

clamber

meaning

climb by crawling

example

She clambered over the wall.

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coincident

meaning

occurring at the same time

example

Some people find the coincident events in Hardy's novels annoyingly improbable.

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deleterious

meaning

harmful

example

Workers in nuclear research must avoid the deleterious effects of radioactive substances.

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discernible

meaning

distinguishable; perceivable

example

The ships in the harbor were not discernible in the fog.

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divergent

meaning

differing; deviating

example

The two witnesses presented the jury with remarkably divergent accounts of the same episode.

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duress

meaning

forcible restraint, especially unlawfully

example

The hostages were held under duress until the prisoners' demands were met.

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espionage

meaning

spying

example

In order to maintain its power, the government developed a system of espionage that penetrated every household.

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exertion

meaning

effort; expenditure of much physical work

example

The exertion involved in unscrewing the rusty bolt left her exhausted.

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fawning

meaning

courting favor by cringing and flattering

example

She was constantly surrounded by a group of fawning admirers who had hoped to win some favor.

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forebears

meaning

ancestors

example

Reverence for one's forebears (sometimes referred to as ancestor worship) plays an important part in many Oriental cultures.

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idiosyncratic

meaning

private; peculiar to an individual

example

Such behavior is idiosyncratic, it is as easily identifiable as a signature.

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ignoble

meaning

of lowly origin; unworthy

example

This plan is inspired by ignoble motives and I must, therefore, oppose it.

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incongruity

meaning

lack of harmony; absurdity

example

The incongruity of his wearing sneakers with formal attire amused the observers.

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lascivious

meaning

lustful

example

Because they might arouse lascivious impulses in their readers, the lewd books were banned by the clergy.

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leniency

meaning

mildness; permissiveness

example

Considering the gravity of the offense, we were surprised by the leniency of the sentence.

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lull

meaning

moment of calm

example

Not wanting to get wet, they waited under the awning for a lull in the rain.

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miasma

meaning

swamp gas; heavy, vaporous atmosphere, often emanating from decaying matter; pervasive corrupting influence

example

The smog hung over Victorian London like a dark cloud; noisome, reeking of decay, it was a visible miasma.

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mitigate

meaning

appease

example

Nothing he did could mitigate her wrath; she was unforgiving.

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nemesis

meaning

revenging agent

example

Captain Bligh vowed to be Christian's nemesis.

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nuptial

meaning

related to marriage

example

Their nuptial ceremony was performed in Golden Gate Park.

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paramount

meaning

foremost in importance; supreme

example

Proper nutrition and hygiene are of paramount importance in adolescent development and growth.

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pastoral

meaning

rural

example

In these stories of pastoral life, we find an understanding of the daily tasks of country folk.

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perturb

meaning

disturb greatly

example

I am afraid this news will perturb him and cause him grief.

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piebald

meaning

of different colors; mottled; spotted

example

You should be able to identify Polka Dot in this race; he is the only piebald horse running.

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potent

meaning

powerful; persuasive; greatly influential

example

The jury was swayed by the highly potent testimony of the crime's sole eyewitness.

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profane

meaning

violate; desecrate

example

Tourists are urged not to profane the sanctity of holy places by wearing improper garb.

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psychopathic

meaning

pertaining to mental derangement

example

The psychopathic patient suffers more frequently from a disorder of the nervous system than from a diseased brain.

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remediable

meaning

reparable

example

Let us be grateful that the damage is remediable.

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repellent

meaning

driving away; unattractive

example

Mosquitoes find the odor so repellent that they leave any spot where this liquid has been sprayed.

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reputed

meaning

supposed

example

He is the reputed father of the child.

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senility

meaning

old age; feeble mindedness of old age

example

Most of the decisions are being made by the junior members of the company because of the senility of the president.

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servitude

meaning

slavery; compulsory labor

example

Born a slave, Douglass resented his wife of servitude and plotted to escape to the North.

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sublimate

meaning

refine; purify

example

We must strive to sublimate these desires and emotions into worthwhile activities.

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succumb

meaning

yield; give in; die

example

I succumb to temptation whenever it comes my way.

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surlly

meaning

rude; cross

example

Because of his surlly attitude, many people avoided his company.

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thrifty

meaning

careful about money; economical

example

A thrifty shopper compares prices before making major purchases.

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trenchant

meaning

cutting; keen

example

I am afraid of his trenchant wit for it is so often sarcastic.

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uncanny

meaning

strange; mysterious

example

You have the uncanny knack of reading my innermost thoughts.

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unscathed

meaning

unharmed

example

They prayed he would come back from the war unscathed.

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verbiage

meaning

pompous array of words

example

After we had waded through all the verbiage, we discovered that the writer had said very little.

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zany

meaning

crazy; comic

example

I can watch the Marx brothers' zany antics for hours.

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zeal

meaning

eager enthusiasm

example

Wang's zeal was contagious; soon all his fellow students were busily making posters, inspired by his ardent enthusiasm for the cause.

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avuncular

meaning

like an uncle

example

Avuncular pride did not prevent him from noticing his nephew's shortcomings.

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bastion

meaning

stronghold; something seen as a source of protection

example

The villagers fortified the town hall, hoping this improvised bastion could protect them from the guerrilla raids.

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clairvoyant

meaning

having foresight; fortuneteller

example

Cassandra's clairvoyant warning was not heeded by the Trojans.

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