from which it is difficult to free oneself

example

Up to her knees in mud, Myra wondered how on earth she was going to extricate herself from this quagmire.

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reverie

meaning

daydream; musing

example

He was awakened from his reverie by the teacher's question.

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robust

meaning

vigorous; strong

example

The candidate for the football team had a robust physique.

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scintilla

meaning

shred; least bit

example

You have not produced a scintilla of evidence to support your argument.

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scruple

meaning

fret about; hesitate, for ethical reasons

example

Fearing that her husband had become involved in an affair, she did not scruple to read his diary.

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taut

meaning

tight; ready

example

The captain maintained that he ran a taut ship.

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ultimatum

meaning

last demand; warning

example

Since they have ignored our ultimatum, our only recourse is to declare war.

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unique

meaning

without an equal; single in kind

example

You have the unique distinction of being the first student whom I have had to fail in this course.

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ancillary

meaning

serving as an aid or accessory;
auxiliary

example

In an ancillary capacity Doctor Watson was helpful; however, Holmes could not trust the good doctor to solve a perplexing case on his own.

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arroyo

meaning

gully

example

Until the heavy rains of the past spring, this arroyo had been a dry bed.

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astral

meaning

relating to the stars

example

She was amazed at the number of astral bodies the new telescope revealed.

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attenuate

meaning

make thin; weaken

example

By withdrawing their forces, the generals hoped to attenuate the enemy lines.

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calumny

meaning

malicious misrepresentation

example

He could endure his financial failure, but he could not bear the calumny that his foes heaped upon him.

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celibate

meaning

abstaining from sexual intercourse;
unmarried

example

Though the late Havelock Ellis wrote extensively about sexual customs and was considered an expert in such matters, recent studies maintain he was celibate throughout his life.

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