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| **callow**kal-oh | *adj.* Young and inexperienced; immature.The student was too **callow** to knew he was being fooled. |
| **contemporary**kuh n-tem-puh-rer-ee | *n.* A person living during the same period as another.Martha Jane Canary, known as “Calamity Jane,” and Annie Oakley were **contemporaries**.*adj.* Existing or occurring at the same time.The rise in fuel costs was **contemporary** with the demand for alternative fuels. |
| **cynical**sin-i-kuh l | *adj.* Doubtful of the sincerity of others’ motives; skeptical.People become **cynical** about diet programs when lost weight is soon regained.**cynic** *n.* Even though many clients have lied to her, Katharine, a public defender, has not become a **cynic**. |
| **despot**des-puh t | *n.*  A ruler with absolute power or tyrannical control over a group of people.In the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, thousands fled Haiti seeking refuge from the **despot** Jean Claude Duvalier.**despotic** *adj.*The Declaration of Independence of the United States asserts the government’s right to overthrow a **despotic** ruler. |
| **enunciate**ih-nuhn-see-eyt | *v.* 1. To pronounce clearly.In speech class we learn to **enunciate** our words.2. To state; to announce.The president **enunciated** his objectives for the coming year in his State of the Union address to Congress. |
| **impediment**im-ped-uh-muh nt | *n.* Anything that gets in the way; an obstacle.After the hurricane, fallen trees were **impediments** to traffic in our neighborhood. |
| **impoverish**im-pov-rish | *v.*  1. To make poor.Uncontrolled gambling can **impoverish** a person.2. To take away.Continual over-farming **impoverishes** the soil.**impoverished** *adj.*The Peace Corps is an agency of the United States government that sends volunteers to improve living standards in **impoverished** areas of the world. |
| **indolent**in-dl-uh nt | *adj.*  Indulging in ease; avoiding exertion; lazy.Being in the torrid heat of the tropical sun makes one feel **indolent**.**indolence** *n.*His failure to reach his goal certainly cannot be attributed to **indolence**. |
| **sagacious**suh-gey-shuh s | *adj.* Showing sound judgment; wise.My grandmother’s **sagacious** advice has guided me many times over the years.**sagacity** *n.*I was amazed when she questioned the **sagacity** of my plan to climb the mountain. |
| **secular**sek-yuh-ler | *adj.* Worldly; not connected with a church or religion.The choir included a few **secular** songs in the memorial service. |
| **speculate**spek-yuh-leyt | *v.* 1. To think about or make guesses.As we waited, we **speculated** about whether he’d keep his promise and show up.2. To engage in a risky business venture.She lost a great deal of money when she **speculated** in the stock market last year. |
| **strife**strahyf | *n.* Conflict or struggle.The **strife** between the two families has existed for a few years now. |
| **venerate**ven-uh-reyt | *v.* To show great respect for.Asian cultures **venerate** their ancestors long after they have died. |
| **voracious**voh-rey-shuh s | *adj.* 1. Ravenous; desireing and eating a large amount of food.We arrived back from our hike with **voracious** appetites.2. Greatly eager.Simon has been a **voracious** reader since childhood. |
| **wane**weyn | *v.* To get smaller, dimmer, or weaker; to near an end.When interest in sitcoms **waned**, the television networks switched to reality shows. |