

Essential SAT Vocabulary

T-Z

TACIT

Although not a word had been said, everyone in the room knew that the tacit agreement had been made about which course of action to take.

TACIT

- silently understood
- implied but not actually expressed

TANGENTIAL

Your argument is interesting, but it's tangential to the matter at hand, so I suggest we get back to the point.

TANGENTIAL

- digressive
- divergent
- touching only lightly on the issue

TENABLE

Greg burned down his own house so that his ex-wife could not live in it, a scarcely tenable action in light of the fact that this also left his children homeless.

TENABLE

- capable of being defended
- reasonable

TIMOROUS

A timorous woman, Lois relied on her children to act for her whenever aggressive behavior was called for.

TIMOROUS

- timid and shy
- fearful and overly cautious

TOME

The teacher was forced to refer to various tomes to find the answer to the advanced student's question.

TOME

- book, usually large and scholarly in nature

TORPID

After surgery, the patient was torpid until the anesthesia wore off.

TORPID

- lethargic
- unable to move
- dormant

TRACTABLE

Though it was exhausted,
the tractable workhorse
obediently dragged the
carriage through the mud.

TRACTABLE

- obedient
- yielding

TRENCHANT

Dan's trenchant observations in class make him the professor's favorite student.

TRENCHANT

- acute, sharp, and incisive
- forceful and effective

TREPIDATION

Having never been in trouble before, Mike approached the door of the principal's office with trepidation.

TREPIDATION

- fear and anxiety
- nervous agitation

TRIFLING

That little glitch in the computer program is a trifling error; in general, it works really well.

TRIFLING

- insignificant and trivial
- of slight worth or importance

TRITE

Lindsay's graduation speech was the same trite nonsense we've heard hundreds of times in the past.

TRITE

- not fresh or original
- boring from overuse
- shallow or superficial

TRUNCATE

The mayor truncated his standard lengthy speech when he realized that the audience was not in the mood to listen to it.

TRUNCATE

- to cut off
- to shorten or abbreviate

TURPITUDE

The priest's affair with the teenage parishioner was considered an act of utter turpitude.

TURPITUDE

- inherent vileness
- foulness
- depravity

TYRO

An obvious tyro at salsa,
Millicent received no
invitations to dance.

TYRO

- beginner
- novice
- one with no experience

UBIQUITOUS

McDonald's franchises are ubiquitous in the United States, and are common in foreign countries as well.

UBIQUITOUS

- being everywhere simultaneously
- commonplace and frequently encountered

UMBRAGE

The businessman took umbrage at the security guard's accusation that he had shoplifted a packet of gum.

UMBRAGE

- offense or pique
- a feeling of resentment at some fancied slight or insult

UNCTUOUS

The unctuous salesman showered the rich customers with exaggerated compliments.

UNCTUOUS

- greasy and oily
- smug and falsely earnest

UPBRAID

The teacher upbraided the student for scrawling graffiti all over the walls of the school.

UPBRAID

- to scold sharply
- to verbally chastise

URBANE

The urbane teenager
sneered at the mannerisms
of his country-bumpkin
cousin.

URBANE

- possessing a polished and worldly demeanor
- sophisticated and refined
- suave and debonair

USURP

The vice-principal was power-hungry and threatened to usurp the principal's authority.

USURP

- to seize by force
- to take without actual right or authority

UTILITARIAN

The suitcase was deniably utilitarian, with its convenient compartments of different sizes, but it was also hideous.

UTILITARIAN

- efficient, functional, and useful
- fit for specific purpose

VACILLATE

Visibly torn because of his choices, the customer held up the line as he vacillated between ordering chocolate or coffee ice cream.

VACILLATE

- to waver
- to show indecision

VACUOUS

The congresswoman's vacuous speech angered the voters, who were tired of hearing empty platitudes.

VACUOUS

- empty and void
- lacking intelligence

VAPID

Todd found his blind date vapid and boring—he couldn't wait to get away from her.

VAPID

- dull and flat
- lacking liveliness

VAUNTED

The much-vaunted new computer program turned out to have so many bugs that it had to be recalled.

VAUNTED

- boasted about
- bragged about

VENERATE

In traditional Confucian society, the young venerate the older members of their village and defer to the elders' wisdom.

VENERATE

- to honor and respect
- to regard with admiring deference

VERDANT

He wandered deep into the verdant woods in search of mushrooms and other edible flora.

VERDANT

- green with vegetation
- inexperienced; unripe in judgment

VERISIMILITUDE

The TV show's verisimilitude led viewers to believe that the characters it portrayed were real.

VERISIMILITUDE

- quality of appearing true or real
- seeming to depict truth

VESTIGE

Vestiges of the former tenant still remained in the apartment, although he hadn't lived there for years.

VESTIGE

- trace or remnant
- mark left by something in the past

VICISSITUDE

Investors must be prepared for vicissitudes in the market and not panic when stock prices fall occasionally.

VICISSITUDE

- natural change or variation in nature and humanity
- mutability

VIRTUOSO

He is a virtuoso conductor and has performed in all the most prestigious concert halls.

VIRTUOSO

- someone with a masterly skill in the arts
- expert musician or artist

VITRIOLIC

Give the opportunity to critique his enemy's new book, the spiteful critic wrote an unusually vitriolic review of it for the *New York Times*.

VITRIOLIC

- burning and caustic
- sharp and bitter

WHET

The delicious odors wafting from the kitchen whet Jack's appetite, and he couldn't wait to eat.

WHET

- to sharpen
- to make keen or more accute
- to stimulate

WHIMSICAL

The ballet was whimsical, delighting the children with its imaginative characters and unpredictable sets.

WHIMSICAL

- subject to unpredictable change
- characterized by caprice

WIZENED

The wizened old man was told that the plastic surgery necessary to make him look young again would cost more money than he could imagine.

WIZENED

- withered, shriveled, and wrinkled

XENOPHOBIA

Countries in which xenophobia is prevalent often have more restrictive immigration policies than countries which are more accepting of foreign influences.

XENOPHOBIA

- fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers

YOKE

As soon as the farmer had yoked his oxen together, he began to plow the fields.

YOKE

- to join together
- to put to work, as a draft animal

ZEALOT

The religious zealot had no time for those who failed to share his strongly held beliefs.

ZEALOT

- someone passionately devoted to cause
- fanatic or crusader