

argot

meaning

slang

example

In the argot of the underworld, she "was taken for a ride."

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avow

meaning

declare openly

example

I must avow that I am innocent.

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castigation

meaning

punishment; severe criticism

example

Sensitive even to mild criticism, Woolf could not bear castigation that she found in certain reviews.

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chide

meaning

scold

example

Grandma began to chide Steven for his lying.

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codicil

meaning

supplement to the body of a will

example

This codicil was drawn up five years after the writing of the original will.

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conglomeration

meaning

mass of material sticking together

example

In such a conglomeration of miscellaneous statistics, it was impossible to find a single area of analysis.

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contiguous

meaning

adjacent to; touching upon

example

The two countries are contiguous for a few miles; then they are separated by the gulf.

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corpulent

meaning

very fat

example

The corpulent man resolved to reduce.

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cynical

meaning

skeptical or distrustful of human motives

example

cynical at all times, he was suspicious of all altruistic actions of others.

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elysian

meaning

relating to paradise; blissful

example

An afternoon sail on the bay was for her an elysian journey.

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erotic

meaning

pertaining to passionate love

example

The erotic passages in this novel should be removed as they are merely pornographic.

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esteem

meaning

respect; value; judge

example

I esteem Ezra Pound both for his exciting poetry and for his acute comments on literature.

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fallow

meaning

plowed but sowed; uncultivated

example

Farmers have learned that it is advisable to permit land to be fallow every few years.

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incarnate

meaning

endowed with flesh; personified

example

Your attitude is so fiendish that you must be a devil incarnate.

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incense

meaning

enrage; infuriate

example

Unkindness to children incensed her.

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insensate

meaning

without feeling

example

She lay there as insensate as a log.

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insensible

meaning

unconscious; unresponsive

example

Sherry and I are very different; at times when I would be covered with embarrassment, she seems insensible to shame.

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intuition

meaning

power of knowing without reasoning

example

She claimed to know the truth by intuition.

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jovial

meaning

good natured; merry

example

A frown seemed out of place on his invariably jovial face.

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lethal

meaning

deadly

example

It is unwise to leave lethal weapons where children may find them.

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macerate

meaning

soften by soaking in liquid; waste away

example

The strawberries had been soaking in the champagne for so long that they had begun to macerate: they literally fell apart at the touch of a spoon.

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martinet

meaning

strict disciplinarian

example

The commanding officer was a martinet who observed each regulation to the letter.

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mogul

meaning

powerful person

example

The oil moguls made great profits when the price of gasoline rose.

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monotony

meaning

sameness leading to boredom

example

He took a clerical job, but soon grew to hate the monotony of his daily routine.

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novice

meaning

beginner

example

Even a novice can do good work if he follows these simple directions.

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panache

meaning

flair; flamboyance

example

Many performers imitate Noel Coward, but few have his panache and sense of style.

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portent

meaning

sign; omen; forewarning

example

He regarded the black cloud as a portent of evil.

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prate

meaning

Speak foolishly; boast idly

example

Let us not prate about our qualities; rather, let our virtues speak for themselves.

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preamble

meaning

introductory statement

example

In the preamble to the Constitution, the purpose of the document is set forth.

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prodigious

meaning

enormous; marvelous

example

He marveled at her prodigious appetite when he saw all the food she ate.

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quay

meaning

dock; landing place

example

Because of the captain's carelessness, the ship crashed into the quay.

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quixotic

meaning

idealistic but impractical

example

His head is in the clouds; he is constantly presenting these quixotic schemes.

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ramble

meaning

wander aimlessly (physically or mentally)

example

Listening to the teacher ramble, Judy wondered whether he'd ever get to his point.

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raspy

meaning

grating; harsh

example

The sergeant's raspy voice grated on the recruits' ears.

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resolution

meaning

determination

example

Nothing could shake his resolution to succeed despite all difficulties.

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sluice

meaning

artificial channel for directing or controlling the flow of water

example

In times of drought, this sluice enables farmers to obtain water for irrigation.

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staccato

meaning

played in an abrupt manner; marked by abrupt, sharp sound

example

His staccato speech reminded one of the sound of a machine gun.

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stellar

meaning

pertaining to the stars

example

He was the stellar attraction of the entire performance.

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therapeutic

meaning

curative

example

Now better known for its racetrack, Saratoga Springs first gained attention for the therapeutic qualities of its famous "healing waters."

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trigger

meaning

set off

example

John is touchy today; say one word wrong and you'll trigger an explosion.

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wrest

meaning

pull away; take by violence

example

With only ten seconds left to play, our team wrested victory from their grasp.

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anathematize

meaning

curse

example

The high priest anathematized the heretic.

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anecdote

meaning

short account of an amusing or interesting event

example

Rather than make concrete proposals for welfare reform, President Reagan told anecdotes about poor people who became wealthy despite their impoverished backgrounds.

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aperture

meaning

opening; hole

example

She discovered a small aperture in the wall, through which the insects had entered the room.

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appal

meaning

dismay; shock

example

We were appalled by the horrifying conditions in the city's jails.

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