

1

Brevity

(noun) briefness or conciseness in speech or writing

- For the sake of brevity, choose your words with care.
- Limited space in the newsletter makes brevity essential.
- When time is short, brevity is a virtue.

Circumlocution

(noun) speaking in circles; roundabout speech

- To avoid hurting anyone's feelings, Hank resorted to circumlocution.
- Circumlocution is commonly called *beating around the bush*.
- The principal said, "Your circumlocution is wasting time. Just tell me exactly what you saw out in the parking lot."

2

Complacent

(adjective) self-satisfied; smug

- Complacent in his role as an assistant principal, Mr. Jones did not aspire to become a principal.
- Carole could get an A in math, but she's too complacent to work for it.
- Complacence destroys ambition.

Banal

(adjective) dull or stale because of overuse; hackneyed

- To wake up and realize your adventure was all a dream is a banal ending for a short story.
- Have you heard the banal joke about the moron who threw the clock out the window in order to see time fly?
- Banality is boring because it's so predictable.

3

Allay

(verb) to lessen fear; to calm; to relieve pain

- An SAT prep course can allay the anxiety of some students but can heighten tension for others.
- The recorded sound of waterfalls and breaking waves is said to allay stress.
- In order to allay Allen's worries about his grade in chemistry, Ms. Petrie told him to expect at least an A-minus.

Affable

(adjective) easy to talk to; easy to approach, friendly; kind; amiable

- Affable baseball players willingly sign autographs for the fans; the unfriendly ones refuse.
- It's pleasant to talk to Jane because she's so affable and positive.
- Don's friendly grin conveys his affable personality.

4

Animosity

(noun) hatred; ill will

- So much animosity grew between Mark and Mike that they were never buddies again.
- Ursula's animosity toward Eddie hardened her heart.
- Sonya's sarcasm raised the level of animosity between Liz and her.

Altruistic

(adjective) showing an unselfish concern for others

- Donna is a supreme example of altruism. She leads youth groups, delivers meals to the homebound, and volunteers at the local hospital.
- Altruistic Al never thinks of himself; he devotes all his time to helping others.
- Barbara's motives were not altogether altruistic. She had much to gain from serving as the head of the school's blood drive.

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Avarice

(noun) greed

- The mayor's avarice caused him to embezzle funds from the city's coffers.
- She was young and beautiful; he was old but rich. Rumors circulated that avarice drove her to marry him.
- Avarice motivates many people to cheat on their income tax.

Adversity

(noun) great trouble or difficulty

- The book tells how he overcame the adversity of an impoverished childhood.
- The hero faced four years of adversity trying to survive on a deserted island.
- Although students may believe the greatest adversity of their lives is surviving high school and parent control, they later realize that independence and responsibility can be much more arduous.

6

Baneful

(adjective) causing ruin; harmful; pernicious

- My campus visit was baneful. When it was over, I resolved never to go near the place again.
- The senior's baneful comments about Becky destroyed her chances of receiving a bid from the sorority.
- Norman's baneful remark about Nora's hair ruined the rest of her day.

Berate

(verb) to rebuke or scold in a harsh tone

- Her parents often berated her, but when the scoldings took place in front of her friends, Lulu was humiliated.
- The teacher berated Jonathan for shouting an obscenity in class.
- Though his mother thought she was provided construction criticism, Jeff felt that he was being berated.

7

Aloof

(adjective) emotionally removed or distant; uninterested; showing no concern

- He appears to be aloof, but his detachment comes from shyness not conceit.
- The Parkers prefer to stay aloof from their neighbors. They didn't even attend the Labor Day community party.
- Biff's recent aloofness contrasts sharply with his usual gregariousness.

Indolent

(adjective) lazy; not wanting to do any work

- "The Lazy Boy" is a perfect title for a story about an indolent youth.
- Indolence kept Alicia from finishing the assignment. I hope she won't be so lazy in the future.
- Kevin deserves a reputation for indolence. He spends more time taking breaks than doing the work.

8

Compliant

(adjective) yielding; submissive

- Ms. Hayes prefers compliant students, those who'll do everything they are told.
- If you comply with the school rules, you won't get into trouble.
- Rose always complies with Charles's requests; she never says no.

Ardent

(adjective) full of passion and emotion

- Ardent soccer fans never miss a game.
- John and Sherrie's embrace was more than a casual hug; it was an ardent show of affection.
- For their extraordinary service, the volunteers deserve ardent thanks.

9

Adamant

(adjective) unwilling to bend; unyielding

- Although the invitation said dress was formal, Charlie was adamant about wearing his wrestling shoes to the prom.
- Dad's adamant tone convinced Charlie there was no chance he could go dressed in that manner.
- Mom adamantly refused my request for chocolate cake for breakfast.

Acoustics

(noun) the quality of sound, pertaining to how it is heard based on the quality and structure of the room

- At first the sound inside Philharmonic Hall was flat, but after the renovation, the acoustics were perfect.
- The sound track of the film is extraordinary; he producer must be an acoustic genius.
- Always fascinated by sound, Ernest studied to be an acoustical engineer.

10

Acclaim

(verb) to express strong approval or praise; hail

- He's an accomplished artist, acclaimed by all the critics.
- The father was happy to hear his son's talent acclaimed by his teachers.
- It is a hit play, but in spite of all the acclaim it has received, I didn't think much of it.

Ample

(adjective) abundant; plentiful; enough or more than enough

- It will be expensive to send me to college, but my parents have saved ample funds, thank goodness.
- For turning in the lost wallet, Heather received an ample reward of \$100 from the owner.
- Juice and a piece of toast is an ample breakfast for me.