

aggregate

meaning

sum; total

example

The aggregate wealth of this country is staggering to the imagination.

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alloy

meaning

mixture as of metals

example

alloy of gold are used more frequently than the pure metal.

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ambiguous

meaning

unclear or doubtful in meaning

example

His ambiguous instructions misled us; we did not know which road to take.

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anesthetic

meaning

substance that removes sensation with or without loss of consciousness

example

His monotonous voice acted like an anesthetic; his audience was soon asleep.

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annihilate

meaning

destroy

example

The enemy in its revenge tried to annihilate the entire population.

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aphorism

meaning

pithy maxim

example

An aphorism differs from an adage in that it is more philosophical or scientific.

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apocalyptic

meaning

prophetic; pertaining to revelations; especially of disaster

example

His apocalyptic remarks were dismissed by his audience as wild surmises.

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bequeath

meaning

leave to someone by means of a will; hand down

example

In his will, Father bequeathed his watch to Phillip; the bequest meant a great deal to the boy.

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chaffing

meaning

bantering; joking

example

Sometimes his flippant and chaffing remarks annoy us.

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chastise

meaning

punish

example

I must chastise you for this offense.

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circumlocution

meaning

indirect or roundabout expression

example

He was afraid to call spade a spade and resorted to circumlocutions to avoid direct reference to his subject.

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clique

meaning

small, exclusive group

example

She charged that a clique had assumed control of school affairs.

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congeal

meaning

freeze; coagulate

example

His blood congealed in his veins as he saw the dread monster rush toward him.

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consecrate

meaning

dedicate; sanctify

example

We shall consecrate our lives to this noble purpose.

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counterpart

meaning

a thing that completes another; things very much alike

example

Night and day are counterparts.

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deflect

meaning

turn aside

example

His life was saved when his cigarette case deflected the bullet.

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excoriate

meaning

flay; abrade

example

These shoes are so ill-fitting that they will excoriate the feet and create blisters.

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functionary

meaning

official

example

As his case was transferred from one functionary to another, he began to despair of ever reaching a settlement.

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grandeur

meaning

impressiveness; stateliness; majesty

example

No matter how often he hiked through the mountains, David never failed to be struck by the grandeur of the Sierra Nevada range.

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hindmost

meaning

furthest behind

example

The coward could always be found in the hindmost lines whenever a battle was being waged.

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immobility

meaning

state of being immovable

example

Modern armies cannot afford the luxury of immobility, as they are vulnerable to attack while standing still.

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incendiary

meaning

arsonist

example

The fire spread in such an unusual manner that the fire department chiefs were certain that it had been set by an incendiary.

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increment

meaning

increase

example

The new contract calls for a 10 percent increment in salary for each employee for the next two years.

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indicative

meaning

suggestive; implying

example

A lack of appetite may be indicative of a major mental or physical disorder.

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insipid

meaning

lacking in flavor; dull

example

Flat prose and flat ginger ale are equally insipid: both lack sparkle.

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jaunty

meaning

lighthearted; animated; easy and carefree

example

In *Singing in the Rain*, Gene Kelly sang and danced his way through the lighthearted title number in a properly jaunty style.

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lechery

meaning

gross lewdness; lustfulness

example

In his youth he led a life of lechery and debauchery; he did not mend his ways until middle age.

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maul

meaning

handle roughly

example

The rock star was mauled by his overexcited fans.

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mausoleum

meaning

monumental tomb

example

His body was placed in the family mausoleum.

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morose

meaning

ill-humored; sullen

example

When we first meet Hamlet, we find him morose and depressed.

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osseus

meaning

made of bone; bony

example

The hollow "soft spot" found at the top of the infant's skull gradually closes as new osseus tissue fills in the gap.

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pandemic

meaning

widespread; affecting the majority of people

example

They feared the AIDS epidemic would soon reach pandemic proportions.

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ramification

meaning

branching out; subdivision

example

We must examine all the ramifications of this problem.

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regatta

meaning

boat or yacht race

example

Many boating enthusiasts followed the regatta in their own yachts.

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rend

meaning

split; tear apart

example

In his grief, he tried to rend his garments.

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restive

meaning

restlessly impatient; obstinately resisting control

example

Waiting impatiently in the line to see Santa Claus, even the best-behaved children grow restive and start to fidget.

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revulsion

meaning

sudden violent change of feeling;
negative reaction

example

Many people in this country who admired dictatorships underwent a revulsion when they realized what Hitler and Mussolini were trying to do.

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rococo

meaning

ornate; highly decorated

example

The rococo style in furniture and architecture, marked by scrollwork and excessive decoration, flourished during the middle of the eighteenth century.

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stamina

meaning

strength; staying power

example

I doubt that she has the stamina to run the full distance of the marathon race.

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statutory

meaning

created by statute or legislative action

example

The judicial courts review and try statutory crimes.

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sylvan

meaning

pertaining to the woods; rustic

example

His paintings of nymphs in sylvan backgrounds were criticized as oversentimental.

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throttle

meaning

strangle

example

The criminal tried to throttle the old man with his bare hands.

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unctuous

meaning

oily; bland; insincerely suave

example

Uriah Heep disguised his nefarious actions by unctuous protestations of his "umility."

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validate

meaning

confirm; ratify

example

I will not publish my findings until I validate my results.

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adorn

meaning

decorate

example

Wall paintings and carved statues adorned the temple.

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