



Essential Vocabulary List for Year 5

for the Selective Test

**(400 must-know words
with mnemonics)**

A

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
abandon	To leave completely and finally; forsake	Think of a "band" of friends who "don" (put on) their jackets and leave you behind
abrupt	Sudden and unexpected	A-BRUPT sounds like it breaks suddenly, just like an abrupt change
absorb	To take in or soak up	When you "absorb" information, you "sorb" (soak) it up like "ab" (a) sponge
abundant	Present in great quantity	"A bun dance" - imagine so many buns that they're dancing around everywhere
accomplish	To complete successfully	"Ac-com-plish" sounds like "I come polish" - you polish off a task until it shines
accurate	Correct and exact	"Ac-curate" sounds like "a curate" who carefully arranges things in the correct order
achieve	To successfully complete a task	"A-chieve" sounds like "a chief" - chiefs are known for achieving great things
admire	To regard with respect and approval	"Ad-mire" - imagine looking in a mirror ("mire") and adding ("ad") respect to what you see
adore	To love deeply	"A door" opens to your heart when you adore someone
adversity	Misfortune or difficulty	"Ad-vers-ity" sounds like "add reverse to me" - when life reverses your good fortune
advocate	To support or promote	"Ad-vo-cate" sounds like "add voice" - you add your voice to support a cause
affection	Fond attachment or love	"A-ffect-ion" - the effect of caring creates a strong connection
agile	Able to move quickly and easily	Think of a "gile" (like "gel") that helps things slide around easily
agony	Extreme physical or mental pain	"Ag-ony" sounds like "a groan-y" - someone groaning in pain
ambitious	Having a strong desire for success	"Am-bit-ious" sounds like "I am bit by success" - success has bitten you

accelerate	To increase speed	"Ac-celer-ate" - accelerate by eating celery for quick energy
acclaim	Enthusiastic approval	"Ac-claim" - people clap their hands to acclaim your achievement
accumulate	To gather or collect	"Ac-cumul-ate" - you accumulate things until you eat up all your storage space
amiable	Friendly and pleasant	"Ami-able" - Amy is able to be friendly with everyone
anticipate	To expect or predict	"Anti-cip-ate" - before ("anti") you sip, anticipate how hot the tea will be

B

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
baffle	To confuse or perplex completely	"Baffle" sounds like "bad full" - your brain feels badly full when confused
balance	State of equilibrium	"Bal-ance" - imagine a ballet dancer balancing on one foot
banish	To send away; exile	"Ban-ish" - when you ban someone, you wish them gone
barren	Unproductive; sterile	"Barren" sounds like "bare in" - nothing growing, just bare soil
beacon	A light or signal for guidance	"Bea-con" - imagine a beam of light from a cone-shaped lighthouse
benevolent	Kind, charitable	"Bene-volent" - "bene" means good, like a volunteer doing good deeds
bewildered	Confused and puzzled	"Be-wild-ered" - imagine being lost in the wild, feeling confused
blunder	A careless mistake	"Blun-der" sounds like "blind error" - a mistake made blindly
boisterous	Noisy and energetic	"Boist-erous" sounds like "boys' chorus" - loud and full of energy
boycott	To refuse to deal with as a form of protest	"Boy-cott" - imagine a group of boys refusing to wear their cotton uniforms as protest

brave	Showing courage	The letter "b" stands tall at the beginning, representing standing up to fear
brief	Short in duration	"Bri-ef" - be "brief" when talking with the "chief"
brilliant	Extremely clever or talented	"Brill-iant" - your brain shines like a brilliant diamond
brisk	Quick and active	"Br-isk" - the "br" sounds like "brrr" (cold), and people move briskly when cold
burden	Something difficult to bear	"Bur-den" - a heavy load weighs you down like a "den" full of "burrs"
beneficial	Resulting in good	"Bene-ficial" - the benefits are officially good for you
benign	Not harmful	"Be-nign" - be nice and not harmful
bountiful	Abundant	"Bounti-ful" - bounty hunters find a full supply of what they seek
buoyant	Able to float; cheerful	"Buoy-ant" - buoys float like ants on water

C

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
calamity	Great misfortune or disaster	"Cala-mity" sounds like "call a mighty" help - you need massive help during a disaster
calculate	To determine by mathematical methods	"Cal-culate" - imagine counting "cal"ories with a "cute" calculator
capable	Having the ability or qualification	"Cap-able" - picture someone wearing a graduation cap, showing they're able
captivate	To attract and hold interest	"Captiv-ate" - imagine someone held captive by a fascinating story
carefree	Without worry or responsibility	"Care-free" - picture tossing all your cares away and being free
cautious	Careful to avoid potential problems	"Caut-ious" sounds like "caught us" - being careful so problems don't catch you

celebrate	To observe a day or event with ceremonies	"Cel-eb-rate" - imagine a celebrity who rates parties highly
challenge	A demanding or stimulating situation	"Chall-enge" - picture climbing a chalk mountain as a challenge
character	The mental and moral qualities of a person	"Char-acter" - your unique character traits are what actors draw on
charitable	Generous in giving to those in need	"Char-itable" - a table full of charity items to give away
cherish	To hold dear	"Cher-ish" - picture sharing ("sher") your affection with what you cherish
clever	Quick to understand and learn	"C-lever" - imagine using a lever (C-shaped) to lift ideas quickly
collapse	To fall down suddenly	"Col-lapse" - picture a column that suddenly lapses and falls
colleague	A fellow worker	"Col-league" - someone in your league at work, part of the same collection
comfort	A state of physical ease	"Com-fort" - "come forth" and relax in this comfortable chair
commend	To praise	"Com-mend" - coming to mend your reputation with praise
compensate	To make up for	"Com-pens-ate" - you ate the pen so you must compensate for it
compliment	Expression of praise	"Compli-ment" - mint candies given as a compliment
comprehensive	Including all or everything	"Com-pre-hens-ive" - coming to comprehend everything, even hens
conceal	To hide	"Con-ceal" - the con artist sealed away the truth
concise	Brief but comprehensive	"Con-cise" - cut (cise) it down to convey your point briefly

D

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
daring	Bold or courageous	"Dar-ing" - "dare" + "ing" - constantly doing dares
dazzle	To blind temporarily with light	"Dazz-le" - the dazzling lights made me so dizzy
debate	A formal discussion or argument	"De-bate" - two people debating like in a batting contest, hitting ideas back and forth
debilitate	To make weak or feeble	"De-bil-itate" - it "de"creases your "ability" to function
deceive	To cause to believe what is false	"De-ceive" - to "see" things differently from how they really are
decipher	To succeed in understanding	"De-cipher" - taking a "cipher" (code) apart to understand it
decline	To become gradually less	"De-cline" - picture sliding down a decline or slope
dedicate	To devote to a particular purpose	"Ded-icate" - imagine your dad indicating what he's devoted to
defiant	Showing open resistance	"De-fiant" - the prefix "de" means away from, so defiant means going against the "fiant" (rules)
delay	To put off until later	"De-lay" - to lay something down for later
deliberate	Done with careful consideration	"De-liber-ate" - liberating your thoughts by careful thinking before acting
delicate	Easily broken or damaged	"Del-icate" - imagine an ice sculpture that's so delicate
delight	Great pleasure	"De-light" - your face lights up with happiness
demonstrate	To show clearly	"Demon-strate" - picture a demon showing students how to do something
deny	To declare untrue	"De-ny" - saying "nay" (no) to something
diligent	Hardworking and attentive	"Dili-gent" - daily going at work like a gentleman
discreet	Careful to avoid causing embarrassment	"Dis-creet" - this street is known for keeping secrets

distinctive	Characteristic of one person or thing	"Distinct-ive" - distinctly ivy-league in appearance
divert	To change direction	"Di-vert" - to direct vertically in another way
dubious	Doubtful	"Dub-ious" - I dubbed this information as suspicious

E

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
eager	Showing keen interest or enthusiasm	"E-ager" - the letter E is rushing ahead, eager to start the alphabet
eccentric	Unconventional and slightly strange	"Ec-centric" - someone who is not at the centre of normal behaviour
economical	Careful not to waste resources	"Eco-nomical" - ecology + minimal use of resources
educate	To provide with knowledge	"Ed-u-cate" - sounds like "Ed, you create" knowledge in others' minds
efficient	Working well with minimum waste	"E-fficient" - the letter E works efficiently, doing three horizontal tasks at once
elaborate	Involving many details	"E-labor-ate" - it takes a lot of labour to create something elaborate
elevate	To raise to a higher position	"Ele-vate" - elephants use their trunks to elevate objects
eloquent	Fluent and persuasive in speaking	"Elo-quent" - the words flow like water ("aqua") when someone speaks eloquently
embarrass	To cause to feel awkward or ashamed	"Em-barr-ass" - imagine having a barrier ("barr") that makes you feel like an ass
emerge	To come into view	"E-merge" - like emerging from water, you merge into visibility
empathy	Understanding and sharing feelings of others	"Em-path-y" - you walk the same path as someone to understand their feelings
encounter	To meet or come upon	"En-counter" - you count each person you encounter

encourage	To give support or confidence	"En-courage" - to put courage into someone
enormous	Very large	"E-norm-ous" - something so large it's outside ("e-") the norm
enthusiastic	Showing intense and eager enjoyment	"En-thus-iastic" - when you're enthusiastic, you're "thus" full of energy

F

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
fabricate	To make up or invent	"Fabric-ate" - weaving a fabric of made-up stories
facilitate	To make an action or process easier	"Facil-itate" - making a facility that makes things easy
fascinate	To attract and hold interest	"Fascin-ate" - your fascination with something makes you fasten your attention to it
fatigue	Extreme tiredness	"Fat-igue" - so tired that your body feels heavy ("fat") with "igue" (ache)
feasible	Possible to do	"Feas-ible" - if it's feasible, you're able to feast on the results
ferocious	Savage or fierce	"Fer-ocious" - a ferocious animal is so "ocious" (atrocious) it makes you "fer" (fear) it
flexible	Able to bend easily	"Flex-ible" - you're able to flex like rubber
flourish	To grow or develop vigorously	"Flour-ish" - like flowers that flourish in good soil
fluctuate	To rise and fall irregularly	"Fluct-uate" - like a floating duck ("fluct") on waves that go up and down
formidable	Inspiring fear or respect	"Form-id-able" - able to form ideas that make others respectful
fragile	Easily broken or damaged	"Fra-gile" - as fragile as a frame made of glass
frequent	Happening often	"Fre-quent" - you frequently answer questions
frustrate	To prevent from achieving a purpose	"Frust-rate" - when frustrated, you feel like you're eating a "crust" at a slow "rate"

fundamental	Forming a necessary base or core	"Fund-a-mental" - the mental foundation fund of knowledge
furious	Extremely angry	"Fur-ious" - so angry your fur stands up like a furious cat
feeble	Weak	"Fee-ble" - too feeble to pay the fee for being able
flamboyant	Conspicuously showy	"Flam-boy-ant" - a flaming boy ant with flashy colours
foresight	Ability to predict what will happen	"Fore-sight" - before it happens, you see it

G

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
gallant	Brave, heroic	"Gall-ant" - an ant with a lot of gall (courage) is gallant
garbled	Confused and distorted	"Gar-bled" - garbage all jumbled up
generate	To produce or create	"Gen-erate" - a generator creates electricity
generous	Willing to give more than necessary	"Gen-er-ous" - generally, you're generous with "er...us" (your things)
genuine	Authentic, real	"Gen-u-ine" - genuine products have your genes in them
glimpse	A brief or partial view	"Gli-mpse" - you glide your eyes for just an "mpse" (moment)
global	Relating to the entire world	"Glob-al" - the globe is all-encompassing
glorious	Impressively beautiful	"Glor-ious" - the glory is so delicious to see
gradual	Taking place slowly by degrees	"Grad-ual" - moving up grade by grade, as in school
grateful	Feeling or showing appreciation	"Grate-ful" - full of great feelings for someone's kindness
gravity	The force that attracts objects toward earth	"Grav-ity" - the grave pulls you down with gravity
grief	Deep sorrow	"Gri-ef" - grief makes you grind your teeth with "ef"fort

grotesque	Distorted and unpleasant in appearance	"Gro-tesque" - so gross it makes you tesque (twist) your face
grumble	To complain in a bad-tempered way	"Grum-ble" - grumpy people mumble complaints
guarantee	A formal promise	"Guar-antee" - the guard will ensure your safety
gracious	Kind and courteous	"Gra-cious" - grandma's gracious nature is so delicious
gruelling	Extremely tiring and demanding	"Grue-ling" - the gruesome drilling was gruelling

H

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
habitual	Done regularly or repeatedly	"Habit-ual" - you usually follow your habits
haggard	Looking exhausted and unwell	"Hag-gard" - looking like a tired old hag in the garden
haphazard	Lacking any obvious principle of organization	"Hap-hazard" - things happening hazardingly by chance
harass	To trouble by repeated attacks	"Ha-rass" - harassers are like donkeys (asses) that repeatedly "ha" (laugh) at you
hasty	Done with excessive speed	"Has-ty" - has to be done quickly like drinking hot tea ("ty")
haughty	Arrogantly superior	"Haugh-ty" - holding your head so high you're "tying" it to the sky
hazardous	Risky; dangerous	"Hazard-ous" - full of hazards
hesitate	To pause before doing something	"Hes-itate" - "hes" (he has) to "itate" (iterate) his thoughts before acting
hideous	Extremely ugly	"Hide-ous" - so ugly you want to hide it from us
hilarious	Extremely amusing	"Hilar-ious" - Hillary found it so delicious (ious) to laugh
hindrance	An obstacle	"Hind-rance" - a fence (rance) behind you blocks your way

homogeneous	Of the same kind	"Homo-gen-eous" - genes that are the same throughout
hostile	Unfriendly; antagonistic	"Host-ile" - this host will pile on aggression
humiliate	To make someone feel ashamed	"Humil-iate" - makes you feel as low as the humus (soil)
hypocrite	A person who pretends to be what they are not	"Hypo-crite" - below ("hypo") the surface, they criticise what they themselves do
humble	Having a modest view of one's importance	"Hum-ble" - hum quietly while you mumble, not showing off
hustle	To move quickly and energetically	"Hus-tle" - hurry to settle the hustle and bustle

I

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
identical	Exactly alike	"Ident-ical" - their identities are the same, like twins
idle	Not working or active	"Id-le" - "I'll" just sit here doing nothing
ignite	To set on fire	"Ig-nite" - the ignition lights up the night
ignorant	Lacking knowledge	"Ignor-ant" - an ant that ignores important information
illuminate	To light up	"Illum-inate" - I'll make it shine like the moon ("lum")
illustrate	To explain by using examples	"Illust-rate" - I'll use a lustrous drawing to illustrate this at a good rate
immaculate	Perfectly clean or neat	"Im-maculate" - no mac (stain) on it at all
immediate	Happening right away	"Im-medi-ate" - no medium or delay, it happens right away
immense	Extremely large	"Im-mense" - it's not just mense (measurable), it's beyond measure
immune	Protected against a disease	"Im-mune" - I'm unable to be hurt by this disease
impartial	Treating all sides equally	"Im-partial" - not partial to any side
impatient	Not willing to wait	"Im-patient" - not patient enough to wait

impeccable	Without fault or error	"Im-pecc-able" - not able to commit a peccadillo (minor sin)
impede	To obstruct or hinder	"Im-pede" - put your foot ("pede") in the way
impressive	Arousing admiration	"Im-press-ive" - it presses into your mind and leaves a mark
implore	To beg earnestly	"Im-plore" - I'm on the floor begging you
industrious	Hardworking and persistent	"Indus-trious" - industry needs tries-us workers who never stop
ingenious	Showing inventiveness	"In-gen-ious" - the genius inside you creates ingenious ideas
integrity	Honesty and strong moral principles	"Integ-rity" - integral to your character is the truth
intricate	Very complicated or detailed	"In-tric-ate" - in the trick is to eat it bit by intricate bit
intrigue	To arouse curiosity	"In-trigue" - in the league of mysterious things that intrigue us

J

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
jabber	To talk rapidly and excitedly	"Jab-ber" - jabbing the air with words
jealous	Feeling resentment towards someone	"Jeal-ous" - the jelly of envy oozes out of you
jeopardy	Danger of loss, harm, or failure	"Jeo-pardy" - you joke ("jeo") about danger but it's still a "pardy" (party) spoiler
jittery	Nervous or tense	"Jit-tery" - jittering like a tea cup ("tery") on a bumpy table
jovial	Cheerful and friendly	"Jov-ial" - like Jove (Jupiter), the jolly planet, always social
jubilant	Feeling or expressing great happiness	"Jubi-lant" - jumping like ants at a jubilee celebration
judicious	Having good judgment	"Judi-cious" - judges are wise ("cious")

jumble	A confused mixture	"Jum-ble" - things jump around and become a jumble
junction	A point where two things join	"Junct-ion" - the junction of one road with another causes a function
justify	To show to be right or reasonable	"Just-ify" - to make something just (fair)
jagged	Having sharp points	"Jag-ged" - jagged edges get you when you grab them
jinx	A person or thing that brings bad luck	"Jin-x" - jingling the x-factor of bad luck

K

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
keen	Eager or enthusiastic	"K-een" sounds like "Key in" - you're so eager you've already got your key in the door
kindle	To start a fire or inspire	"Kin-dle" - your kindle device lights up like a fire
kinship	A feeling of connection	"Kin-ship" - a ship full of your kin (family) creates a sense of connection
knack	A special skill or aptitude	"K-nack" - imagine a key ("k") that unlocks your natural abilities
knead	To work and press with hands	"K-nead" - you need to press the dough with your hands
knowledgeable	Having a lot of knowledge	"Know-ledge-able" - able to store knowledge on your mental ledge
kudos	Praise and recognition	"Ku-dos" - when you do something good, kudos comes to you in "dos" (two) forms: respect and admiration

L

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
laborious	Requiring a lot of hard work	"Labor-ious" - full of labour that's so tedious
lacerate	To tear or cut roughly	"Lacer-ate" - lacing something with cuts and tears

lacklustre	Lacking energy or enthusiasm	"Lack-lustre" - lacking shine or sparkle
languid	Lacking energy or vitality	"Lang-uid" - your language sounds drowsy and fluid when you're languid
latent	Existing but not yet developed	"Lat-ent" - the talent is there but hasn't emerged yet
lavish	Sumptuously rich, elaborate, or luxurious	"Lav-ish" - when you lavish gifts, you wish to give plenty
lenient	Not strict; merciful	"Lend-ient" - lending a helping hand instead of punishing
liable	Legally responsible	"Lie-able" - you are able to lie in court and be held responsible
liberate	To set free	"Liber-ate" - after liberation, you can eat in freedom
limber	Flexible	"Lim-ber" - your limbs bend easily when they're limber
linger	To stay longer	"Line-ger" - you linger in a line, taking your time
loathe	To hate intensely	"Low-athe" - the lowest form of hate makes you loathe someone
lucid	Clear and easily understood	"Luc-cid" - like clear light ("luc") showing ideas
luminous	Giving off light	"Lumin-ous" - the moon ("lum") shines luminously on us
luxurious	Extremely comfortable and expensive	"Lux-ur-ious" - luxurious things are delicious for "ur" (your) enjoyment

M

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
majestic	Impressive or grand	"Maj-estic" - a majesty (king or queen) stands in a fantastic setting
malleable	Easily changed or influenced	"Mall-eable" - like metal that can be hammered and shaped in a mall
mammoth	Huge	"Mam-moth" - your mum ("mam") says this moth is enormous

mandatory	Required by law	"Man-dat-ory" - a man giving you the date when something must be done - it's mandatory
manipulate	To handle or control skilfully	"Mani-pulate" - using your hands ("mani") to pull strings like a puppet master
marvel	To be filled with wonder	"Mar-vel" - the marvellous velvet makes you wonder
massive	Very large	"Mass-ive" - has so much mass it's impressive
masterful	Showing great skill	"Master-ful" - full of mastery
mature	Fully developed	"Ma-ture" - your mum is mature because she's been through a lot
meagre	Small in quantity	"Mea-gre" - so mean with portions that you're only getting a grain ("gre")
meander	To wander aimlessly	"Me-ander" - "me" wandering through the "ander" (land) without direction
meticulous	Showing great attention to detail	"Meti-culous" - you're so careful, you measure ("meti") every ridiculous detail
mimic	To imitate	"Mim-ic" - "mim" (mom) says "ic" (I see) you copying me
miraculous	Like a miracle; amazing	"Mirac-ulous" - the miracle was so fabulous it seemed miraculous
mischievous	Playfully causing trouble	"Mis-chiev-ous" - the chief of misbehaviour is always causing trouble
magnify	To make larger	"Magni-fy" - magic that makes flies look bigger
mindful	Conscious or aware	"Mind-ful" - your mind is full of awareness
mischief	Playful misbehaviour	"Mis-chief" - the chief of mistakes causes mischief
modest	Not showing off	"Mod-est" - the model is dressed in the modest style
momentous	Very important	"Moment-ous" - a moment that affects all of us

N

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
naive	Showing lack of experience	"Na-ive" - "na" (no) "ive" (I've) never experienced this before
narcissistic	Excessively self-centered	"Narciss-istic" - Narcissus was so in love with himself that he stared at his reflection
navigate	To plan and direct a course	"Navi-gate" - your navigation system helps you find the gate (entrance)
nebulous	Vague or ill-defined	"Neb-ulous" - like nebulae in space, a nebulous idea is cloudy and unclear
necessitate	To make necessary	"Necess-itate" - it creates a necessity
nefarious	Wicked or criminal	"Ne-fari-ous" - not ("ne") fair—the nefarious villain cheats
neglect	To fail to care for properly	"Neg-lect" - saying "neg" (no) when you should be collecting (caring for) something
negotiate	To discuss terms for agreement	"Nego-tiate" - saying "no, go" until you tie up an agreement
neighbouring	Near or adjacent	"Neigh-bour-ing" - your neighbour is boring holes through your fence to say hi
nonchalant	Appearing calm and relaxed	"Non-chalant" - not challenged by anything, stays cool
notorious	Famous for something bad	"Not-orious" - not glorious, but famous for wrong reasons
novice	A beginner	"Nov-ice" - a November ice skater just beginning to learn
nurture	To care for and encourage growth	"Nur-ture" - your nurse makes sure you mature properly
nutritious	Providing nourishment	"Nutri-tious" - nutrition that's so delicious
nuzzle	To push or rub gently with the nose	"Nuzz-le" - your nose will puzzle through something by nuzzling it

O

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
obedient	Willing to obey	"Ob-edi-ent" - the obedient student edits their behaviour to follow rules
objective	Not influenced by personal feelings	"Object-ive" - viewing objects as they are, not as you feel about them
obligatory	Required by a rule or law	"Oblig-atory" - the obligation is mandatory
obscure	Not well known	"Ob-scure" - the object is secure from public knowledge
obsolete	No longer in use	"Ob-sol-ete" - the old solar technology has been eaten by progress
obstacle	Something that blocks the way	"Ob-stacle" - an object that stacks in your way
obstinate	Stubbornly adhering to an opinion	"Ob-stin-ate" - this stubborn obstacle stings when you try to move it
obtain	To get or acquire	"Ob-tain" - the object is attained
obvious	Easily perceived or understood	"Ob-vi-ous" - the object is visible to all of us
occasional	Happening sometimes but not often	"Oc-cas-ional" - on occasions, casually taking place
offensive	Causing someone to feel upset	"Off-ens-ive" - it sends people's feelings off in a negative way
ominous	Suggesting future evil or misfortune	"Omin-ous" - oh my, it's ominous when it hangs over us like that
opaque	Not transparent	"O-paque" - oh, I can't see through this opaque object
optimistic	Hopeful and confident about the future	"Optim-istic" - the optimal way to see life is with optimism
outrageous	Shocking and unacceptable	"Out-rage-ous" - your rage comes out when something is outrageous
obnoxious	Extremely unpleasant	"Ob-nox-ious" - objectionably noxious and odious

observant	Quick to notice things	"Ob-serv-ant" - observing like an ant that serves information
obsolete	No longer used	"Ob-sol-ete" - old solutions have been eaten by progress

P

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
pacify	To bring peace	"Pac-ify" - the pacific ocean is peaceful; to pacify is to make peaceful
pamper	To treat with excessive indulgence	"Pam-per" - Aunt Pam will spoil you ("per" you) with treats
paramount	Of supreme importance	"Para-mount" - beyond ("para") the mountain, the most important thing
parched	Extremely dry	"Parch-ed" - the paper is so parched it's turned to parchment
pardon	To forgive	"Par-don" - part of your donation to someone is forgiveness
passion	Strong enthusiasm	"Pass-ion" - like a passing ion, the energy of passion flows through you
patient	Able to wait without becoming annoyed	"Pat-ient" - patting yourself gently while waiting
peculiar	Strange or odd	"Pec-uliar" - this peculiar peck on the cheek looks peculiar to regular people
penalise	To punish	"Penal-ise" - the penalty is to isolate someone
perceive	To become aware of through the senses	"Per-ceive" - perceiving what you see through your personal filter
perilous	Full of danger	"Peril-ous" - the peril is hazardous to us
permanent	Lasting for a long time	"Perma-nent" - the permanent marker never rubs out
perplex	To confuse or puzzle	"Per-plex" - your personal complex puzzle perplexes you
persevere	To continue despite difficulties	"Per-sev-ere" - pursue severely what you were doing, don't give up

persuade	To cause to do something through reasoning	"Per-suade" - personal sweet talk to persuade someone
peevish	Easily irritated	"Pee-vish" - a person with a peevish wish to complain
pensive	Engaged in deep thought	"Pen-sive" - using a pen while thinking sively (deeply)
perceptive	Having insight	"Per-cept-ive" - personally accepting all perspectives
persistent	Continuing firmly	"Per-sist-ent" - per your sister's encouragement, you persist
petulant	Childishly sulky	"Pet-ul-ant" - the pet is ultimately acting like an angry ant
plausible	Seeming reasonable	"Plaus-ible" - it's plausible that you're able to applaud this idea
ponder	To think about carefully	"Pon-der" - put on your thinking cap and wonder
poignant	Evoking a keen sense of sadness	"Poign-ant" - the point of the ant's story was poignantly sad
precise	Exact and accurate	"Pre-cise" - before you cut (cise), be precise about the measurement
prim	Stiffly formal	"Pr-im" - properly immaculate in appearance

Q

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
quaint	Attractively unusual or old-fashioned	"Qu-aint" - your aunt has quaint old furniture
qualm	A feeling of doubt or uneasiness	"Qu-alm" - a quiet alarm bell in your mind
quarrel	An angry dispute or argument	"Quar-rel" - four ("quar") relatives ("rel") arguing
quench	To satisfy thirst	"Qu-ench" - quickly end the thirst on your bench
query	A question	"Que-ry" - questioning very ("ry") eagerly

quest	A long search for something	"Que-st" - the question that started your search
quiver	To shake with a slight trembling motion	"Qui-ver" - quickly shiver when afraid
quota	A fixed share of something	"Quo-ta" - quote the amount that's allotted
quotient	The result of division in mathematics	"Quot-ient" - when you quote the result, it's the quotient

R

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
radiant	Sending out light; shining	"Rad-iant" - radiators emit heat like an ant that's radiantly glowing
rampant	Flourishing or spreading unchecked	"Ramp-ant" - ants ramping up their numbers uncontrollably
rancid	Having a foul smell or taste	"Ran-cid" - ran away because it's so acidic and foul
random	Made or done without method or planning	"Ran-dom" - ran around your home without any plan
rapture	A feeling of intense pleasure or joy	"Rap-ture" - the rap song captures your attention with pure joy
rarity	Something uncommon	"Rar-ity" - rare items are a rarity
rational	Based on reason	"Rat-ional" - even a rat is rational when making decisions based on facts
ravage	To cause severe damage	"Rav-age" - ravens of old age ravage the countryside
ravenous	Extremely hungry	"Raven-ous" - the raven is so hungry it could eat all of us
rebellion	An act of violent resistance	"Re-bell-ion" - ringing the bells again for the rebellion
recede	To move back or away	"Re-cede" - seeds that go back into the ground
reckless	Without thinking about the consequences	"Reck-less" - with less reckoning (thinking) about what might happen
reconcile	To restore friendly relations	"Re-conc-ile" - reconnect the concrete tile of friendship that was broken

redeem	To compensate for faults	"Re-deem" - to deem something worthy again
redundant	No longer needed	"Re-dund-ant" - repetitive like an ant doing the same job over and over
replenish	To fill again	"Re-plen-ish" - repeat filling your plate until you're plenished (full)
resilient	Able to recover quickly	"Re-sil-ient" - readily silent but bouncing back like a client
robust	Strong and healthy	"Ro-bust" - rowing makes your bust (chest) robust and strong

S

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
sacred	Connected with God or religion	"Sac-red" - the sacred red cloth in the church
sacrifice	Give up something valuable	"Sacri-fice" - sacred offering sliced away
sagacious	Having good judgment	"Saga-cious" - the long saga made you wise and conscientious
salvage	To save from a wreck	"Sal-vage" - sailors save what they can from sinking ships
sanctify	To make holy	"Sanct-ify" - saint-ify something to make it holy
sarcasm	Remarks that mean the opposite	"Sarc-asm" - sharp as a shark's bite, this wit has a chasm between what's said and meant
saturate	To soak completely	"Satur-ate" - on Saturday, ate so much the sponge was completely full
savage	Fierce, violent, and uncontrolled	"Sav-age" - save yourself from the age of savagery
scarce	Insufficient for the demand	"Scar-ce" - the scarcity leaves a scar on the economy
scrutinise	To examine carefully	"Scrut-inise" - scrubs the tiny details to examine them
seclude	To keep away from others	"Se-clude" - see yourself excluded by choice

sedentary	Involving little exercise	"Sed-ent-ary" - sitting ("sed") like an entomologist studying ants all day
sensational	Causing great public excitement	"Sensa-tion-al" - the sensation of a national event
serene	Calm and peaceful	"Se-rene" - see the rain falling peacefully in a serene setting
severe	Extremely strict or harsh	"Se-vere" - so very harsh and strict
spontaneous	Done without planning	"Spont-aneous" - spontaneously, ants appear from nowhere
steadfast	Firmly fixed in place	"Stead-fast" - standing steadily and fastened in place
sublime	Of very high quality	"Sub-lime" - submarine covered with lime is sublimely beautiful

T

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
taciturn	Reserved or uncommunicative in speech	"Taci-turn" - takes a turn being quiet
tactful	Having or showing tact	"Tact-ful" - full of the right touches in conversations
tangible	Perceptible by touch	"Tang-ible" - able to touch something with a tang (distinctive flavour)
tantrum	An uncontrolled outburst of anger	"Tant-rum" - aunt's rum made her throw a tantrum
tardy	Late	"Tar-dy" - getting stuck in tar makes you dirty and late
tarnish	To lose lustre	"Tarn-ish" - the small lake (tarn) is becoming tarnished with pollution
tenacious	Holding firmly	"Ten-acious" - ten aces would give you a tenacious grip on victory
tentative	Not certain or fixed	"Tent-ative" - like a tent that's not permanently fixed to the ground

terrify	To fill with extreme fear	"Terri-fy" - terrible things that make you fly away in fear
testimony	A formal statement	"Testi-mony" - tested in court, your testimony must be honest
therapeutic	Having a beneficial effect on health	"Thera-peutic" - therapy that is particularly effective
thrifty	Using money and resources carefully	"Thri-fty" - thriving by being fifty percent more careful with money
thwart	To prevent from accomplishing something	"Th-wart" - throw a wart in someone's plans to stop them
timid	Showing a lack of courage or confidence	"Tim-id" - Tim is afraid to share his ID
tolerate	To allow without prohibition	"Toler-ate" - ate something you don't like but tolerated it

U

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
ultimate	Being the best or most extreme	"Ulti-mate" - the final mate you need is the ultimate one
unanimous	In complete agreement	"Una-nimous" - one animal of thought - everyone agrees
uncertain	Not definitely known	"Un-certain" - not certain about the outcome
uncouth	Lacking good manners	"Un-couth" - not in the cool group because of poor manners
underlying	Present but not obvious	"Under-lying" - lying under the surface
undermine	To weaken gradually	"Under-mine" - digging under a mine to make it collapse
undertake	To commit oneself to an enterprise	"Under-take" - take under your wing a new project
undulate	To move in waves	"Und-ulate" - under the water, undulating like seaweed
unfathomable	Impossible to comprehend	"Un-fathom-able" - not able to measure the depth (fathom) of it

unfortunate	Having bad luck	"Un-fortune-ate" - ate all your fortune cookies with bad news
ungainly	Lacking grace in movement	"Un-gain-ly" - not gaining any style points for clumsy movements
unify	To make into a unit	"Uni-fy" - university brings different subjects together in one place
unique	Being the only one of its kind	"Uni-que" - one question with only one possible answer
universal	Applicable to all cases	"Uni-versal" - one verse that applies to all situations
unpretentious	Not attempting to impress others	"Un-pretent-ious" - not pretending to be what you're not

V

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
vacant	Empty	"Va-cant" - the vacant house can't have people in it
vague	Not clearly expressed	"Va-gue" - your voice goes vague when unsure
valid	Legally or officially acceptable	"Val-id" - your ID is valid for identification
valiant	Showing courage	"Val-iant" - the valiant ant faces dangers bravely
vanquish	To defeat thoroughly	"Van-quish" - the van squished the opponent completely
vapid	Offering nothing stimulating	"Vap-id" - as empty as vapour, with no ideas
venerable	Accorded a great deal of respect	"Vener-able" - the venerable elder is able to command respect
vengeance	Punishment inflicted in return for a wrong	"Venge-ance" - the avenger's dance of revenge
verify	To prove true	"Veri-fy" - very sure after you verify the facts
versatile	Able to do many things	"Versa-tile" - can be turned (versa) like a tile in many directions
vibrant	Full of energy and life	"Vib-rant" - vibrating with energy like an excited ant

vigilant	Keeping careful watch	"Vigil-ant" - the vigilant ant keeps watch all night
vigorous	Strong, active, and energetic	"Vig-orous" - vigor makes us strong and energetic
vindicate	To clear from criticism	"Vindi-cate" - vindicated when the cat is innocent
virtuous	Having high moral standards	"Virt-uous" - virtual saints are us when being virtuous
vigilance	Watchful attention	"Vigil-ance" - keeping a vigilant stance during your watchful vigil

W

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
wary	Cautious	"W-ary" - walking very carefully
wavelength	Distance between similar points in electromagnetic waves	"Wave-length" - waves have length from crest to crest
waver	To show signs of doubt	"Wa-ver" - waves of indecision go very far
weary	Tired	"We-ary" - we are very tired
wholesome	Promoting health or well-being	"Whole-some" - the whole sum of goodness
wicked	Extremely unpleasant	"Wick-ed" - the wick burned and I said "ed!" (ouch)
wilt	To become limp	"Wi-lt" - will it stand up or wilt down?
wince	To make a slight involuntary grimace	"Win-ce" - when you win, say "ce" (yay), when you lose, you wince
witty	Clever and humorous	"Wit-ty" - your wit is so tiny but effective
wondrous	Inspiring wonder	"Wond-rous" - wonderful things rush to your eyes
worrisome	Causing anxiety	"Worry-some" - something that makes you worry

worship	To show reverence and adoration	"Wor-ship" - worthy of shipping your praise to
wrathful	Full of anger	"Wrath-ful" - full of wrath like a raging bull
wretched	Very unhappy	"Wret-ched" - wretched people get retched (thrown) away
writhe	To twist or squirm in pain	"Wri-the" - writing the pain on your face as you twist

X

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
xenophobia	Fear of foreigners	"Xeno-phobia" - fear of strange (xeno) people
xerox	To photocopy	"Xer-ox" - Xerox is the brand of copying machine that copies like an ox works
xylophone	A musical instrument with wooden bars	"Xylo-phone" - "xylo" means wood, making phone-like sounds

Y

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
yearn	To long for something	"Ye-arn" - you earn what you yearn for
yield	To produce or provide	"Yi-eld" - your investment will yield returns for the elderly
yoke	A wooden cross piece for harnessing animals	"Yo-ke" - your key to connecting two oxen
youthful	Young or seeming young	"Youth-ful" - full of youth
yummy	Delicious	"Yum-my" - in my tummy, so yummy

Z

Word	Definition	Mnemonic
zany	Amusingly unconventional	"Z-any" - any zebra wearing polka dots would look zany

zealous	Having great energy or enthusiasm	"Zea-lous" - the zealous person loves ("lous") their cause
zenith	The highest point	"Ze-nith" - zero-in on the highest point
zest	Great enthusiasm and energy	"Ze-st" - the zest is the best part that stands out
zigzag	Having sharp turns	"Zig-zag" - zigging then zagging in a sharp pattern
zoom	To move quickly	"Z-oom" - zooming with a "zoom" sound
zestful	Full of zest	"Zest-ful" - full of enthusiasm like a zesty lemon