

**Definitions**

Note carefully the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the word in the blank space(s) in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms given at the end of each entry.

**1. abeyance**  
(ə bā' əns)

(*n.*) a state of being temporarily inactive, suspended, or set aside

The administrators and staff reluctantly agreed to hold the matter in \_\_\_\_\_.  
SYNONYMS: deferment, postponement, suspension

**2. ambivalent**  
(əm biv' ə lənt)

(*adj.*) having opposite and conflicting feelings about someone or something

Despite their deeply \_\_\_\_\_ attitudes, the scientists went ahead with the program.  
SYNONYMS: equivocal, ambiguous, of two minds  
ANTONYMS: unequivocal, unambiguous, clear-cut

**3. beleaguer**  
(bi lē' gər)

(*v.*) to set upon from all sides; to surround with an army; to trouble, harass

Sherman's division arrived by train, then positioned itself to \_\_\_\_\_ the city's fortress.  
SYNONYMS: besiege, encircle, pester

**4. carte blanche**  
(kärt' blänsh')

(*n.*) full freedom or authority to act at one's own discretion

The boss gave us \_\_\_\_\_ in the matter of how we were going to approach the client.  
SYNONYMS: blank check, free rein

**5. cataclysm**  
(kat' ə kliz əm)

(*n.*) a sudden, violent, or devastating upheaval; a surging flood, deluge

Diplomacy could not stop the \_\_\_\_\_ of World War I.  
SYNONYMS: disaster, catastrophe

**6. debauch**  
(di bôch')

(*v.*) to corrupt morally, seduce; to indulge in dissipation; (*n.*) an act or occasion of dissipation or vice

Those who would \_\_\_\_\_ the innocent deserve our wrath.  
The \_\_\_\_\_ began at midnight.

SYNONYMS: (*v.*) carouse, (*n.*) spree, orgy  
ANTONYMS: (*v.*) elevate, uplift, inspire, purify

- 7. éclat**  
(ā klä')
- (*n.*) dazzling or conspicuous success or acclaim; great brilliancy (of performance or achievement)
- Dazzled by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the performance, critics heaped praise on the troupe.
- SYNONYMS: celebrity  
ANTONYMS: dullness, insipidity, mediocrity
- 8. fastidious**  
(fa stid' ē əs)
- (*adj.*) overly demanding or hard to please; excessively careful in regard to details; easily disgusted
- Known for her \_\_\_\_\_ taste, the decorator was always in great demand.
- SYNONYMS: precise, meticulous, exacting, finicky  
ANTONYMS: careless, sloppy, messy, untidy, slovenly
- 9. gambol**  
(gam' bəl)
- (*v.*) to jump or skip about playfully
- The children began to \_\_\_\_\_ like fawns in a meadow.
- SYNONYMS: frolic, romp, cavort, caper  
ANTONYMS: lumber, trudge, plod
- 10. imbue**  
(im byū')
- (*v.*) to soak or stain thoroughly; to fill the mind
- The celebrated teacher strove to \_\_\_\_\_ her students with the desire to succeed.
- SYNONYMS: infuse, instill, inculcate  
ANTONYMS: remove, expunge, eradicate, erase
- 11. inchoate**  
(in kō' it)
- (*adj.*) just beginning; not fully shaped or formed
- At first a molten and \_\_\_\_\_ mass, it soon grew, picked up speed, and destroyed all in its path.
- SYNONYMS: incipient, embryonic, rudimentary  
ANTONYMS: mature, developed, complete
- 12. lampoon**  
(lam pūn')
- (*n.*) a malicious satire; (*v.*) to satirize, ridicule
- Their \_\_\_\_\_ of his speech impediment did not amuse the dictator.
- The intent was to \_\_\_\_\_ the senator.
- SYNONYMS: (*n.*) burlesque; (*v.*) parody  
ANTONYMS: (*n.*) compliment, flattery, homage
- 13. malleable**  
(mal' ē ə bəl)
- (*adj.*) capable of being formed into different shapes; capable of being altered, adapted, or influenced
- The \_\_\_\_\_ minds of the young students were at the mercy of the charismatic professor.
- SYNONYMS: pliable, impressionable, adaptable  
ANTONYMS: rigid, inflexible, unyielding, intractable

- 14. nemesis**  
(nem' ə sis) (n.) an agent or force inflicting vengeance or punishment; retribution itself; an unbeatable rival  
Calculus proved to be my \_\_\_\_\_.  
SYNONYMS: comeuppance, avenger  
ANTONYMS: guardian angel, ally, patron
- 15. opt**  
(opt) (v.) to make a choice or decision  
We decided to \_\_\_\_\_ for the cheaper model.  
SYNONYMS: choose, select, decide
- 16. philistine**  
(fil' i stēn) (adj.) lacking in, hostile to, or smugly indifferent to cultural and artistic values or refinements; (n.) such a person  
Their \_\_\_\_\_ contempt for art is something the curator simply cannot abide.  
The mayor is seen as a \_\_\_\_\_ by the members of the city's arts community.  
SYNONYMS: (adj.) boorish, lowbrow; (n.) yahoo  
ANTONYMS: (adj.) refined, cultivated; (n.) esthete, highbrow
- 17. picaresque**  
(pik ə resk') (adj.) involving or characteristic of clever rogues or adventurers  
Reviewers cited the \_\_\_\_\_ element in the novel as its best feature.  
SYNONYMS: roguish, rascally, rakish
- 18. queasy**  
(kwē' zē) (adj.) nauseated or uneasy; causing nausea or uneasiness; troubled  
The remarks gave me a \_\_\_\_\_ feeling in the pit of my stomach.  
SYNONYM: unsettled  
ANTONYMS: calm, untroubled, confident
- 19. refractory**  
(ri frak' tə rē) (adj.) stubborn; hard or difficult to manage; not responsive to treatment or cure  
Caring for the \_\_\_\_\_ patient left us exhausted and drained.  
SYNONYMS: unruly, disobedient, willful, mulish  
ANTONYMS: docile, tractable, dutiful, obedient
- 20. savoir-faire**  
(sav wär fâr') (n.) the ability to say and do the right thing in any situation; social competence  
The experienced and wily ambassador handled the delicate affair with her usual \_\_\_\_\_.  
SYNONYMS: tact, finesse, suavity, sophistication  
ANTONYMS: tactlessness, gaucherie, boorishness