

Definitions

Note the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the appropriate form of the word in the blank spaces in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms.

1. annul
(ə nəl')

(v.) to reduce to nothing; to make ineffective or inoperative; to declare legally invalid or void

The state legislators voted by an overwhelming majority to _____ **annul** _____ the out-of-date law.

SYNONYMS: cancel, abolish, invalidate, nullify
ANTONYMS: validate, authorize, ratify

2. blasé
(blä zä')

(adj.) indifferent, bored as a result of having enjoyed many pleasures; apathetic

Battle-hardened soldiers may tend to become a bit _____ **blasé** _____ about the dangers they face.

ANTONYMS: enthusiastic, passionate, fervent

3. bolster
(böl' stər)

(v.) to support, give a boost to; (n.) a long pillow or cushion; a supporting post

When you write a research paper, you should always use appropriate facts to _____ **bolster** _____ your case.

The sofa has four comfortable _____ **bolsters** _____.

SYNONYMS: (v.) reinforce, buttress, validate
ANTONYMS: (v.) undermine, weaken, impair

4. deplore
(di plôr')

(v.) to feel or express regret or disapproval

Social critics _____ **deplore** _____ what they believe is a widespread decline in good manners.

SYNONYMS: lament, bemoan, bewail
ANTONYMS: approve, commend, extol

5. frivolous
(friv' ə ləs)

(adj.) of little importance, not worthy of serious attention; not meant seriously

I'll ignore your _____ **frivolous** _____ suggestion.

SYNONYMS: silly, foolish, inane, petty
ANTONYMS: serious, important, significant

6. muster
(məs' tər)

(v.) to bring together for service or battle; to gather or summon; to amount to, comprise, include; (n.) a list of military personnel; a gathering, accumulation

You will need to _____ **muster** _____ your courage to face the bully who has been tormenting you.

The sleepy new recruits assembled on the parade ground for the early morning **muster**.

SYNONYMS: (v.) mobilize, marshal; (n.) roster, inventory

ANTONYMS: (v.) disband, dismiss, disperse

7. nonentity
(năn en' tã tē)

(n.) a person or thing of no importance

We may not be movie stars, but we did not deserve to be treated as **nonentities** by the presumptuous and haughty headwaiter.

SYNONYM: nobody

ANTONYM: celebrity

8. obsess
(ăb ses')

(v.) to trouble, haunt, or fill the mind

If you allow fear of failure to **obsess** you, you will find it difficult or even impossible to achieve your goals in life.

SYNONYM: preoccupy

9. ornate
(ôr nât')

(adj.) elaborately decorated; showily splendid

If you ask me, an **ornate** gilded frame distracts the viewer's eye from a simple drawing.

SYNONYMS: fancy, flashy, flamboyant

ANTONYMS: plain, stark, austere

10. oust
(aüst)

(v.) to remove, drive out of a position or place

Military leaders **ousted** the duly elected president and took over the government.

SYNONYMS: expel, eject

ANTONYMS: admit, welcome

11. peruse
(pə rüz')

(v.) to read thoroughly and carefully

It is wise to have a lawyer **peruse** an agreement before you sign it.

SYNONYMS: study, pore over, scrutinize

12. porous
(pôr' əs)

(adj.) full of tiny holes; able to be penetrated by air or water

Some synthetic materials are as **porous** and strong as natural sponges.

SYNONYMS: leaky, permeable

ANTONYMS: airtight, impermeable

13. promontory
(präm' ən tôr ě)

(n.) a high point of land extending into water

We chose a high **promontory** overlooking the sea as the perfect spot for our picnic lunch.

SYNONYMS: cliff, outcrop, jetty

14. prone
(prōn)

(*adj.*) lying face down; inclined, likely

Unfortunately, I am **prone** to earaches and sinus infections.

SYNONYMS: prostrate, liable

ANTONYMS: standing upright, unlikely

15. qualm
(kwām)

(*n.*) a pang of conscience, uneasiness, misgiving, or doubt; a feeling of faintness or nausea

Don't you have serious **qualms** about voting for such a relatively unknown and inexperienced candidate?

SYNONYMS: regret, second thought, scruple

16. recourse
(rē' kōrs)

(*n.*) a person or thing turned to for help or advice; the act of seeking help or protection

If my letter of complaint fails to get results, I will still have **recourse** to a higher authority.

SYNONYMS: redress, remedy

17. residue
(rez' ə dü)

(*n.*) a remainder, that which remains when a part has been used up or removed

A **residue** of sticky taffy made the pan difficult to clean.

SYNONYMS: remnant, remains, leavings

18. solicitous
(sə lis' ət əs)

(*adj.*) showing concern or care; fearful or anxious about someone or something

Neighbors made **solicitous** inquiries about the state of the elderly couple's health.

SYNONYM: concerned

ANTONYMS: unconcerned, indifferent, apathetic

19. staid
(stād)

(*adj.*) serious and dignified; quiet or subdued in character or conduct

Many companies have a dress code which requires that all employees wear **staid** colors such as navy or gray.

SYNONYMS: sedate, sober, prim

ANTONYMS: gaudy, jaunty, unconventional

20. sustain
(sə stān')

(*v.*) to support, nourish, keep up; to suffer, undergo; to bear up under, withstand; to affirm the validity of

You may **sustain** a serious eye injury if you forget to wear your safety goggles when you work with chemicals or power tools.

SYNONYMS: foster, uphold