

badinage

meaning

teasing conversation

example

Her friends at work greeted the news of her engagement with cheerful badinage.

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banal

meaning

hackneyed; commonplace; trite

example

His frequent use of clichés made his essay seem banal.

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censure

meaning

blame; criticize

example

He was censured for his inappropriate behavior.

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concatenate

meaning

link as in a chain

example

It is difficult to understand how these events could concatenate as they did without outside assistance.

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converse

meaning

opposite

example

The inevitable converse of peace is not war but annihilation.

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cringe

meaning

shrink back, as if in fear

example

The dog cringed, expecting a blow.

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decollete

meaning

having a low-cut neckline

example

Fashion decrees that evening gowns be decollete this season; bare shoulders are again the vogue.

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dinghy

meaning

small boat (often ship's boat)

example

In the film *Lifeboat*, an ill-assorted group of passengers from a sunken ocean liner are marooned at sea in a dinghy.

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disarray

meaning

a disorderly or untidy state

example

After the New Year's party, the once orderly house was in total disarray.

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dubious

meaning

doubtful

example

He has the dubious distinction of being the lowest man in his class.

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filial

meaning

pertaining to a son or daughter

example

Many children forget their filial obligations and disregard the wishes of their parents.

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flout

meaning

reject; mock

example

The headstrong youth flouted all authority; he refused to be curbed.

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gall

meaning

bitterness; nerve

example

The knowledge of his failure filled him with gall.

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gratis

meaning

free

example

The company offered to give one package gratis to every purchaser of one of their products.

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hap

meaning

chance; luck

example

In his poem hap, Thomas Hardy objects to the part chance plays in our lives.

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heedless

meaning

not noticing; disregarding

example

He drove on, heedless of the warnings that the road was dangerous.

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heterogeneous

meaning

dissimilar

example

In a heterogeneous group, we have an unassorted assemblage, while in a homogeneous group we have people or things that have common traits.

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imbue

meaning

saturate, fill

example

His visits to the famous Gothic cathedrals imbued him with feelings of awe and reverence.

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inconsistency

meaning

state of being self-contradictory;
lack of uniformity or steadiness

example

How are lawyers different from agricultural inspectors? Where lawyers check inconsistencies in witnesses' statements, agricultural inspectors check inconsistencies in Grade A eggs.

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irate

meaning

angry

example

When John's mother found out that he had overthrown his checking account for the third month in a row, she was so irate that she could scarcely speak to him.

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knead

meaning

mix; work dough

example

Her hands grew strong from kneading bread.

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mete

meaning

measure; distribute

example

He tried to be impartial in his efforts to mete out justice.

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misogynist

meaning

hater of women

example

She accused him of being a misogynist because he had been a bachelor all his life.

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nomenclature

meaning

terminology; system of names

example

She struggled to master scientific nomenclature.

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opaque

meaning

dark; not transparent

example

The opaque window kept the sunlight out of the room.

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overwrought

meaning

extremely agitated; hysterical

example

When Kate heard the news of the sudden tragedy, she became too overwrought to work and had to leave the office early.

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pedantic

meaning

showing off learning; bookish

example

Leaving his decisions with humorous, down-to-earth anecdotes, Judge Walker was not at all pedantic legal scholar.

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perversion

meaning

corruption; turning from right to wrong

example

Inasmuch as he had no motive for his crimes, we could not understand his perversion.

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ravel

meaning

fall apart into tangles; unravel or untwist; entangle

example

A single thread pulled loose, and the entire scarf started to ravel.

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rebuff

meaning

snub; beat back

example

She rebuffed his invitation so smoothly that he did not realize he had been snubbed.

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relent

meaning

give in

example

When her stern father would not relent and allow her to marry Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett eloped with her suitor.

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reparation

meaning

amends; compensation

example

At the peace conference, the defeated country promised to pay reparations to the victors.

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repugnance

meaning

loathing

example

She looked at the snake with repugnance.

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slake

meaning

quench; sate

example

When we reached the oasis, we were able to slake our thirst.

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sustenance

meaning

means of support, food, nourishment

example

In the tropics, the natives find sustenance easy to obtain because of all the fruit trees.

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swerve

meaning

deviate; turn aside sharply

example

The car swerved wildly as the driver struggled to regain control of the wheel.

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testy

meaning

irritable; short-tempered

example

My advice is to avoid discussing this problem with him today as he is rather testy and may shout at you.

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tutelary

meaning

protective; pertaining to a guardianship

example

I am acting in my tutelary capacity when I refuse to grant you permission to leave the campus.

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tycoon

meaning

wealthy leader

example

John D. Rockefeller was a prominent tycoon.

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uxorious

meaning

excessively devoted to one's wife

example

His friends laughed at him because he was so uxorious and submissive to his wife's desires.

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vernacular

meaning

living language; natural style

example

Cut out those old-fashioned "thee's" and "thou's" and write in the vernacular.

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viable

meaning

capable of maintaining life; practicable; workable

example

The infant, though prematurely born, is viable and has a good chance to survive.

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volition

meaning

act of making a conscious choice

example

She selected this dress of her own volition.

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agrarian

meaning

pertaining to land or its cultivation

example

As a result of its recent industrialization, the country is gradually losing its agrarian traditions.

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assent

meaning

agree; accept

example

It gives me great pleasure to assent to your request.

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