

	word	definition	part of speech	example
aberrant	aberrant	markedly different from an accepted norm.	adjective	When the financial director started screaming and throwing food at his co-workers, the police had to come in to deal with his aberrant behavior.
	aberration	a deviation from what is normal or expected.	noun	Aberrations in climate have become the norm: rarely a week goes by without some meteorological phenomenon making headlines.
abstain	abstain	choose not to consume or take part in (particularly something harmful or sinful)	verb	
	abstruse	difficult to understand; incomprehensible.	adjective	Physics textbooks can seem so abstruse to the uninitiated that readers feel as though they are looking at hieroglyphics.
adamant	adamant	refusing to change one's mind.	adjective	Civil rights icon Rosa Parks will forever be remembered for adamantly refusing to give up her seat on a public bus—even after the bus driver insisted, she remained rooted in place.
	admonish	to warn strongly, even to the point of reprimanding.	verb	Before the concert began, security personnel admonished the crowd not to come up on stage during the performance.
admonitory	admonitory	serving to warn; expressing reproof or reproach especially a speech or action intended to warn or correct	adjective	At the assembly, the high school vice-principal gave the students an admonitory speech, warning them of the many risks and dangers of prom night.
	aesthete	one who professes great sensitivity to the beauty of art and nature	noun	A true aesthete, Marty would spend hours at the Guggenheim Museum, staring at the same Picasso.
aesthetic	aesthetic	concerned with the appreciation of beauty.	adjective	The director, not known for his aesthetic sensibilities, decided not to use costumes at all, and put on the play in everyday clothing.
	aesthetic	a set of principles underlying and guiding the work of a particular artist or school of artists	noun	The artist operated according to a peculiar aesthetic, not considering any photograph to be worth publishing unless it contained a marine mammal.
amalgam	amalgam	a mixture of multiple things.	noun	The band's music was an amalgam of hip-hop, flamenco and jazz, blending the three styles with surprising results.
	ambiguous	open to more than one interpretation.	adjective	The coach told his team, "Move toward that side of the field!" because he did not point, his directions were ambiguous, and the team had no idea to which side he was referring.
ambivalent	ambivalent	mixed or conflicting emotions about something.	adjective	Sam was ambivalent about studying for the exam because doing so ate up a lot of his time, yet he was able to improve his analytical skills.
	ameliorate	make something bad better.	verb	Three Cups of Tea tells the story of western man who hopes to ameliorate poverty and the lack of education in Afghanistan.
amenable	amenable	easily persuaded.	adjective	Even though she did not like the outdoors, Shirley was generally amenable and so her brother was able to persuade her to go camping.
	amorphous	shapeless.	adjective	His study plan for the GRE was at best amorphous; he would do questions from random pages in any one of seven test prep books.
anomalous	anomalous	not normal.	adjective	According to those who do not believe in climate change, the extreme weather over the last five years is simply anomalous—average temps should return to average, they believe.
	anomaly	something that is not normal, standard, or expected.	noun	After finding an anomaly in the data, she knew that she would have to conduct her experiment again.
antipathy	antipathy	an intense feeling of dislike or aversion.	noun	Maria had an antipathy for four groups, often boiling to the other side of the museum as soon as she saw a chaperone leading a group of wide-eyed tourists.
	antithetical	sharply contrasted in character or purpose.	adjective	His deep emotional involvement with these ideas is, in fact, antithetical to the detachment Buddhism preaches.
apathetic	apathetic	marked by a lack of interest.	adjective	Mr. Thompson was so talented at teaching math that even normally apathetic students took interest.
	apocryphal	an absence of emotion or enthusiasm.	noun	Widespread apathy among voters led to a very small turnout on election day.
appease	apocryphal	being of questionable authenticity.	adjective	The web is notorious for sandwiching apocryphal stories between actual news.
	arbitrary	pacify by according to the demands of.	verb	Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister during WWII, tried to appease Hitler and in doing so sent a clear message: you can walk all over us.
arcane	arbitrary	based on a random, groundless decision.	adjective	One of the arbitrary decrees in place during the emperor's rule is that all citizens pay him weekly homage at his palace. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	arduous	requiring secret or mysterious knowledge.	adjective	Most college fraternities are known for arcane rituals that those hoping to join the fraternity must learn.
artful	arduous	demanding considerable mental effort and skill; testing power	adjective	
	artful	exhibiting artistic skill.	adjective	Picasso is generally considered the most artful member of the Cubist movement.
ascetic	artful	clever in a cunning way.	adjective	Bernie Madoff's artful Ponzi scheme stole billions of dollars from investors and is considered the largest financial fraud in U.S. history.
	ascetic	practicing self-denial.	adjective	His ascetic life is the main reason he inspired so many followers, especially since he gave up wealth and power to live in poverty.
askance	ascetic	one who practices great self-denial.	noun	Historically, ascetics like Ghandi are often considered wise men partially because of their restraint.
	askance	with a look of suspicion or disapproval.	adverb	The old couple looked askance on the teenagers seated next to them, whispering to each other, "They've got rings through their noses and purple hair!"
audacious	audacious	willing to be bold in social situations or to take risks.	adjective	As all of the other campers covered in their tents, Bill, armed only with a flashlight, audaciously tracked down the bear that had raided their food.
	audacity	aggressive boldness in social situations.	noun	She surprised her colleagues by having the audacity to publically criticize the findings of an distinguished scientist.
auspicious	auspicious	favorable, the opposite of sinister.	adjective	Despite an auspicious beginning, Mike's road trip became a series of mishaps, and he was soon stranded and penniless, leaning against his wrecked automobile.
	austere	practicing self-denial.	adjective	His lifestyle of revelry and luxurious excess could hardly be called austere.
austere	austere	unadorned in style or appearance.	adjective	Late Soviet architecture, although remaining largely austere, moved into experimental territory that employed previously unused shapes and structures.
	austere	harsh in manner of temperament.	adjective	The principal of my elementary school was a cold, austere woman; I could never understand why she chose to work with children.
avaricious	avaricious	excessively greedy.	adjective	Since avaricious desire is similar to gluttony or lust—sins of excess—it was listed as one of the seven deadly sins by the Catholic church.
	banal	repeated too often; overfamiliar through overuse.	adjective	The professor used such banal expression that many students in the class either fell asleep from boredom or stayed awake to complete his sentences and humor friends.
banality	banality	a trite or obvious remark.	noun	Herbert regarded the minister's remark as a mere banality until Sharon pointed out profound implications to the seemingly obvious words.
	belie	to give a false representation to; misrepresent.	verb	The smile on her face belies the pain she must feel after the death of her husband.
belligerent	belligerent	characteristic of one eager to fight.	adjective	Tom said that he was arguing the matter purely for philosophical reasons, but his belligerent tone indicated an underlying anger about the issue.
	betray	to reveal or make known something, usually unintentionally.	verb	With the gold medal at stake, the gymnast awaited his turn, his quivering lip betraying his intense emotions.
blatant	blatant	without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious	adjective	
	bolster	support and strengthen.	verb	The case for the suspect's innocence was bolstered considerably by the fact that neither fingerprints nor DNA were found at the scene. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
brazen	brazen	unrestrained by convention or propriety.	adjective	Their large "donations" to the local police department gave the drug cartel the brazen confidence to do their business out in the open.
	bucolic	relating to the pleasant aspects of the country.	adjective	The noble families of England once owned vast expanses of beautiful, bucolic land.
bumbling	bumbling	lacking physical movement skills, especially with the hands	adjective	
	burgeon	grow and flourish.	verb	China's housing market is burgeoning, but some predict that the growth is merely a bubble and will burst much like the U.S. real estate bubble of 2008.
calumny	calumny	making of a false statement meant to injure a person's reputation	noun	With the presidential primaries well under way, the air is thick with calumny, and the mud already waist- high.
	capricious	determined by chance or impulse or whim rather than by necessity	adjective	
castigate	castigate	to reprimand harshly.	verb	Drill sergeants are known to castigate new recruits so mercilessly that the latter often break down during their first week in training.
	censure	to express strong disapproval.	verb	After being caught in bed with a mistress, the mayor was quickly censured by the city council.
castise	castise	to reprimand harshly.	verb	Though chastised for his wanton abuse of the pantry, Lawrence shrugged off his mother's harsh words, and continued to plow through jars of cookies and boxes of donuts.
	chortle	to chuckle, laugh merrily.	verb	Walking past the bar, I could hear happy, chortling people and the blast of horns from a jazz band.
circumscribe	circumscribe	restrict or confine.	verb	Their tour of South America was circumscribed so that they saw only popular destinations and avoided the dangerous parts of cities. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	circumvent	cleverly find a way out of one's duties or obligations.	verb	One way of circumventing the GRE is to apply to a grad school that does not require GRE scores.
commensurate	commensurate	to be in proportion or corresponding in degree or amount	adjective	
	concede	acknowledge defeat	verb	You win!
concede	concede	admit (to a wrongdoing).	verb	After a long, stern lecture from her father, Olivia conceded to having broken the window.
	concede	give over; surrender or relinquish to the physical control of	verb	The Spanish were forced to concede much of the territory they had previously conquered.
confound	confound	be confusing or perplexing to.	verb	Though Harry loved numbers, he found calculus confounding.
	confound	mistake one thing for another.	verb	Americans often confound sweet potatoes with yams, and refer to both vegetables by the same name.
conspicuous	conspicuous	without any attempt at concealment; completely obvious.	adjective	American basketball players are always conspicuous when they go abroad—not only are they American, but some are over seven feet tall.
	constituent	a citizen who is represented in a government by officials for	noun	
constituent	constituent	an abstract part of something.	noun	The constituents of the metal alloy are nickel, copper, and tin.
	construe	interpreted in a particular way.	verb	The author's inability to take a side on the issue was construed by both his opponents and supporters as a sign of weakness.
contingent	contingent	a gathering of persons representative of some larger group.	noun	A small contingent of those loyal to the king have gathered around the castle to defend it.
	contingent	possible but not certain to occur.	adjective	Whether the former world champions can win again this year is contingent upon none of its star players getting injured.
contrition	contrition	the feeling of remorse or guilt that comes from doing something wrong	noun	Those who show contrition during their prison terms—especially when under review by a parole board—often get shortened sentences.
	contrive	to pull off a plan or scheme, usually through skill or trickery.	verb	Despite a low GPA, he contrived to get into college, going so far as to write his own glowing letters of recommendation. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
copious	copious	in abundant supply.	adjective	In midsummer, there are copious popsicle stands at the beach: in the winter, there are none.
	craven	pathetically cowardly.	adjective	Though the man could have at least alerted the police, he crouched cravenly in the corner as the old woman was mugged.
cryptic	cryptic	mysterious or vague, usually intentionally.	adjective	Since Sarah did not want her husband to guess the Christmas present she had bought him, she only answered cryptically when he would ask her questions about it.
	culminate	reach the highest or most decisive point.	verb	Beethoven's musical genius culminated in the 9th Symphony, which many consider his greatest work.
culpability	culpability	a state of guilt.	noun	Since John had left his banana peel at the top of the stairwell, he accepted culpability for Martha's broken leg.
	decorous	characterized by good taste in manners and conduct.	adjective	Sally's parties are decorous affairs, and instead of the usual beer and music, there is tea and intellectual conversation.
decorum	decorum	propriety in manners and conduct.	noun	You will obey the rules of decorum for this courtroom or spend the night in a jail cell, said the judge to the prosecutor.

differential	showing respect.	adjective	you ever have the chance to meet the president, stand up straight and be differential.
deleterious	harmful to living things.	adjective	The BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was deleterious to the fishing industry in the southern states.
delineate	describe in detail.	verb	After a brief summary of proper swimming technique, the coach delineated the specifics of each stroke, spending 30 minutes alone on the backstroke.
demur	to object or show reluctance.	verb	Wallace disliked the cold, so he demurred when his friends suggested they going skiing in the Alps.
denigrate	charge falsely or with malicious intent; attack the good name	verb	Count Rumford denigrated the new theory of heat, demonstrating that it was wholly inadequate to explain the observations.
denote	be a sign or indication of, have as a meaning.	verb	Even if the text is not visible, the red octagon denotes "stop" to all motorists in America.
derivative	(or a creative product, e.	adjective	g. music, writing, etc.) not original but drawing on the work of another person. Because the movies were utterly derivative of other popular movies, they did well at the box office. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
derive	come from; be connected by a relationship of blood, for exa	verb	Many words in the English language are derived from Latin, including the word "derive".
derive	reason by deduction; establish by deduction.	verb	From the multiple set of footprints in the living room, the investigator derived an important clue: Sheila was not alone in the room at the time of the murder.
dictatorial	expecting unquestioning obedience; characteristic of an abs	adjective	
didactic	instructive (especially excessively).	adjective	Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Ilyich is a didactic novel, instructing the reader on how to live a good life.
diffident	showing modest reserve; lacking self-confidence.	adjective	As a young girl she was diffident and reserved, but now as an adult, she is confident and assertive.
dilatory	wasting time.	adjective	Lawyers use dilatory tactics so that it takes years before the case is actually decided.
dilettante	an amateur who engages in an activity without serious inten	noun	Fred has no formal medical training; while he likes to claim authority on medical issues, he is little more than a dilettante.
disaffected	discontented as toward authority.	adjective	After watching his superior take rations from the soldiers, he quickly became disaffected and rebeld.
discrete	constituting a separate entity or part.	adjective	What was once known as Czechoslovakia has since split into two discrete, independent nations.
disinterested	unbiased; neutral.	adjective	The potential juror knew the defendant, and therefore could not serve on the jury, which must consist only of disinterested members.
dispassionate	unaffected by strong emotion or prejudice.	adjective	A good scientist should be dispassionate, focusing purely on what the evidence says, without personal attachment.
disseminate	cause to become widely known.	verb	Before the effects of anaesthesia were disseminated, patients had to experience the full pain of a surgery.
dogmatic	highly opinionated, not accepting that your belief may not be	adjective	Bryan is dogmatic in his belief that the earth is flat, claiming that all pictures of a spherical earth are computer generated.
duress	compulsory force or threat.	noun	The witness said he signed the contract under duress and argued that the court should cancel the agreement.
eclectic	comprised of a variety of styles.	adjective	Joey was known for his eclectic tastes in music, one moment dancing to disco the next "air conducting" along to Beethoven's 9th symphony.
economical	avoiding waste, efficient.	adjective	Journalists favor an economical style of writing, in which no unnecessary words are used and every sentence is as short as possible.
edifying	enlightening or uplifting so as to encourage intellectual or m	adjective	I recently read an article in the Times about whether good literature is edifying or not; specifically, does reading more make a person more moral.
efficacious	producing the intended result.	adjective	Since Maggie's cough syrup, which had expired five years back, was no longer efficacious, she coughed through the night.
egregious	standing out in negative way; shockingly bad.	adjective	The dictator's abuse of human rights was so egregious that many world leaders asked that he be tried in an international court for genocide.
elicit	call forth (emotions, feelings, and responses).	verb	Such smiling—even if you are depressed—can elicit feelings of pleasure and happiness.
elucidate	make clearer and easier to understand.	verb	Youtube is a great place to learn just about anything—an expert elucidates finer points so that even a complete novice can learn.
eminent	standing above others in quality or position.	adjective	Shakespeare is an eminent author in the English language, but I find his writing uninteresting and melodramatic.
enervate	to sap energy from.	verb	John preferred to avoid equatorial countries; the intense sun would always leave him enervated after he'd spent the day sightseeing.
engender	give rise to.	verb	The restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles were so severe that they engendered deep hatred and resentment in the German people.
entrenched	fixed firmly or securely.	adjective	By the time we reach 60-years old, most of our habits are so entrenched that it is difficult for us to change.
ephemeral	lasting a very short time.	adjective	The lifespan of a mayfly is ephemeral, lasting from a few hours to a couple of days.
equivocal	confusing or ambiguous.	adjective	The findings of the study were equivocal—the two researchers had different opinions on what the results signified.
eradicate	to completely destroy.	verb	I tried eradicating the mosquitos in my apartment with a rolled up newspaper, but there were too many, of them.
erudite	having or showing profound knowledge.	adjective	Before the Internet, the library was typically where you would find erudite readers.
eschew	avoid and stay away from deliberately; stay clear of.	verb	Politicians are the masters of eschewing morals; academics are the masters of eschewing clarity.
esoteric	confined to and understandable by only an enlightened inne	adjective	Map collecting is an esoteric hobby to most, but to geography geeks it is a highly enjoyable pasttime.
espouse	to adopt or support an idea or cause.	verb	As a college student, Charlie espoused Marxism, growing his beard out and railing against the evils of the free-market.
exacerbate	make worse.	verb	Her sleeplessness exacerbated her cold—when she woke up the next day, her sinuses were completely blocked.
exacting	requiring and demanding accuracy.	adjective	Though his childhood piano teacher was so exacting, Max is thankful now, as a professional pianist.
exalt	praise or glorify.	verb	The teenagers exalted the rock star, covering their bedrooms with posters of him.
exonerate	pronounce not guilty of criminal charges.	verb	The document clearly indicated that Nick was out of the state at the time of the crime, and so served to exonerate him of any charges.
expound	add details or explanation; clarify the meaning; state in dept	verb	The CEO refused to expound on the decision to merge our department with another one, and so I quit.
extant	the opposite of extinct.	adjective	Despite many bookstores closing, experts predict that some form of book dealing will still be extant generations from now.
fallacious	of a belief that is based on faulty reasoning.	adjective	The widespread belief that Eskimos have forty different words for snow is fallacious, based on one false report.
fastidious	overly concerned with details; fussy.	adjective	Whitney is fastidious about her shoes, arranging them on a shelf in a specific order, each pair evenly spaced.
flux	a state of uncertainty about what should be done (usually fo	noun	
foment	try to stir up public opinion.	verb	After having his pay cut, Phil spread vicious rumors about his boss, hoping to foment a general feeling of discontent.
forlorn	marked by or showing hopelessness.	adjective	After her third pet dog died, Marcia was simply forlorn: this time even the possibility of buying a new dog no longer held any joy.
forthcoming	available when required or as promised.	adjective	The President announced that the senators were about to reach a compromise, and that he was eager to read the forthcoming details of the bill.
forthcoming	at ease in talking to others.	adjective	As a husband, Larry was not forthcoming: if Jill didn't demand to know details, Larry would never share them with her.
fortuitous	occurring by happy chance; having no cause or apparent ca	adjective	While the real objects are vastly different sizes in space, the sun and the moon seem to have the same fortuitous size in the sky.
frivolous	not serious in content or attitude or behavior.	adjective	Compared to Juliet's passionate concern for human rights, Jake's non-stop concern about football seems somewhat frivolous.
frugal	not spending much money (but spending wisely).	adjective	Monte was no miser, but was simply frugal, wisely spending the little that he earned.
frustrate	hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of.	verb	I thought I would finish writing the paper by lunchtime, but a number of urgent interruptions served to frustrate my plan. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
furtive	marked by quiet and caution and secrecy; taking pains to av	adjective	
gainsay	deny or contradict; speak against or oppose.	verb	I can't gainsay a single piece of evidence James has presented, but I still don't trust his conclusion.
gall	the trait of being rude and impertinent.	noun	Even though Carly was only recently hired, she had the gall to question her boss's judgment in front of the office.
gall	feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will.	noun	In an act of gall, Leah sent compromising photos of her ex-boyfriend to all his co-workers and professional contacts.
galvanize	to excite or inspire (someone) to action.	verb	At mile 23 of his first marathon, Kyle had all but given up, until he noticed his friends and family holding a banner that read, "Go Kyle!," galvanized, he broke into a gallop, finishing the last three miles in less than 20 minutes.
garrulous	full of trivial conversation.	adjective	Lynne was garrulous: once, she had a fifteen minute conversation with a stranger before she realized the woman didn't speak English.
gauche	lacking social polish.	adjective	Sylvester says the most gauche things, such as telling a girl he liked that she was much prettier when she wore makeup.
germane	relevant and appropriate.	adjective	The professor wanted to tell the jury in detail about his new book, but the lawyer said it wasn't germane to the charges in the cases.
glut	an excessive supply.	noun	The Internet offers such a glut of news related stories that many find it difficult to know which story to read first.
glut	supply with an excess of.	verb	In the middle of economic crises, hiring managers find their inboxes glutted with resumes.
gossamer	characterized by unusual lightness and delicacy.	adjective	The gossamer wings of a butterfly, which allow it to fly, are also a curse, so delicate that they are often damaged.
gregarious	be likely to socialize with others.	adjective	Often we think that great leaders are those who are gregarious, always in the middle of a large group of people; yet, as Mahatma Gandhi and many others have shown us, leaders can also be introverted.
guileless	free of deceit.	adjective	At first I thought my niece was guileless, but I then found myself buying her ice cream every time we passed a shop.
hackneyed	lacking significance through having been overused.	adjective	Cheryl rolled her eyes when she heard the lecturer's hackneyed advice to "be true to yourself".
haphazard	marked by great carelessness; dependent upon or characte	adjective	





conspicuously and offensively loud, given to vehement outcries	adjective	In giving Marcia a particular vociferous response, Paul caused people at every other table in the restaurant to turn around an look at them angrily.
the quality of talking or writing easily and continuously.	noun	The professor's volubility knows no bounds; he could talk through a hurricane and elaborate a point from one St. Patrick's Day to the next.
lacking.	adjective	She did not think her vocabulary was wanting, yet there were so many words that inevitably she found a few she didn't know.
charming in a childlike or naive way.	adjective	She was winsome by nature, and many people were drawn to this free and playful spirit. Basic Words.
open and honest.	adjective	The mayor, despite his avuncular face plastered about the city, was hardly aboveboard – some concluded that it was his ingratiating smile that allowed him to engage in corrupt behavior and get away with it.
extremely bad.	adjective	Coach Ramsey took his newest player off the field after watching a few painful minutes of her abysmal performance.
the highest point of achievement.	noun	The new Cessna airplanes will be the acme of comfort, offering reclining seats and ample legroom.
speak, plead, or argue in favor of.	verb	While the senator privately approved of gay marriage, he was unwilling to advocate for the cause in a public venue. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea.	noun	Martin Luther King Jr. was a tireless advocate for the rights of African-Americans in the United States. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
likeable; easy to talk to.	adjective	For all his surface affability, Marco was remarkably glum when he wasn't around other people.
wealthy.	adjective	The center of the city had sadly become a pit of penury, while, only five miles away, multi-million dollar homes spoke of affluence.
the quality of unselfish concern for the welfare of others.	noun	Albert Schweitzer spent most of his life doing missionary work as a doctor in Africa, seeking no reward, apparently motivated only by altruism.
friendly.	adjective	Amy's name was very apt: she was so amiable that she was twice voted class president.
more than is adequate.	adverb	The boat was amply supplied for its year at sea--no man would go hungry or thirst.
in a frenzied or uncontrolled state.	adverb	Wherever the bowl haircut teen-idol went, his legions of screaming fans ran through the streets amuck, hoping for a glance at his boyish face.
similar in some respects but otherwise different.	adjective	In many ways, the Internet's transformative effect on society has been analogous to that of the printing press.
intense hostility.	noun	The governor's animosity toward his rival was only inflamed when the latter spread false lies regarding the governor's first term.
precede in time.	verb	Harry was so unknowledgeable that he was unaware the Egyptian pharaohs antedated the American Revolution.
old-fashioned; belonging to an earlier period in time.	adjective	Aunt Betty had antiquated notions about marriage, believing that a man should court a woman for at least a year before receiving a kiss.
the highest point.	noun	The Ivy League is considered the apex of the secondary education system.
a short instructive saying about a general truth.	noun	Nietzsche was known for using aphorisms, sometimes encapsulating a complex philosophical thought in a mere sentence.
something that is a concise and instructive of a general truth	adjective	refers to an amount). There is an appreciable difference between those who say they can get the job done and those who actually get the job done.
large enough to be noticed (usu.	adjective	Test day can be one of pure apprehension, as many students worry about their test scores.
fearful expectation.	noun	Hoping to sound intelligent, Mary spoke in archaic English that was right out of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice--needless to say, she didn't have many friends.
so old as to appear to belong to a different period.	adjective	The ascendancy of the Carlsbad water polo team is clear--they have a decade of championships behind them.
the state that exists when one person or group has power o	noun	History ascribes The Odyssey and The Illiad to Homer, but scholars now debate whether he was a, historical figure or a fictitious name.
attribute or credit to.	verb	In the weekly paper, the editor assailed the governor for wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars in public projects that quickly failed.
attack in speech or writing.	verb	Her fear that the new college would be filled with unknown faces was assuaged when she recognized her childhood friend standing in line.
make something intense less severe.	verb	Ideally, the restaurant's augmented menu will expand its clientele and increase its profits.
enlarge or increase; improve.	verb	Many of the factory workers are worried about being replaced by machines and computers that will work completely autonomously.
In an autonomous or self-governing manner.	adverb	The Spanish conquistadors were known for their avarice, plundering Incan land and stealing Incan gold.
greed (one of the seven deadly sins).	noun	Afraid to see the aftermath of the car crash, I averted my eyes as we drove by.
turn away.	verb	The struggling videogame company put all of its finances into one final, desperate project to avert bankruptcy.
ward off or prevent.	verb	Martin is an avid birdwatcher, often taking long hikes into remote mountains to see some rare eagle.
marked by active interest and enthusiasm.	adjective	Badgered by his parents to find a job, the 30-year-old loafer instead joined a gang of itinerant musicians. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
to pester.	verb	The students were willing to clean up the broken glass, but when the teacher asked them to mop the entire floor, they balked, citing reasons why they needed to leave.
refuse to comply.	verb	This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
expel from a community, residence, or location; drive away	verb	Often we imagine all monks to wear the beatific smile of the Buddha, but, like any of us, a monk can have a bad day and not look very happy.
blissfully happy.	adjective	Her dress was becoming and made her look even more beautiful. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
appropriate, and matches nicely.	adjective	Sitting all alone in his room, Harvey begrudged the happiness of the other children playing outside his window.
to envy someone for possessing or enjoying something.	verb	We never begrudge money spent on ourselves.
to give reluctantly.	verb	The teacher looked down at the student and said, "It would behoove you to be in class on time and complete your homework, so that you don't repeat freshman English for a third straight year."
to be one's duty or obligation.	verb	A good teacher will never belittle his students, but will instead empower them.
lessen the importance, dignity, or reputation of.	verb	Known for their bellicose ways, the Spartans were once the most feared people from Peloponnesus to Persia.
warlike; inclined to quarrel.	adjective	I remember my grandfather's face was wrinkled, benign, and calm.
kind.	adjective	The tumor located in your ear lobe seems to be benign and should not cause you any trouble.
(medicine) not dangerous to health; not recurrent or progress	adjective	After discovering a priceless artifact in her backyard, Jane was besieged by phone calls, emails, and reporters all trying to buy, hold or see the rare piece of history.
harass, as with questions or requests; cause to feel distress	verb	The prince's distasteful choice of words besmirched not only his own name, but the reputation of the entire royal family.
damage the good name and reputation of someone.	verb	Unrelenting overcast skies tend to lead people to create bleak literature and lugubrious music – compare England's band Radiohead to any band from Southern California.
having a depressing or gloomy outlook.	adjective	Modern technology has been a boon to the travel industry.
a desirable state.	noun	He was a boon companion to many, and will be sadly missed.
very close and convivial.	adjective	Not one for social pleasantries, the Chief of Staff would brusquely ask his subordinates anything he wanted, even coffee.
ill-mannered and coarse or contemptible in behavior or app	adjective	The profits at our firm bucked the general downturn that effected the real estate industry. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
in a blunt, direct manner.	adverb	China's economy has been buttressed by a global demand for the electronic parts the country manufactures.
resist.	verb	Some actors take challenging roles in which they have to lose so much weight that they appear cadaverous.
make stronger or defensible.	verb	Even with a perfect stranger, Charles was always candid and would rarely hold anything back.
emaciated; gaunt.	adjective	Although I was unhappy that the relationship ended, I appreciated her candidness about why she was ready to move on from the relationship.
a straightforward and honest look at something.	adjective	Most cultures consider gambling a cardinal sin and thus have outlawed its practice. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
the quality of being honest and straightforward in attitude an	noun	What seemed like incessant nagging and carping about my behavior from my mother turned out to be wise and useful advice that has served me well.
of primary importance; fundamental.	adjective	Rosa Park's refusal to give up her bus seat acted as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement, setting into motion historic changes for African-Americans.
persistently petty and unjustified criticism.	adjective	Every fall, high school English teachers are inundated by requests to censor their curriculum by removing The Catcher in the Rye and Scarlet Letter from their reading lists.
something that speeds up an event.	noun	A cerebral analysis of championed pop music finds it to be simple and childish, but that ignores the point--the music's effect on the listener. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
given to haughty disregard of others Percy dismissed the	adjective	Martin Luther King Jr. was a championed civil rights fiercely throughout his short life. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
to examine and remove objectionable material.	verb	The chauvinist lives on both sides of the political spectrum, outright shunning anybody whose ideas are not consistent with his own.
involving intelligence rather than emotions or instinct.	adjective	Deserted for six months, the property began to look more like a jungle and less like a residence--weeds grew unchecked in the front yard. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
protect or fight for as a champion.	verb	When government abuses are not kept in check, that government is likely to become autocratic. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
a person who believes in the superiority of their group.	noun	One by one, the presidential candidates dropped out of the race, their respective checkered pasts-- from embezzlement to infidelity--sabotaging their campaigns. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
to limit (usually modifying the growth of something).	verb	Marco's chivalrous ways, like opening doors and pulling out chairs, was much appreciated by his date.
the condition of being held back or limited.	noun	In the final moments of the trial, during his closing speech, Phillips was nearly begging the judge for clemency.
one that is marked by disreputable happenings.	adjective	Over time, the various tribes coalesced into a single common culture with one universal language.
being attentive to women like an ideal knight.	adjective	A cogent argument will change the minds of even the most skeptical audience.
leniency and compassion shown toward offenders by a pers	noun	A well-written, cohesive essay will keep on topic at all times, never losing sight of the main argument.
fuse or cause to grow together.	verb	Many have argued that Lee Harvey Oswald, JFK's assassin, was in collusion with other criminals; others maintain that Oswald was a lone gunman.
clear and persuasive.	adjective	Few appreciate the colossal scale of the sun: if hollow, it could contain a million Earths.
well integrated, forming a united whole.	adjective	The efforts of the firefighters running into the burning building were commendable.
agreement on a secret plot.	noun	After the water polo team won their sixth championship, they became complacent and didn't even make it to the playoffs the next year.
so great in size or force or extent as to elicit awe.	adjective	The head waiter was careful to tell the amateur diners that red wine was complementary with beef, each bringing out subtle taste notes in the other.
worthy of high praise.	adjective	
contented to a fault with oneself or one's actions.	adjective	
enhancing each other's qualities (for two things or more).	adjective	

compound	make more intense, stronger, or more marked.	verb	headache was compounded by the construction crew outside, which had six jackhammers going at the same time. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
conducive	making a situation or outcome more likely to happen.	adjective	Studying in a quiet room is conducive to learning; studying in a noisy environment makes learning more difficult.
conniving	taking part in immoral and unethical plots.	verb	The queen was so conniving that, with the help of the prince, she tried to overthrow the king.
consecrate	to make holy or set apart for a high purpose.	verb	At the church of Notre Dame in France, the new High Altar was consecrated in 1182.
constraint	something that limits or restricts.	noun	He found pop music a constraint on his ability to learn and preferred to listen to classical musical while studying.
consummate	having or revealing supreme mastery or skill.	adjective	Tyler was the consummate musician: he was able to play the guitar, harmonica, and the drum at the same time. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
consummate	to make perfect and complete in every respect.	verb	The restoration of the ancient church was only consummated after a twenty years of labor. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
contemptuous	scornful, looking down at others with a sneering attitude.	adjective	Always on the forefront of fashion, Vanessa looked contemptuously at anyone wearing dated clothing.
contrite	to be remorseful.	adjective	Though he stole his little sister's licorice stick with malevolent glee, Chucky soon became contrite when his sister wouldn't stop crying.
conundrum	a difficult problem.	noun	Computers have helped solve some of the mathematical conundrums which have puzzled man for many centuries.
convivial	describing a lively atmosphere.	adjective	The wedding reception was convivial; friends who hadn't seen each other for ages drank and ate together before heading to the dance floor.
convoluted	highly complex or intricate.	adjective	Instead of solving the math problem in three simple steps, Kumar used a convoluted solution requiring fifteen steps.
cornucopia	an abundant supply of something good.	noun	The International Food Expo was a cornucopia of culinary delights: gourmet foods from every continent were under one roof.
corroborate	to confirm or lend support to (usually an idea or claim).	verb	Her claim that frog populations were falling precipitously in Central America was corroborated by locals, who reported that many species of frogs had seemingly vanished overnight.
cosmopolitan	comprising many cultures; global in reach and outlook	adjective	
credence	belief in something.	noun	He placed no credence in psychics, claiming that they offered no special powers beyond the ability to make people part with their money.
credible	deserving of praise but not that amazing.	adjective	Critics agreed the movie was credible, but few gave it more than three out of five stars.
credulity	tendency to believe readily.	noun	Virginia's wide-eyed credulity as a five-year old was replaced by suspicion after she learned that Santa Claus didn't really exist.
cumbersome	difficult to handle or use especially because of size or weight	adjective	Only ten years ago, being an avid reader and a traveler meant carrying a cumbersome backpack stuffed with books—these days we need only an e-reader.
dearth	a lack or shortage.	noun	I am surprised by the dearth of fast food chains; this is America and I assumed they were on every street.
debase	reduce the quality or value of something.	verb	The third-rate script so debased the film that not even the flawless acting could save it from being a flop.
debunk	expose as false ideas and claims, especially while ridiculing	verb	Richard Dawkins tries to debunk religious belief, but his ridicule tends to push people away from his points rather than convince them.
decimation	destroying or killing a large part of the population.	noun	The decimation after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is incomprehensible.
degrade	reduce in worth or character, usually verbally.	verb	Jesse had mockingly pointed out all of Nancy's faults in front of their friends, publicly degrading the poor girl.
delegate	give an assignment to (a person).	verb	Since the senior manager had to go on many international business trips, she was forced to delegate many of her responsibilities to two lower-level managers. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
deliberate	think about carefully; weigh the pros and cons of an issue.	verb	Emergency situations such as this call for immediate action and leave no room to deliberate over options. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
demean	to insult; to cause someone to lose dignity or respect.	verb	At first the soccer players bantered back and forth, but as soon as one of the players became demeaning, calling the other's mother a water buffalo, the ref whipped out a red card.
demure	to be modest and shy.	adjective	The portrait of her in a simple white blouse was sweet and demure.
deride	treat or speak of with contempt.	verb	The nun derided the students for trying to sneak insects and worms into the classroom.
derisive	abusing vocally, expressing contempt or ridicule.	adjective	I was surprised by her derisive tone; usually, she is sweet, soft spoken, and congenial.
derogative	expressed as worthless or in negative terms.	adjective	Never before have we seen a debate between two political candidates that was so derogative and filthy.
desecrate	to willfully violate or destroy a sacred place.	verb	After desecrating the pharaoh's tomb, the archaeologist soon fell victim to a horrible illness.
destitute	poor enough to need help from others.	adjective	Jean Valjean, is at first destitute, but through the grace of a priest, he makes something of his life.
destitute	completely wanting or lacking (usually "destitute of")	adjective	
deter	turn away from by persuasion.	verb	His mother tried to deter him from joining the army, but he was too intoxicated with the idea of war to listen.
deter	try to prevent; show opposition to.	verb	The government's primary job should involve deterring paths to war, not finding ways to start them.
detrimental	(sometimes followed by "to") causing harm or injury.	adjective	Many know that smoking is detrimental to your health, but processed sugar in large quantities is equally bad.
devolve	pass on or delegate to another.	verb	The company was full of managers known for devolving tasks to lower management, but never doing much work themselves.
devolve	grow worse (usually "devolve into").	verb	The dialogue between the two academics devolved into a downright bitter argument.
diabolical	to be extremely wicked like the devil.	adjective	The conspirators, willing to dispatch anyone who stood in their way, hatched a diabolical plan to take over the city.
differentiate	be a distinctive feature, attribute, or trait (sometimes in post verb)	verb	Mozart's long melodic lines differentiate his compositions from other works of late 18th century music.
differentiate	evolve so as to lead to a new species or develop in a way	verb	Animals on Madagascar differentiated from other similar animal species due to many years of isolation on the island.
dilapidated	in terrible condition.	adjective	The main house has been restored but the gazebo is still dilapidated and unuseable.
diligent	characterized by care and perseverance in carrying out task	adjective	Michael was a diligent gardener, never leaving a leaf on the ground and regularly watering each plant.
discord	lack of agreement or harmony.	noun	Despite all their talented players, the team was filled with discord—some players refused to talk to others—and lost most of their games.
discreet	careful to protect one's speech or actions in order to avoid	adjective	The professor thought that he was discreet, subtly wiping the stain off of his shirt, but as soon as he stepped off the podium a member of the audience pointed out the large ketchup stain.
discriminate	recognize or perceive the difference.	verb	Sarah couldn't discriminate between a good wine and a bad wine, so she avoided wine tastings. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
disenfranchise	deprive of voting rights.	verb	The U.S. Constitution disenfranchised women until 1920 when they were given the right to vote.
disheartened	made less hopeful or enthusiastic.	adjective	After the visiting team scored nine times, the home team's fans were disheartened, some leaving the game early.
disparate	two things are fundamentally different.	adjective	With the advent of machines capable of looking inside the brain, fields as disparate as religion and biology have been brought together by scientists trying to understand what happens in the brain when people have a religious experience.
dispatch	the property of being prompt and efficient.	noun	She finished her thesis with dispatch, amazing her advisors who couldn't believe she hadn't written 60 scholarly pages so quickly. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
dispatch	dispose of rapidly and without delay and efficiently.	verb	As soon as the angry peasants stormed the castle, they caught the king and swiftly dispatched him. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
docile	easily handled or managed; willing to be taught or led or sug	adjective	
dog	to pursue relentlessly; to hound.	verb	Throughout his life, he was dogged by insecurities that inhibited personal growth. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
dupe	to trick or swindle.	verb	Once again a get-rich-fast Internet scheme had duped Harold into submitting a \$5,000 check to a sham operation.
dupe	a person who is easily tricked or swindled.	noun	The charlatan mistook the crowd for a bunch of dupes, but the crowd was quickly on to him and derided his bald-faced attempt to bilk them.
eccentric	highly unconventional or usual (usually describes a person).	adjective	Mozart was well-known for his eccentricities, often speaking words backward to confuse those around him.
egotist	a conceited and self-centered person.	noun	An egotist, Natasha had few friends because of her inability to talk about anything except her dream of becoming the next American Idol.
eke	To live off meager resources, to scrape by.	verb	Stranded in a cabin over the winter, Terry was able to eke out an existence on canned food.
elaborate	marked by complexity and richness of detail.	adjective	Thomas, on returning from Morocco, replaced his dirty gray carpet with an elaborate one he'd brought back with him.
elaborate	explain in more detail.	verb	Most high school physics teachers find themselves elaborating the same point over and over again, since many concepts confuse students.
elude	escape understanding.	verb	Even a basic understanding of physics can elude most high schools students.
elusive	difficult to capture or difficult to remember.	adjective	Many first time skydivers say that describing the act of falling from the sky is elusive.
embellish	make more attractive by adding ornament, colour, etc.	verb	; make more beautiful McCarthey would write relatively straightforward lyrics, and Lennon would embellish them with puns and poetic images.
embroiled	involved in argument or contention.	adjective	These days we are never short of a D.C. politician embroiled in scandal—a welcome phenomenon for those who, having barely finished feasting on the sordid details of one imbroiglio, can sink their teeth into a fresh one.
empathetic	showing understanding and ready comprehension of other	adjective	Most discrimination and hatred is based on a lack of empathetic awareness of people that have the same aspirations and fears.
emulate	strive to equal or match, especially by imitating; compete with	verb	To really become fluent in a new language, emulate the speech patterns and intonation of people

excruciating	extremely painful.	adjective	After the Boulder rolled a couple of feet, pinning my friend's arm, he experienced excruciating pain.
exemplify	be characteristic of.	verb	Lincoln exemplified the best of not only America, but also the potential greatness that exists within each person.
exemplify	clarify by giving an example of.	verb	Please present some case studies that exemplify the results that you claim in your paper.
exhort	to strongly urge on, encourage.	verb	Nelson's parents exhorted him to study medicine, urging him to choose a respectable profession; intransigent, Nelson left home to become a graffiti artist.
extenuating	making less guilty or more forgivable.	adjective	The jury was hardly moved by the man's plea that his loneliness was an extenuating factor in his crime of dogsnapping a prized pooch.
facetious	cleverly amusing in tone.	adjective	Facetious behavior will not be tolerated during sex education class, it's time for all of you to treat these matters like mature adults.
fawn	try to gain favor by extreme flattery.	verb	The media fawned over the handsome new CEO, praising his impeccable sense of style instead of asking more pointed questions. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
ferret	to search for something persistently.	verb	Ever the resourceful lexicographer, Fernton was able to ferret out the word origin of highly obscure words. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
fete	to celebrate a person.	verb	After World War II, war heroes were feted at first but quickly forgotten.
fickle	fiable to sudden unpredictable change, esp.	adjective	in affections or attachments. She was so fickle in her politics, it was hard to pinpoint her beliefs; one week she would embrace a side, and the next week she would denounce it.
fragle	achieve something by means of trickery or devious methods	verb	Steven was able to fragile one of the last seats on the train by convincing the conductor that his ston stub was actually a valid ticket.
fledgling	young and inexperienced; describing any new participant in	adjective	
fleece	to deceive	verb	Many people have been fleeced by Internet scams and never received their money back. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
founder	behave awkwardly; have difficulties.	verb	Sylvia has excelled at advanced calculus, but ironically, when she has dealt with taxes, she founders.
flush	to be in abundance.	adjective	The exam's passage is flush with difficult words, words that you may have learned only yesterday.
foible	a behavioral attribute that is distinctive and peculiar to an in	noun	When their new roommate sat staring at an oak tree for an hour, Marcia thought it indicated a mental problem, but Jeff assured her it was a harmless foible.
foolhardy	marked by defiant disregard for danger or consequences.	adjective	The police regularly face dangerous situations, so for a police officer not to wear his bullet-proof vest is foolhardy.
forthright	characterized by directness in manner or speech; without su	adjective	I did not expect the insurance agent to give us any straight answers, but I was pleasant surprised by how forthright he was.
futile	producing no result or effect; unproductive of success.	adjective	I thought I could repair the car myself, but after two days of work with no success, I have to admit that my efforts were futile.
genial	agreeable, conducive to comfort.	adjective	Betty is a genial young woman; everyone she meets is put at ease by her elegance and grace.
genteel	marked by refinement in taste and manners.	adjective	A live string quartet would provide a more genteel air to the wedding than would a folk singer.
glean	collect information bit by bit.	verb	Herb has given us no formal statement about his background, but from various hints, I have gleaned that he grew up in difficult circumstances.
glib	(of a person) speaking with ease but without sincerity I have	adjective	
goad	urge on with unpleasant comments.	verb	Doug did not want to enter the race, but Jim, through a steady stream of taunts, goaded him into signing up for it.
grovel	show submission or fear.	verb	Every time Susan comes to the office, Frank grovels as if she were about to fire.
guffaw	laugh boisterously.	verb	Whenever the jester fell to the ground in mock pain, the king guffawed, exposing his yellow, fang-like teeth.
hamper	prevent the progress or free movement of.	verb	As the rain water began to collect in pools on the highway, it began to hamper the flow of traffic. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
hamstring	made ineffective or powerless.	verb	The FBI has made so many restriction on the local police that they are absolutely hamstringing, unable to accomplish anything.
heyday	the pinnacle or top of a time period or career.	noun	During the heyday of Prohibition, bootlegging had become such a lucrative business that many who had been opposed to the 18th Amendment began to fear it would be repealed.
hodgepodge	a confusing mixture of jumble.	noun	Those in attendance represented a hodgepodge of the city's denizens: chimney sweepers could be seen sitting elbow to elbow with stockbrokers.
hound	to pursue relentlessly.	verb	An implacable foe of corruption, Eliot Ness hounded out graft in all forms—he even helped nab Al Capone. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
humdrum	dull and lacking excitement.	adjective	Having grown up in a humdrum suburb, Jacob relished life in New York City after moving.
illicit	contrary to or forbidden by law.	adjective	Though Al Capone was engaged in many illicit activities, he was finally arrested for income tax evasion, a relatively minor offense.
immaterial	not relevant.	adjective	The judge found the defendant's comments immaterial to the trial, and summarily dismissed him from the witness stand.
impeccable	without fault or error.	adjective	He was impeccably dressed in the latest fashion without a single crease or stain.
impede	be a hindrance or obstacle to.	verb	Since the police sergeant had to train the pair of new hires, progress in his own case was impeded.
impending	close in time; about to occur.	adjective	The impending doom of our world has been a discussed and debated for 2000 years—maybe even longer.
impermeable	does not allow fluids to pass through.	adjective	The sand bags placed on the river formed an impermeable barrier, protecting the town from flooding.
implicate	convey a meaning; imply.	verb	By saying that some of the guests were uncomfortable, the manager implicated to the hotel staff that it needed to be more diligent.
implicate	to indicate in wrongdoing, usually a crime.	verb	The crime boss was implicated for a long list of crimes, ranging from murder to disturbing the peace.
imponderable	impossible to estimate or figure out.	adjective	According to many lawmakers, the huge variety of factors affecting society make devising an efficient healthcare system an imponderable task.
impregnable	immune to attack; incapable of being tampered with.	adjective	As a child, Amy would build pillow castles and pretend they were impregnable fortresses.
inadvertent	happening by chance or unexpectedly or unintentionally.	adjective	Although Prohibition was rooted in noble ideals, the inadvertent and costly consequences of making alcohol illegal in the U.S. led its the repeal.
inarticulate	without or deprived of the use of speech or words.	adjective	Although a brilliant economist, Professor Black was completely inarticulate, a terrible lecturer.
incense	make furious.	verb	When Herb bought football tickets for a game on the day of their wedding anniversary, Jill was incensed. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
incessant	uninterrupted in time and indefinitely long continuing.	adjective	I don't mind small children in brief doses, but I think the incessant exposure that their parents have to them would quickly wear me down.
inclement	(of weather) unpleasant, stormy.	adjective	After a week of inclement weather, we finally are able to go outside and enjoy the sun.
inclement	used of persons or behavior; showing no mercy.	adjective	Marcus Aurelius, though a fair man, was inclement to Christians during his reign, persecuting them violently.
incumbent	necessary (for someone) as a duty or responsibility.	adjective	Middle managers at times make important decisions, but real responsibility for the financial well-being of the corporation is ultimately incumbent on the CEO.
indict	to formally charge or accuse of wrong-doing.	verb	The bankrobber was indicted on several major charges, including possession of a firearm.
indigenous	originating in a certain area.	adjective	The plants and animals indigenous to Australia are notably different from those indigenous to the U.S.—one look at a duckbill platypus and you know you're not dealing with an opossum.
indignant	feeling anger over a perceived injustice.	adjective	When the cyclist swerved into traffic, I forced the driver to brake and elicited an indignant shout of "Hey, punk, watch where you're going!"
industrious	characterized by hard work and perseverance.	adjective	Pete was an industrious student, completing every assignment thoroughly and on time.
inflammable	extremely controversial, incendiary.	adjective	It only takes one person to leave an inflammable comment on an Internet thread for that threat to blow up into pages upon pages of reader indignation.
ingenuity	the power of creative imagination.	noun	Daedalus was famous for his ingenuity; he was able to fashion his son Icarus with a pair of wings, using wax to hold them together.
inkling	a slight suggestion or vague understanding.	noun	Lynne speaks four Romance languages, but she doesn't have an inkling about how East Asian languages are structured.
insipid	dull and uninteresting.	adjective	The movie director was known for hiring beautiful actors in order to deflect attention away from the insipid scripts he would typically use.
insolvent	unable to pay one's bills; bankrupt.	adjective	With credit card bills skyrocketing, a shockingly large number of Americans are truly insolvent.
intermittent	stopping and starting at irregular intervals.	adjective	The intermittent thunder continued and the night was punctuated by cracks of lightning—a surreal sleepless night.
inundate	to flood or overwhelm.	verb	The newsroom was inundated with false reports that only made it more difficult for the newscasters to provide an objective account of the bank robbery.
irascible	quickly angered to anger.	adjective	If Arthur's dog is not fed adequately, he becomes highly irascible, even growling at his own shadow.
irk	irritate or vex.	verb	My little sister has a way of irking and annoying me like no other person.
irresolute	uncertain how to act or proceed.	adjective	He stood irresolute at the split in the trail, not sure which route would lead back to the camp.
jargon	a characteristic language of a particular group.	noun	To those with little training in medicine, the jargon of doctors can be very difficult to understand.
jocular	characterized by jokes and good humor.	adjective	My uncle was always in a jocular mood at family gatherings, messing up people's hair and telling knock- knock jokes to anyone who would listen.
junta	an aggressive takeover by a group (usually military).	noun	As dangerous of a threat as North Korea is, some analysts believe that there was a junta suddenly to gain power, it could be even more unpredictable and bellicose than the current leadership.
laborious	characterized by effort to the point of exhaustion; especially	adjective	
leery	openly distrustful and unwilling to confide.	adjective	Without checking his references and talking to previous employers, I am leery of hiring the candidate.
lethargic	lacking energy.	adjective	Nothing can make a person more lethargic than a big turkey dinner.
lucid	(of language) transparently clear; easily understandable.	adjective	Though Walters writes about physics and time travel, his writing is always lucid, so readers with little scientific training can understand difficult concepts.
macabre	suggesting the horror of death and decay; gruesome.	adjective	Edgar Allen Poe was considered the master of the macabre; his stories vividly describe the moment leading up to—and often those moments after—a grisly death.
malady	a disease or sickness.	noun	The town was struck by a malady throughout the winter that left most people sick in bed for two weeks.
malevolent	wishing or appearing to wish evil to others; arising from inter	adjective	
malleable	capable of being shaped or bent or drawn out.	adjective	The clay became malleable and easy to work with after a little water was added.
malleable	easily influenced.	adjective	My little brother is so malleable that I can convince him to sneak cookies from the cupboard for me.
malodorous	having an unpleasant smell.	adjective	Some thermally active fountains spew sulfur fumes—the air around them is sometimes so malodorous that many have to plug their noses.
marital	suggesting war or military life.	adjective	Americans tend to remember Abraham Lincoln as kindly and wise, not at all marital, despite the fact that he was involved in the fiercest war America has even fought.
maxim	a short saying expressing a general truth.	noun	Johnson initially suggests that the secret to business can be summarized in a single maxim but then requires a 300-page book to explain exactly what he means.
meander	to wander aimlessly.	verb	A casual observer might have thought that Peter was meandering through the city, but that day he was actually seeking out those places where he and his long lost love had once visited.
melancholy	a deep, long-lasting sadness.	noun	Hamlet is a figure of tremendous melancholy; he doesn't have a truly cheerful scene throughout the entire play.

melee	a wild, confusing fight or struggle.	noun	ending daily taunts about my name. I became enraged and pummeled the schoolyard bully and his sycophantic friends in a brutal melee.
mesmerize	to spellbind or enthral.	verb	The plot and the characters were so well developed that many viewers were mesmerized, unable to move their eyes from the screen for even a single second.
misanthrope	a hater of mankind.	noun	Hamilton had been deceived so many times in his life that he hid behind the gruff exterior of a. misanthrope, lambasting perfect strangers for no apparent reason.
miscreant	a person who breaks the law.	noun	Come back you miscreant! yelled the woman who just had her purse stolen.
miser	a person who doesn't like to spend money (because they are mean).	noun	
misogynist	a person who dislikes women in particular.	noun	Many have accused Hemingway of being a quiet misogynist, but recently unearthed letters argue against this belief.
moment	significant and important value.	noun	Despite the initial hullabaloo, the play was of no great moment in Hampton's writing career, and within a few years the public quickly forgot his foray into theater arts. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
moot	open to argument or debate; undecided in a meaningless way.	adjective	Since the Board just terminated Steve as the CEO, what the finance committee might have thought of his proposed marketing plan for next year is now a moot point. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
morose	ill-tempered and not inclined to talk; gloomy.	adjective	After Stanley found out he was no longer able to go on vacation with his friends, he sat in his room morosely.
morph	To undergo dramatic change in a seamless and barely noticeable way.	verb	The earnestness of the daytime talk shows of the 1970's has morphed into something far more sensational and vulgar; today guests actually standup and threaten to take swings at one another.
muted	softened, subdued.	adjective	Helen preferred muted earth colors, such as green and brown, to the bright pinks and red her sister liked. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
obdurate	stubbornly persistent in changing an opinion or action.	adjective	No number of pleas and bribes would get him to change his obdurate attitude.
obliging	showing a cheerful willingness to do favors for others.	adjective	Even after all his success, I found him to be accommodating and obliging, sharing with me his "secret tips" on how to gain wealth and make friends.
obstinate	resistant to guidance or discipline; stubbornly persistent.	adjective	The coach suggested improvements Sarah might make on the balance beam, but she remained obstinate, unwilling to modify any of the habits that made her successful in the past.
ornate	marked by elaborate rhetoric and elaborated with decorative details.	adjective	The ornate Victorian and Edwardian homes spread throughout San Francisco are my favorite part of the city.
paradoxical	seemingly contradictory but nonetheless possibly true.	adjective	That light could be both a particle and a wave seems paradoxical, but nonetheless, it is true.
pastoral	relating to the countryside in a pleasant sense.	adjective	Those who imagine America's countryside as a pastoral region are often disappointed to learn that much of rural U.S. is filled with cornfields extending as far as the eye can see.
patronize	treat condescendingly.	verb	She says she genuinely wanted to help me, but instead she patronized me, constantly pointing out how I was inferior to her. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
paucity	a lack of something.	noun	There is a paucity of jobs hiring today that require menial skills, since most jobs have either been automated or outsourced.
peevish	easily irritated or annoyed.	adjective	Our office manager is peevish, so the rest of us tip-toe around him, hoping not to set off another one of his fits.
perennial	lasting an indefinitely long time; eternal; everlasting.	adjective	Even at the old-timers games, Stan Musial would get the loudest cheer: he was a perennial favorite of the fans there. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
perpetuate	cause to continue.	verb	If you do not let him do things for himself, you are merely perpetuating bad habits that will be even harder to break in the future.
perquisite	a right reserved exclusively by a particular person or group.	noun	Even as the dishwasher at the French restaurant, Josh quickly learned that he had the perquisite of being able to eat terrific food for half the price diners would pay.
pertinent	having precise or logical relevance to the matter at hand.	adjective	While the salaries of the players might draw attention in the media, such monetary figures are not pertinent to the question of who plays the best on the field.
perturb	disturb in mind or cause to be worried or alarmed.	verb	Now that Henry is recovering from a major illness, he no longer lets the little trivialities, such as late mail, perturb him.
peruse	to read very carefully.	verb	Instead of perusing important documents, people all too often rush to the bottom of the page and plaster their signatures at the bottom.
pine	to yearn for.	verb	Standing forlornly by the window, she pined for her lost love. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
pinnacle	the highest point.	noun	At its pinnacle, the Roman Empire extended across most of the landmass of Eurasia, a feat not paralleled to the rise of the British Empire in the 18th and 19th century.
piquant	having an agreeably pungent taste.	adjective	The chef, with a mere flick of the salt shaker, turned the bland tomato soup into a piquant meal.
pitiful	concise and full of meaning.	adjective	I enjoy reading the Dodejef for its pitiful and insightful prose; it always gives me something to think about.
piteance	a small amount (of money).	noun	Vinny's uncle beamed smugly about how he'd offered his nephew fifty dollars for his Harvard tuition; even twice the amount would have been a mere pittance.
placid	not easily irritated.	adjective	Doug is normally placid, so we were all shocked to see him yelling at the television when the Mets lost the game.
plodding	(of movement) slow and laborious.	adjective	Charlie may seem to run at a plodding pace, but he is an ultramarathoner, meaning he runs distances of up to 100 miles, and can run for ten hours at a stretch.
play	a clever plan to turn a situation to one's advantage.	noun	Dennis arranged an elaborate play, involving 14 different people lying for him in different situations, so that it could appear that he was meeting Mary completely by chance at the wedding reception.
powwow	an informal meeting or discussion.	noun	Before the team takes the field, the coach always calls for a powwow so that he can make sure all the players are mentally in the right place.
precarious	fraught with danger.	adjective	People smoke to relax and forget their cares, but ironically, in terms of health risks, smoking is far more precarious than either mountain-climbing or skydiving.
precedent	an example that is used to justify similar occurrences at a later time.	noun	The principal explained that even though one student had done modeling work outside of school, the outfits that student wore in those photographs in no way established a precedent for what could be worn at school dances.
preempt	take the place of or have precedence over.	verb	A governmental warning about an imminent terrorist attack would preempt ordinary network programming on television.
preemptive	done before someone else can do it.	adjective	Just as Martha was about to take the only cookie left on the table, Noah preemptively swiped it.
presumption	an assumption that is taken for granted.	noun	When Mr. Baker found out the family car was gone, he acted under the presumption that his rebellious son had taken the car, calling his son's phone and yelling at him; only later did Mr. Baker realize that Mrs. Baker had simply gone out to get her nails d.
presumptuous	audacious (even arrogant) behavior that you have no right to demand.	noun	The new neighbor quickly gained a reputation for her presumption; she had invited herself to several of the neighbors homes, often stopping over at inopportune times and asking for a drink.
prevail	be widespread in a particular area at a particular time; be superior.	verb	Many felt that Barney was presumptuous in moving into the large office before the management even made any official announcement of his promotion.
prevail	prove superior.	verb	
pristine	Unspoiled, untouched (usu. of nature).	adjective	Before the cricket match, Australia was heavily favored, but India prevailed.
pristine	Immaculately clean and unused.	adjective	Drill sergeants are known for demanding pristine cabinets, uniforms, and beds, and often make new recruits clean and clean and clean until they meet the expected high standards.
profuse	plentiful; pouring out in abundance.	adjective	During mile 20 of the Hawaii Marathon, Dwayne was sweating so profusely that he stopped to take off his shirt, and ran the remaining six miles wearing nothing more than skimpy shorts. Note:
profusion	the property of being extremely abundant.	noun	When Maria reported that she had been visited by Jesus Christ and had proof, a profusion of reporters, and journalists descended on the town.
proponent	a person who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea.	noun	Ironically, the leading proponent of Flat-Earth Theory flies all over the world in an effort to win more adherents.
provisional	under terms not final or fully worked out or agreed upon.	adjective	Until the corporate office hands down a definitive decision on use of the extra offices, we will share their use in a provisional arrangement.
pugnacious	eager to fight or argue; verbally combative.	adjective	The comedian told one flat joke after another, and when the audience started booing, he pugnaciously back at them, "Hey, you think this is easy -- why don't you buffoons give it a shot?".
quail	uneasiness about the fitness of an action.	noun	While he could articulate no clear reason why Harkner's plan would fail, he nevertheless felt qualms about committing any resources to it.
quandary	state of uncertainty or perplexity especially as requiring a choice.	noun	Steve certainly is in a quandary; if he doesn't call Elaine, she will blame him for everything, but if he does call her, the evidence of where he currently is could cost him his job.
quip	a witty saying or remark.	noun	In one of the most famous quips about classical music, Mark Twain said: "Wagner's music is better than it sounds."
raffish	marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness.	adjective	The men found him raffish, but the women adored his smart clothes and casual attitude.
raft	a large number of something.	noun	Despite a raft of city ordinances passed by an overzealous council, noise pollution continued unabated in the megalopolis. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
rakish	marked by a carefree unconventionality or disreputableness.	adjective	As soon as he arrived in the city, the rakish young man bought some drugs and headed straight for the seedy parts of town.
rankle	gnaw into; make resentful or angry.	verb	His constant whistling would rankle her, sometimes causing her to leave in a huff.
rash	marked by defiant disregard for danger or consequences; inconsiderate.	adjective	criticized his actions as rash. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
redress	an act of making something right.	noun	Barry forgot his wife's birthday two years in a row, and was only able to redress his oversight by surprising his wife with a trip to Tahiti. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
relegate	assign to a lower position.	verb	When Dexter was unable to fulfill his basic duties, instead of firing him, the boss relegated him to kitchen cleanup.
remiss	to be negligent in one's duty.	adjective	Remiss in his duty to keep the school functioning efficiently, the principle was relieved of his position after only three months.
renege	fail to fulfill a promise or obligation.	verb	We will no longer work with that vendor since it has reneged on nearly every agreement.
replete	completely stocked or furnished with something.	adjective	Only weeks after the hurricane made landfill, the local supermarket shelves were replete with goods, so quick was the disaster relief response.
reprobate	a person who is disapproved of.	noun	Those old reprobates drinking all day down by the river--they are not going to amount to much.
reservation	an unstated doubt that prevents you from accepting something.	noun	I was initially excited by the idea of a trip to Washington, D.C. but now that I have read about the high crime statistics there, I have some reservations. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
resignation	the acceptance of something unpleasant that can't be avoided.	noun	Since Jack could not think of a convincing reason why he had to miss the seminar, he attended it with a sense of resignation. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
resolve	reach a conclusion after a discussion or deliberation.	verb	After much thought, Ted resolved not to travel abroad this summer because he didn't have much money in his bank account. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
respite	a pause from doing something (as work).	noun	Every afternoon, the small company has a respite in which workers play foosball or board games.
retriving	to be shy, and to be inclined to retract from company.	adjective	Nelson was always the first to leave soirees--rather than mill about with "fashionable" folk, he was retiring, and preferred the solitude of his garret.
retract	pull inward or towards a center; formally reject or disavow.	verb	Email is wonderfully efficient, but once something awkward or damaging has been sent, there is no way to retract it.
rile	cause annoyance in; disturb, especially by minor irritations.	verb	Dan is usually calm and balanced, but it takes only one intense glare from Sabrina to rile him.
robust	sturdy and strong in form, constitution, or construction.	adjective	Chris preferred bland and mild beers, but Bhavin preferred a beer with more robust flavor.
sancimonious	making a show of being pious; holier-than-thou.	adjective	Even during the quiet sanctity of evening prayer, she held her chin high, a sancimonious sneer forming on her face as she eyed those who were attending church for the first time.
sanguine	cheerful; optimistic.	adjective	With the prospect of having to learn 3,000 words during the course of the summer, Paul was anything but sanguine.
savvy	a perceptive understanding.	noun	Although a great CEO, he did not have the political savvy to win the election.
savvy	get the meaning of something.	verb	The student savvies the meaning of astrophysics with little effort.
savvy	well-informed or perceptive.	adjective	With his savvy business partner, the company was able to turn a profit within a year.
scintillating	describes someone who is brilliant and lively.	adjective	Richard Feynman was renowned for his scintillating lectures--the arcane of quantum physics was made lucid as he wrote animatedly on the chalkboard.
screed	an abusive rant (often tedious).	noun	Joey had difficulty hanging out with his former best friend Perry, who, during his entire cup of coffee, enumerated all of the government's deficiencies--only to break ranks and launch into some screed against big business.



sentimentally	effusively or insincerely emotional, especially in art, music, or speech	adjective	I don't like romanticism for the same reason I don't like melodramatic acting and soap operas—overly sentimental.
serendipity	the instance in which an accidental, fortunate discovery is made	noun	The invention of the 3M Post-it Note was serendipitous, because the scientist who had come up with the idea was looking for a strong adhesive; the weak adhesive he came up with was perfect for holding a piece of paper in place but made it very easy for so.
serene	calm and peaceful	adjective	I'd never seen him so serene; usually, he was a knot of stress and anxiety from hours of trading on the stock exchange.
slapdash	carelessly and hastily put together	adjective	The office building had been constructed in a slapdash manner, so it did not surprise officials when, during a small earthquake, a large crack emerged on the facade of the building.
smattering	a slight or superficial understanding of a subject; a small amount	noun	I know only a smattering of German, but Helen is able to read German newspapers and converse with natives.
smug	marked by excessive complacency or self-satisfaction	adjective	When Phil was dating the model, he had a smug attitude that annoyed his buddies.
snide	expressive of contempt; derogatory or mocking in an indirect way	adjective	The chairman interpreted Taylor's question about promotions as a snide remark, but in all innocence Taylor was trying to figure out the company's process.
snub	refuse to acknowledge; reject outright and bluntly	verb	Wheeler was completely qualified for the committee, but the board snubbed him, choosing an obviously lesser qualified candidate instead.
sordid	involving ignoble actions and motives; arousing moral distaste	adjective	The nightly news simply announced that the senator had had an affair, but the tabloid published all the sordid details of the interaction. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
spendthrift	one who spends money extravagantly	noun	Taking weekly trips to Vegas, Megan was a spendthrift whose excesses eventually caught up to her.
spurn	reject with contempt	verb	She spurned all his flattery and proposals, and so he walked off embarrassed and sad.
steward	spend thoughtlessly; waste time, money, or an opportunity	verb	Fearing his money would be squandered by his family, he gave all of it to charity when he died.
staid	characterized by dignity and propriety	adjective	Frank came from a staid environment, so he was shocked that his college roommate sold narcotics.
start	to suddenly move in a particular direction	verb	All alone in the mansion, Henrietta started when she heard a sound. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
steadfast	marked by firm determination or resolution; not shakable	adjective	A good captain needs to be steadfast, continuing to hold the wheel and stay the course even during the most violent storm.
stem	to hold back or limit the flow or growth of something	verb	To stem the tide of applications, the prestigious Ivy requires that each applicant score at least 330 on the Revised GRE. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
stipend	a regular allowance (of money)	noun	He was hoping for a monthly allowance loan from the government, but after no such stipend was forthcoming he realized he would have to seek other means of paying for his college tuition.
stolid	having or revealing little emotion or sensibility; not easily aroused	adjective	
stymie	hinder or prevent the progress or accomplishment of	verb	The engineers found their plans stymied at every turn and were ultimately able to make almost no progress on the project.
summit	the peak or highest point	noun	After hiking for two days, the climbers finally reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.
summit	a meeting of high-level leaders	noun	Since climate change policy has been mired in congressional fighting, this summit should help set the goals for president's next term.
surly	inclined to anger or bad feelings with overtones of menace	adjective	Every morning, Bhavin was a surly unhappy person, but once he ate breakfast, he became loving, laughing, and a joy to be around.
tact	consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offense	noun	In a tremendous display of tact, Shelly was able to maintain a strong friendship with Marcia, even though Marcia's husband, Frank, confessed to finding Shelly more attractive than Marcia.
tamish	make dirty or spotty, as by exposure to air; also used metaphorically	verb	Pete Rose was one of the best baseball players of his generation, but his involvement with gambling on baseball games has tarnished his image in the eyes of many.
tawdry	tastelessly showy; cheap and shoddy	adjective	Carol expected to find New York City magical, the way so many movies had portrayed it, but she was surprised how often tawdry displays took the place of genuine elegance.
taxing	use to the limit; exhaust	adjective	The hike to the summit of Mt. Whitney was so taxing that I could barely speak or stand up. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
telling	significant and revealing of another factor	adjective	Her unbecoming dress was very telling when it came to her sense of fashion.
telltale	revealing	adjective	The many telltale signs of chronic smoking include yellow teeth, and a persistent, hacking cough.
tender	offer up something formally	verb	The government was loath to tender more money in the fear that it might set off inflation. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
thoroughgoing	very thorough; complete	adjective	As a thoroughgoing bibliophile, one who had turned his house into a veritable library, he shocked his friends when he bought a Kindle.
thrifty	spending money wisely	adjective	He was economical, spending his money thriftily and on items considered essential.
thwart	hinder or prevent (the efforts, plans, or desires) of	verb	I wanted to spend a week in New York this autumn, but the high costs of travel and lodging thwarted my plans.
trade	an angry speech	noun	In terms of political change, a tirade oftentimes does little more than make the person speaking red in the face.
tout	advertize in strongly positive terms; show off	verb	At the conference, the CEO touted the extraordinary success of his company's Research & Development division.
transitory	lasting a very short time	adjective	If we lived forever and life was not transitory, do you think we would appreciate life less or more?
travail	use of physical or mental energy; hard work; agony or anguish	noun	While they experienced nothing but travail in refinishing the kitchen, they completed the master bedroom in less than a weekend.
tribulation	something, especially an event, that causes difficulty and sorrow	noun	As of 2013, nearly 1.5 million Syrians have fled their country hoping to escape the tribulations of a civil war tearing their country to pieces.
tumult	a state of chaos, noise and confusion	noun	Riots broke out just in front of our apartment building, and the tumult continued late into the night.
uncanny	suggesting the operation of supernatural influences; surpassing	adjective	Reggie has an uncanny ability to connect with animals: feral cats will readily approach him, and sometimes even wild birds will land on his finger.
uncompromising	not making concessions	adjective	The relationship between Bart and Hilda ultimately failed because they were both so uncompromising, never wanting to change their opinions.
unconscionable	unreasonable; unscrupulous; excessive	adjective	The lawyer's demands were so unconscionable that rather than pay an exorbitant sum or submit himself to any other inconveniences, the defendant decided to find a new lawyer.
underwrite	to support financially	verb	The latest symphony broadcast was made possible with underwriting from the Carnegie Endowment.
unnerve	to make nervous or upset	verb	At one time unnerved by math problems, she began avidly "Magoosh-ing," and soon became adept at even combinations and permutations questions.
unprecedented	having never been done or known before; novel	adjective	When America first created its national parks, the idea of setting aside the most beautiful land in a country was unprecedented in the history of mankind.
unruly	(of persons) noisy and lacking in restraint or discipline; unruly	adjective	Walk in to any preschool and I am sure that you will find an unruly and chaotic scene—unless it's nap time.
unseemly	not in keeping with accepted standards of what is right or proper	adjective	
urbane	showing a high degree of refinement and the assurance that comes with it	adjective	Because of his service as an intelligence officer and his refined tastes, W. Somerset Maugham became the inspiration for the urbane and sophisticated spy James Bond.
vacuous	devoid of intelligence, matter, or significance	adjective	To the journalist's pointed question, the senator gave a vacuous response, mixing a few of his overall campaign slogans with platitudes and completely avoiding the controversial subject of the question.
vanquish	come out better in a competition, race, or conflict	verb	For years, Argentina would dominate in World Cup qualifying matches, only to be vanquished by one of the European countries during the late stages of the tournament.
variance	the quality of varying	noun	The cynic quipped, "There is not much variance in politicians; they all seem to prevaricate."
veneer	covering consisting of a thin superficial layer that hides the surface	noun	
vicarious	felt or undergone as if one were taking part in the experience	adjective	The advent of Twitter is a celebrity stalker's dream, as he or she can—through hundreds of intimate "tweets"—vicariously live the life of a famous person.
vindictive	compete for something	verb	While the other teams in the division actively vie for the championship, this team seems content simply to go through the motions of playing.
virago	to have a very strong desire for revenge	adjective	Though the other girl had only lightly poked fun of Vanessa's choice in attire, Vanessa was so vindictive that she waited for an entire semester to get the perfect revenge.
voracious	an ill-tempered or violent woman	noun	Poor Billy was the victim of the virago's invective—she railed at him for a good 30-minutes about how he is the scum of the earth for speaking loudly on his cellphone in public.
wanton	very hungry; approaching an activity with gusto	adjective	Steven was a voracious reader, sometimes finishing two novels in the same day.
wax	without check or limitation; showing no moral restraints to or	adjective	Due to wanton behavior and crude language, the drunk man was thrown out of the bar and asked to never return.
whimsical	to gradually increase in size or intensity	verb	Her enthusiasm for the diva's new album only waxed with each song; by the end of the album, it was her favorite CD yet. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
zenith	determined by impulse or whim rather than by necessity or reason	adjective	Adults look to kids and envy their whimsical nature at times, wishing that they could act without reason and play without limitation.
abjure	the highest point; culmination	noun	At the zenith of his artistic career, Elvis was outselling any other artist on the charts. Advanced Words.
abrogate	formally reject or give up (as a belief)	verb	While the church believed that Galileo abjured the heliocentric theory under threat of torture, he later wrote a book clearly supporting the theory.
adjudicate	revoke formally	verb	As part of the agreement between the labor union and the company, the workers abrogated their right to strike for four years in exchange for better health insurance.
afford	to serve as a judge in a competition; to arrive at a judgment	verb	Only those with the most refined palates were able to adjudicate during the barbecue competition.
alacrity	provide with an opportunity	verb	The summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro affords a panoramic

to be deliberately teasing.	adjective	The baroness was arch, making playful asides to the townspeople; yet because they couldn't pick up on her dry humor, they thought her supercilious. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
arrant	complete and wholly (usually) modifying a noun with negative adjective	An arrant fool, Lawrence surprised nobody when he lost all his money in a pyramid scheme that was every bit as transparent as he was corrupt.
arriviste	a person who has recently reached a position of power; a sc noun	The city center was affluster with arrivistes who each tried to outdo one another with their ostentatious sports cars and chic evening dress.
arrogate	seize and control without authority.	Arriving at the small town, the outlaw arrogated the privileges of a lord, asking the frightened citizens to provide food, drink, and entertainment.
artifice	cunning tricks used to deceive others.	The mayoral candidates both spent much of the campaign accusing each other of artifices designed to mislead the voting public.
artless	without cunning or deceit.	Despite the president's seemingly artless speeches, he was a skilled and ruthless negotiator.
artlessness	the quality of innocence.	I, personally, found the artlessness of her speech charming.
asperity	harshness of manner.	The editor was known for his asperity, often sending severe letters of rejection to amateur writers.
assiduously	with care and persistence.	The top college football program recruits new talent assiduously, only choosing those who were the top in their county.
atavism	a reappearance of an earlier characteristic; throwback	Much of the modern art movement was an atavism to a style of art found only in small villages through Africa and South America.
attenuate	to weaken (in terms of intensity); to taper off/become thinner	Her animosity towards Bob attenuated over the years, and she even went so far as to invite him to her party.
autocratic	characteristic of an absolute ruler or absolute rule; having at adjective	
autocratic	offensively self-assured or given to exercising usually unwelcome	
baileuf	threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments.	
base	the lowest, class were without any moral principles.	
bastardization	an act that debases or corrupts.	
beg	to evade or dodge (a question).	
bemoan	express discontent or a strong regret.	
benighted	fallen into a state of ignorance.	
bereth	unhappy in love; suffering from unrequited love.	
bereth	sorrowful through loss or deprivation.	
besotted	strongly affectionate towards.	
besotted	very drunk.	
bilious	irritable; always angry.	
blinkered	to have a limited outlook or understanding.	
bowlerize	edit by omitting or modifying parts considered indelicate.	
bridle	the act of restraining power or action or limiting excess	New verb
bridle	anger or take offense.	verb
bristle	react in an offended or angry manner.	verb
broadside	a strong verbal attack.	noun
bromide	a trite or obvious remark.	noun
brook	put up with something or somebody unpleasant.	verb
broombat	be bossy towards; discourage or frighten with threats or a d	verb
byzantine	intricate and complex.	adjective
callow	young and inexperienced.	adjective
canard	a deliberately misleading fabrication	The public will always t noun
capitulate	to surrender (usually under agreed conditions)	noun
catadysm	an event resulting in great loss and misfortune.	noun
catholic	of broad scope; universal.	adjective
cede	relinquish possession or control over.	verb
celerity	speed, rapidly.	noun
chagrin	strong feelings of embarrassment.	noun
chagrin	cause to feel shame; hurt the pride of.	verb
charlatan	a flamboyant deceiver; one who attracts customers with trid	noun
chary	cautious.	adjective
chauvinism	fanatical patriotism; belief that one's group/cause is superior	noun
chimera	something desired or wished for but is only an illusion and i	noun
choleric	prone to outbursts of temper; easily angered.	adjective
churlish	lacking manners or refinement.	adjective
complainant	showing a cheerful willingness to do favors for others.	adjective
complicit	Associated with or participating in an activity, especially one	adjective
conciliate	to make peace with.	verb
concomitant	describing an event or situation that happens at the same ti	adjective
conflagration	a very intense and uncontrolled fire.	noun
conflate	mix together different elements or concepts.	verb
contentious	likely to argue.	adjective
corollary	a practical consequence that follows naturally.	noun
cosseted	treat with excessive indulgence.	verb
coterminous	being of equal extent or scope or duration.	adjective
countermand	a contrary command cancelling or reversing a previous com	verb
cow	to intimidate.	verb
crestfallen	brought low in spirit.	adjective
crystallize	cause to take on a definite and clear shape.	verb
cupidity	greed for money.	noun
curmudgeon	a grouchy, surly person.	noun
debonair	having a sophisticated charm.	adjective
decry	express strong disapproval of.	verb
defray	to help pay the cost of, either in part or full.	verb
deign	do something that one considers to be below one's dignity.	verb
demonstrative	given to or marked by the open expression of emotion.	adjective
denuement	the final resolution of the many strands of a literary or dram	noun
derelict	(of a person) not doing one's duties.	adjective
derelict	(of a building) abandoned.	noun
desiccated	uninteresting, lacking vitality.	adjective
desideratum	something desired as a necessity.	noun
despot	a cruel and oppressive dictator.	noun
diatribe	a strong verbal attack against a person or institution.	noun
diminutive	to indicate smallness.	noun
diminutive	very small.	adjective
disabuse	to persuade somebody that his/her belief is not valid.	verb

As a child, I was quickly disabused of the notion that Santa Claus was a rotund benefactor of infinite largess--one night I saw my mother diligently wrapping presents and storing them under our Christmas tree.



impugn	attack as false or wrong.	verb	though many initially tried to impugn Darwin's theory, in scientific circles today, the idea is taken as truth.
impute	attribute (responsibility or fault) to something.	verb	He imputed his subpar performance on the test to a combination of stress and poor sleep.
inanity	total lack of meaning or ideas.	noun	Bill's poem was nothing more than a list of impressive sounding words, so there was no point in trying to take meaning from the inanity.
inchoate	only partly in existence; imperfectly formed.	adjective	Inchoate ideas about the relation of humans to other animals had been discussed since the Middle Ages but the modern theory really began with Darwin.
incontrovertible	necessarily or demonstrably true; impossible to deny or dispute.	adjective	Unless you can provide incontrovertible evidence, I will remain skeptical.
indigent	poor; having very little.	adjective	In the so-called Third World, many are indigent and only a privileged few have the resources to enjoy material luxuries.
indigent	a poor or needy person.	noun	The indigents, huddled under the overpass, tried to start a small bonfire in the hope of staying warm.
ineffable	too sacred to be uttered; defying expression or description.	adjective	While art critics can occasionally pinpoint a work's greatness, much of why a piece captures our imaginations is completely ineffable.
ineluctable	impossible to avoid or evade.	adjective	For those who smoke cigarettes for years, a major health crisis brought on by smoking is ineluctable.
inequity	injustice by virtue of not conforming with rules or standards.	noun	After decades of racial inequity, the "separate but equal" doctrine was successfully overturned.
inexpedient	inappropriate.	adjective	During the executive meeting, the marketing director continued to make inexpedient comments about the CEO's gambling habit.
inimitable	defying imitation; matchless.	adjective	Mozart's music follows a clear pattern that, anyone could imitate, but his music gives an overall sense of effortlessness that is inimitable.
insouciance	lack of concern.	noun	Surprisingly, Hank had become a high-powered CEO, his high school friends remembered him as "Hanky Panky", who shrugged off each failed class with insouciance.
insufferable	intolerable, difficult to endure.	noun	Chester always tried to find some area in which he excelled above others; unsurprisingly, his co-workers found him insufferable and chose to exclude him from daily luncheons out.
intertwine	(of conflict) within a group or organization.	adjective	The guerrilla group, which had become so powerful as to own the state police, was finally destroyed by an intertwine conflict.
intimation	an indirect suggestion.	noun	At first the hostess tried intimation, praising the benefits of culetty, when Cecil continued eating with his hands, the hostess told him to use a fork at dinner.
inure	to make accustomed to something unpleasant.	verb	Three years of Manhattan living has inured her to the sound of wailing sirens; she could probably sleep through the apocalypse.
inveigh	abusive or denunciatory language.	noun	The Internet has unleashed the inveighs in many of us; many people post stinging criticism on the comments section underneath newspaper articles or YouTube videos.
invidious	likely to cause resentment.	adjective	At a time when many others in the office were about to be laid off, many considered Cheryl's fine clothes that day an invidious display. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
inviolable	never to be broken, infringed, or dishonored.	adjective	Too many the grass at Wimbledon is inviolable and only greater tennis players are able to enjoy a game there.
involute	must be kept sacred.	adjective	While the literary critic subjected most of the classics to the harshest reviews, he regarded Cervantes as inviolate, and had nothing but praise for him.
irrefutable	impossible to deny or disprove.	adjective	The existence of life on earth is irrefutable, the existence of intelligent life on earth is still hotly debated.
jaundice	to be biased against due to envy or prejudice.	adjective	Shelly was jaundiced towards Olivia, though the two had once been best friends, Olivia had become class president, prom queen, and, to make matters worse, the girlfriend of the one boy Shelly liked.
jejune	dull; lacking flavor.	adjective	Although many top chefs have secured culinary fame's popularity in haute cuisine, Waters criticizes it for being jejune and unfilling.
jeune	immature; childish.	adjective	Her boss further cemented his reputation for being jejune after throwing a fit when the water cooler wasn't refilled.
jingoism	a person who thinks that their country should be at war.	noun	In the days leading up to war, a nation typically breaks up into the two opposing camps: doves, who do their best to avoid war, and jingoists, who are only too eager to wave national flags from their vehicles and vehemently denounce those who do not do so.
juggernaut	a force that cannot be stopped.	noun	Napoleon was considered a juggernaut until he decided to invade Russia in winter, after which, his once indomitable army was decimated by cold and famine.
kowtow	to bow or act in a subservient manner.	verb	Paul kowtowed to his boss so often the boss herself became nauseated by his sycophancy.
lacerate	deeply hurt the feelings of, distress.	verb	The teacher was fired for lacerating a student who wrote a poor essay. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
lachrymose	showing sorrow.	adjective	Lachrymose and depressed, Alexei Alexandrovich walked two miles home in the rain after learning that his wife was having an affair.
lampoon	ridicule with satire.	verb	Mark Twain understood that lampooning a bad idea with humor was the most effective criticism.
languish	become feeble.	verb	Stranded in the wilderness for four days, the hiker languished, eating protein bars and nuts.
lascivious	lecherous; sexually perverted.	adjective	Lolita is a challenging novel for many, not necessarily because of the elevated prose style but because of the depravity of the main character, Humbert Humbert, who, as an old, lascivious man, falls in love with a girl.
limpid	clarity in terms of expression.	adjective	Her limpid prose made even the most recalcitrant subjects accessible to all.
litany	any long and tedious account of something.	noun	Mr. Rogers spoke to a Senate committee and did not give a litany of reasons to keep funding the program, but instead, appealed to the basic human decency of all present.
loath	unwillingness to do something contrary to your custom (usual)	adjective	At the funeral, lugubrious songs filled the small church.
lugubrious	excessively mournful.	adjective	
machinate	engage in plotting or enter into a conspiracy, swear together	verb	
magisterial	offensively self-assured or given to exercising unwarranted authority	adjective	Though she was only a third grade teacher, Ms. Martinet was magisterial in dealing with her class, lorded over them like a queen. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
malapropism	the confusion of a word with another word that sounds similar	noun	Whenever I looked glum, my mother would offer to share "an amusing antidote" with me—an endearing malapropism of "anecdote" that never failed to cheer me up.
malfeasance	misconduct or wrongdoing (especially by a public official).	adjective	Not even the mayor's trademark peppy-toothed grin could save him from charges of malfeasance: while in power, he'd been running an illegal gambling ring in the room behind his office.
malingerer	someone shirking their duty by pretending to be sick or inca	noun	At one time, our country was full of hardworking shirking people, but now it seems that everyone is a malingerer with little inclination to work.
martinet	a strict disciplinarian.	noun	The job seemed perfect to Rebecca, until she found out that her boss was a total martinet, after each project the boss would come by to scrutinize—and inevitably criticize—every little detail of the work Rebecca had done.
maudlin	overly emotional and sad.	adjective	Just as those who were alive during the 70's are mortified that they once cavorted about in bellbottoms, many who lived during the 80's are now aghast at the maudlin pop songs they used to enjoy—really, just what exactly is a total eclipse of the heart?
maunder	wander aimlessly.	verb	Max liked to maunder down by the seaside and pick up whatever sea shells he would stumble upon.
maunder	speak (about unimportant matters) rapidly and incessantly.	verb	After drinking two espressos each, the animated couple would maunder loudly, annoying the other patrons in the coffee shop.
melifluous	smooth and sweet-sounding.	adjective	Chelsea's grandmother thought Franz Schubert's music to be the most mellifluous ever written; Chelsea demurred, and to her grandmother's chagrin, would blast Rihanna on the home stereo speakers.
mendicant	a pauper who lives by begging.	noun	Tolstoy was an aristocrat, but he strove to understand the Christianity of the Russian peasants by wandering among them as a mendicant.
meteoric	like a meteor in speed or brilliance or transience.	adjective	The early spectacular successes propelled the pitcher to meteoric stardom, but a terribly injury tragically cut short his career.
mettle	filled with courage or valor.	adjective	For its raid on the Bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Seal Team Six has become, for many Americans, the embodiment of mettle.
misattribute	To erroneously attribute; to falsely ascribe; used especially c	verb	I made a mistake; I misattributed "Crime and Punishment" to Leo Tolstoy when it was actually written by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.
modicum	a small or moderate or token amount.	noun	If my sister had even a modicum of sense, she wouldn't be engaged to that barbarian.
mordant	biting and caustic in thought, manner, or style.	adjective	While Phil frequently made mordant remarks about company policy overall, he always was considerably gentler in discussing any person in particular.
moribund	being on the point of death; declining rapidly losing all morn	adjective	
mulct	to defraud or swindle.	verb	The so-called magical diet cure simply ended up mulcting Maria out of hundreds of dollars, but did nothing for her weight.
nadir	the lowest point.	noun	For many pop music fans, the rap and alternative-rock dominated 90s were the nadir of musical expression.
nettlesome	causing irritation or annoyance.	adjective	Maria found her coworkers cell phone nettlesome, because every few minutes it would buzz to life with another text message.
noisome	having an extremely bad smell.	adjective	Each August, when the winds moved in a south easterly direction, the garbage dump would spread noisome vapors through the small town.
nonchalant	coming across as coolly uninterested.	adjective	The twenty-somethings at the coffee shop always irked Sheldon, especially the way in which they acted nonchalantly towards everything, not even caring when Sheldon once spilled his mocha on them.
objurgate	express strong disapproval of.	verb	The manager spent an hour objurgating the employee in the hopes that he would not make these mistakes again.
oblique	not straightforward; indirect.	adjective	Herbert never explicitly revealed anything negative about Tom's past, but at times he would obliquely suggest that Tom was not as innocent as he seemed. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
obstrepous	noisily and stubbornly defiant; willfully difficult to control.	adjective	When the teacher asked the obstreperous student simply to bus his tray, the student threw the entire tray on the floor, shouted an epithet, and walked out.
obtain	be valid, applicable, or true.	adjective	The custom of waiting your turn in line does not obtain in some countries, in which many people try to rush to front

	miserly.	adjective	Warren Buffett, famous multi-billionaire, still drives a cheap sedan, not because he is penurious, but because luxury cars are gaudy and impractical.
	percipient	adjective	Even the most percipient editor will make an occasional error when proofreading.
	peremptory	adjective	My sister used to peremptorily tell me to do the dishes, a chore I would either do perfunctorily or avoid doing altogether.
	perfunctory	adjective	The short film examines modern perfunctory cleaning rituals such as washing dishes, doing laundry and tooth-brushing.
	peripatetic	adjective	Jim always preferred a peripatetic approach to discovering a city: he felt that he could see so many more details while walking.
	perspicacious	adjective	Many modern observers regard Eisenhower as perspicacious, particularly in his accurate prediction of the growth of the military.
	phantasmagorical	adjective	Those suffering from malaria fall into a feverish sleep, their world a whirling of phantasmagoria; if they recover, they are unsure of what actually took place and what was simply a product of their febrile imaginations.
	phlistine	adjective	Jane considered Al completely phlistine, because he talked almost exclusively about video games; she was entirely unaware of how well read he really was. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	phlegmatic	adjective	Arnold is truly noble, remaining reserved until an issue of significance arises, but Walter is simply phlegmatic: he doesn't have the energy or inclination to care about anything.
	picaresque	adjective	English teachers are notorious for being picaresque; however, the English language is so nuanced and sophisticated that often such teachers are not being contrary but are only adhering to the rules.
	pillory	verb	After the candidate confessed, the press of the opposing party took the opportunity to pillory him, printing editorials with the most blatantly exaggerated accusations. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	plith	noun	When Cynthia plays a speaker presenting a complex argument, she is always able to discard the irrelevant details and extract the plith of what the speaker is trying to convey. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	pluck	adjective	Some scouts initially doubted Pedroja because of her short stature, but he is a plucky player, surprising everyone with his boundless energy and fierce determination.
	Pollyannaish	adjective	Even in the midst of a busy sales quarter, Debbie remained Pollyannaish, never losing her shrill voice and wide smile, even when prospective customers hung up on her.
	ponderous	adjective	Laden with 20 kilograms of college level books, the freshman moved ponderously across the campus.
	portentious	verb	The vice-president would often portentate about economic theory, as if no one else in the room were qualified to speak on the topic. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	portentious	adjective	When the captain and more than half the officers were sick on the very first night of the voyage, many of the passengers felt this was portentous, but the rest of the voyage continued without any problems.
	precipitate	adjective	Instead of conducting a thorough investigation after the city hall break-in, the governor acted precipitately, accusing his staff of aiding and abetting the criminals.
	precipitate	verb	The government's mishandling the hurricane's aftermath precipitated a widespread outbreak of looting and other criminal activity.
	presentiment	noun	On the night that Lincoln would be fatally shot, his wife had a presentiment about going to Ford's Theater, but Lincoln persuaded her that everything would be fine.
	primacy	noun	The primacy of Apple Computers is not guaranteed, as seen in the recent lawsuits and weak growth.
	probity	noun	The ideal politician would have the probity to lead, but reality gravely falls short of the ideal of morally upright leaders.
	prognostication	noun	When the Senator was asked about where the negotiations would lead, he said that any guess he could make would be an unreliable prognostication.
	provally	noun	I loved my grandfather dearly, but his provality would put me to sleep, regardless of the topic.
	promulgate	verb	The President wanted to promulgate the success of the treaty negotiations, but he had to wait until Congress formally approved the agreement.
	propitiate	verb	The two sons, plying their angry father with cheesy neckties for Christmas, were hardly able to propitiate him – the father already had a drawer full of ones he had never worn before or ever planned to.
	prosaic	adjective	Unlike the talented artists in his workshop, Paul had no such bent for the visual medium, so when it was time for him to make a stained glass painting, he ended up with a prosaic mosaic.
	proscribe	verb	My doctor proscribes that I not eat donuts with chocolate sauce and hamburger patties for breakfast.
	proselytize	verb	Lisa loves her Mac but says little about it; by contrast, Jake will proselytize, interrogating anyone with an Android about why she didn't purchase an iPhone.
	protean	adjective	Peter Sellers was truly a protean actor–in Doctor Strangelove he played three very different roles: a jingoist general, a sedate President and a deranged scientist.
	provident	adjective	In a move that hardly could be described as provident, Bert spend his entire savings on a luxurious cruise, knowing that other bills would come due a couple months later.
	puerile	adjective	Helen enjoyed blowing soap bubbles, but Jim regarded this as puerile, totally unworthy of a woman with a Ph.D.
	puissant	adjective	Over the years of service, and quite to his surprise, he became a puissant adviser to the community.
	punctilious	adjective	The colonel was so punctilious about enforcing regulations that men felt compelled to polish even the soles of their shoes.
	pyrrhic	adjective	Bush's win in the 2000 election was in many ways a pyrrhic victory: the circumstances of his win alienated half of the U.S. population.
	quail	verb	Craig always claimed to be a fearless outdoorsman, but when the thunderstorm engulfed the valley, he quailed at the thought of leaving the safety of his cabin. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	quailing	noun	History looks unfavorably upon quailings; indeed they are accorded about the same fondness as Nero—he who watched his city burn down while playing the violin.
	quixotic	adjective	For every thousand startups with quixotic plans to be the next big name in e-commerce, only a handful ever become profitable.
	raconteur	noun	Jude is entertaining, but he is no raconteur: beyond the handful of amusing stories he has memorized, he has absolutely no spontaneous story-telling ability.
	rallery	noun	The new recruit was not bothered by the rallyry, finding most of it light-hearted and good-natured.
	rapprochement	noun	Although Ann hoped that her mother and her aunt would have a rapprochement, each one's bitter accusations against the other made any reconciliation unlikely.
	rarefied	verb	Jack's vulgar jokes were not so successful in the rarified environment of college professors. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	recapitulation	noun	Every point of the professors lesson was so clear that the students felt his concluding recapitulation was not necessary.
	recrimination	noun	The two brothers sat and cried, pointing fingers and making elaborate recriminations of the other's guilt.
	recrudescence	verb	After years of gamblers anonymous, Tony thought he'd broken his compulsive slot machine playing, but it took only one trip to the Atlantic City for a full recrudescence—he lost \$5k on the one armed bandit.
	redoubtable	adjective	On television basketball players don't look that tall, but when you stand in front of a seven-foot tall NBA player, he is truly redoubtable.
	remonstrate	verb	The mothers of the kidnapped victims remonstrated to the rogue government to release their children, claiming that the detention violated human rights.
	reprisal	noun	The Old Testament doctrine of an eye for an eye is not the kind of retaliation practiced in war; rather, an arm, a leg, and both ears are the reprisal for the smallest scratch.
	ribald	adjective	The speaker was famous for his ribald humor, but the high school principal asked him to keep the talk G-rated when he spoke to the student body.
	row	noun	The Prime Minister looked very foolish after his row with the foreign dignitary was caught on video and posted on youtube. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	sagacious	adjective	Steve Jobs is surely one of the most sagacious CEOs, making Apple the most recognizable and valuable companies in the world.
	sangroid	noun	The hostage negotiator exhibited a sangroid that oftentimes was more menacing than the sword at his throat, or the gun at his head.
	sardonic	adjective	A stand-up comedian wags a fine line when making jokes about members of the audience; such fun and joking can quickly become sardonic and cutting.
	sartorial	adjective	Monte was astute at navigating the world of finance: sartorially, however, he was found wanting—he typically would attempt to complement his beige tie with a gray suit and white pants.
	saturnine	adjective	Deprived of sunlight, humans become saturnine; that's why in very northerly territories people are encouraged to sit under an extremely powerful lamp, lest they become morose.
	schadenfreude	noun	From his warm apartment window, Stanley reveled in schadenfreude as he laughed at the figures below, huddled together in the arctic chill.
	sedulous	adjective	An avid numismatist, Harold sedulously amassed a collection of coins from over 100 countries—an endeavor that took over fifteen years, and to five continents. self-
	effacing	adjective	The most admirable teachers and respected leaders are those who are self-effacing, directing attention and praise to their students and workers.
	semblance	noun	While the banker maintained a semblance of respectability in public, those who knew him well were familiar with his many crimes.
	sententious	adjective	The old man, casting his nose up in the air at the group of adolescents, intoned sententially, "Youth is wasted on the young."
	simulacrum	noun	The Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center showcases a simulacrum of all the present and approved buildings in the city of Shanghai.
	simulacrum	noun	The early days of computer graphics made real people into a simulacrum that now seems comical.
	sinecure	noun	The position of Research Director is a sinecure: the job entails almost no responsibilities, nor does the person in that position have to answer to anyone.
	solecism	noun	Mother Anna was always on guard against any solecism from her children and scolded them immediately if any of them talked out of place in public. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	solicitous	adjective	Our neighbors are constantly knocking on our door to make sure we are ok, and I don't know how to ask them to stop being so solicitous about our health. This word has other definitions but this is the most important one for the GRE.
	solicitude	noun	I walked to his house in the rain to make sure he had enough to eat while he was sick, but he seemed not to appreciate my solicitude.
	spartan	adjective	After losing everything in a fire, Tim decided to live in spartan conditions, sleeping on the floor and owning as little furniture as a possible.
	splenetic	adjective	Ever since the car accident, Frank has been unable to walk without a cane, and so he has become splenetic and unpleasant to be around.
	squelch	verb	After the dictator consolidated his power, he took steps to squelch all criticism, often arresting any journalist who said anything that could be interpreted as negative about his regime.
	stalwart	adjective	Despite all the criticism directed at the President during this scandal, Lisa has remained his stalwart supporter.
	stultify	verb	As an undergraduate Mark felt stultified by classes outside his area of study; only in grad school, in which he could focus solely on literary analysis, did he regain his scholarly edge.
	subterfuge	noun	Finally deciding to abandon all subterfuge, Arthur revealed to Cindy everything about his secret affair over the past two years.
	supercilious	adjective	Nelly felt the Quiz Bowl director acted superciliously towards the underclassmen; really, she fumed, must he act so preternaturally omniscient each time he intones some obscure fact—as though everybody knows that Mt. Aconcagua is the highest peak in South America.
	surfeit	noun	There was no such thing as a surfeit of shopping for Nancy—she could stay at the outlet stores from opening to closing time.
	supercilious	adjective	Since his mom was a light sleeper, Timmy had to tiptoe surreptitiously through the entire house, careful to not make the floors creak, until he at last was able to enjoy his plunder: a box of chocolate chip cookies.
	sybarite	noun	Despite the fact that he'd maxed out fifteen credit cards, Max was still a sybarite at heart: when the police found him, he was at a \$1,000 an hour spa in Manhattan, getting a facial treatment.
	temerity	adjective	No child has the temerity to go in the rundown house at the end of the street and see if it is haunted.
	tempestuous	adjective	Chuck and Kathy had always been stable and agreeable people on their own, but when they got involved, it was a tempestuous relationship.
	tendentious	adjective	Because political mudslinging has become a staple of the 24-hour media cycle, most of us, despite protestations to the contrary, are tendentious on many of today's pressing issues.
	transmute	verb	One of the goals of alchemy was to find the substance or process that would transmute lead into gold.

trenchant	characterized by or full of force and vigor; having keenness	adjective	Jill presented a rather superficial treatment of sales in Asia, but her trenchant analysis of sales in Europe inspired a number of insights into how to proceed in that market.
truculence	defiant aggressiveness.	noun	When the boss confronted Aaron about his earlier remarks, Aaron responded with utter truculence, simply throwing a glass of water in the boss' face and walking away.
truculent	having a fierce, savage nature.	adjective	Standing in line for six hours, she became progressively truculent, yelling at DMV employees and elbowing other people waiting in line.
turgid	(of language) pompous and tedious.	adjective	The amount of GRE vocabulary he used increased with his years--by the time he was 60, his novels were so turgid that even his diaphan fans refused to read them.
turpitude	depravity; a depraved act.	noun	During his reign, Caligula indulged in unspeakable sexual practices, so it not surprising that he will forever be remembered for his turpitude.
tyro	someone new to a field or activity.	noun	All great writers, athletes, and artists were tyros at one time--unknown, clumsy, and unskilled with much to learn.
umbrage	a feeling of anger caused by being offended.	noun	Since he was so in love with her, he took umbrage at her comments, even though she had only meant to gently tease him.
unassailable	immune to attack; without flaws.	adjective	Professor Williams is so self-assured as to seem arrogant, presenting each and every opinion as an unassailable fact.
unflappable	not easily perturbed or excited or upset; marked by extreme	adjective	The house shook and the ground quaked, but my dad was unflappable and comforted the family.
unforthcoming	uncooperative, not willing to give up information.	adjective	The teacher demanded to know who broke the window while he was out of the room, but the students understandably were unforthcoming.
unimpeachable	free of guilt; not subject to blame; beyond doubt or reproach	adjective	After his long and unimpeachable service to the company, Sharaf felt that a gold watch was a slap in the face rather than an honor.
unprepossessing	creating an unfavorable or neutral first impression.	adjective	World leaders coming to meet Gandhi would expect a towering sage, and often would be surprised by the unprepossessing little man dressed only in a loincloth and shawl.
unpropitious	(of a circumstance) with little chance of success.	adjective	With only a bottle of water and a sandwich, the hikers faced an unpropitious task: ascending a huge mountain that took most two days to climb.
unstinting	very generous.	adjective	Helen is unstinting with her time, often spending hours at the house of a sick friend.
untenable	(of theories etc) incapable of being defended or justified.	adjective	With the combination of Kepler's brilliant theories and Galileo's telescopic observations, the old geocentric theory became untenable to most of the educated people in Europe.
untoward	unfavorable; inconvenient.	adjective	Some professors find teaching untoward as having to prepare for lectures and conduct office hours prevents them from focusing on their research.
untrammelled	not confined or limited.	adjective	The whole notion of living untrammelled inspired the American Revolution and was enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
unviable	not able to work, survive, or succeed (also spelled inviable).	adjective	The plan was obviously unviable considering that it lead to complete environmental destruction in the river valley.
vaunted	highly or widely praised or boasted about.	adjective	For years, they had heard of New York City's vaunted skyline, and when they finally saw it, the spectacular cityscape did not disappoint them in the least.
venial	easily excused or forgiven; pardonable.	adjective	His traffic violations ran the gamut from the venial to the egregious--on one occasion he simply did not come to a complete stop; another time he tried to escape across state lines at speeds in excess of 140 mph.
verisimilitude	the appearance of truth.	noun	All bad novels are bad for numerous reasons; all good novels are good for their verisimilitude of reality, placing the readers in a world that resembles the one they know.
veritable	truthfully, without a doubt.	adjective	Frank is a veritable life-saver -- last year, on two different occasions, he revived people using CPR.
vicissitude	change in one's circumstances, usually for the worse.	noun	Even great rulers have their vicissitudes--massive kingdoms have diminished overnight, and once beloved kings have faced the scorn of angry masses.
vitriol	abusive or venomous language used to express blame or bi noun		
vitriolic	harsh or corrosive in tone.	adjective	While the teacher was more moderate in her criticism of the other student's papers, she was vitriolic toward Peter's paper, casting every flaw in the harshest light.
vituperate	to criticize harshly; to berate.	adjective	Jason had dealt with disciplinarians before, but nothing prepared him for the first week of boot camp, as drill sergeants vituperated him for petty oversights such as forgetting to double knot the laces on his boots.
zeitgeist	spirit of the times.	noun	Each decade has its own zeitgeist--the 1990's was a prosperous time in which the promise of the American Dream never seemed more palpable.