

Unit 2 Vocab

1. Accost: (v.) to approach and speak to first; to confront in a challenging or aggressive way

The nobleman was _____ by beggars on his way to the castle.

Synonyms: buttonhole, approach, confront

Antonyms: evade, avoid, shun

2. Animadversion: (n.) a comment indicating a strong criticism or disapproval

The inexperienced filmmaker was disheartened by the _____ of the film critic.

Synonyms: rebuke, reproof

Antonyms: praise, compliment

3. Avid: (adj) desirous of something to the point of greed; intensely eager

Most writers are also _____ readers who have loved books since childhood.

Synonyms: keen, enthusiastic, grasping

Antonyms: reluctant, indifferent, and unenthusiastic

4. Brackish: (adj) having a salty taste and unpleasant to drink

The shipwrecked passengers adrift on the lifeboat became ill after drinking _____ water.

Synonyms: briny, saline

Antonyms: fresh, clear, sweet

5. Celerity: (n.) swiftness, rapidity of motion or action

Although the heavy snowfall was not expected, the highway department responded with surprising _____.

Synonyms: Promptness, alacrity, speed

Antonyms: Slowness, sluggishness, dilatoriness

6. Devious: (adj.) straying or wandering from a straight or direct course; done or acting in a shifty or underhanded way

The interrogator used _____ methods to try to get the suspect to incriminate himself.

Synonyms: roundabout, indirect, tricky, sly, artful

Antonyms: direct, straightforward, open, aboveboard

7. Gambit: (n.) in chess, an opening move that involves risk or sacrifice of a minor piece in order to gain a later advantage; any opening move of this type.

Asking an interesting stranger about his or her job is a popular party _____.

Synonyms: ploy, stratagem, ruse, maneuver

8. Halcyon: (n.) a legendary bird identified with the kingfisher; (adj.) of or relating to the halcyon; calm, peaceful; happy, golden; prosperous, affluent.

The teacher read the legend of the _____, a mythic bird that nested in a calm sea.

Synonyms: tranquil, serene, placid, palmy

Antonyms: turbulent, chaotic, tumultuous

9. Histrionic: (adj.) pertaining to actors and their techniques; theatrical, artificial; melodramatic

Upon receiving his award, the young actor gave a _____ speech.

Synonyms: affected, stagy

Antonyms: low-keyed, muted, untheatrical, subdued

10. Incendiary: (adj.) deliberately setting or causing fires; designed to start fires; tending to stir up strife or rebellion.

The arsonist planted an _____ device in the basement of the store.

Synonyms: inflammatory, provocative,

Antonyms: soothing, quieting

11. Maelstrom: (n.) whirlpool of great size and violence; a situation resembling a whirlpool in violence and destruction.

Many innocent people caught in the _____ of the revolution lost their lives and property.

Synonyms: vortex, chaos, turbulence, tumult

12. Myopic: (adj.) nearsighted; lacking a broad, realistic view of a situation.

The _____ foreign policy of the last administration has led to serious problems with our allies.

Synonyms: shortsighted

Antonyms: farsighted

13. Overt: (adj.) open, not hidden, expressed or revealed in a way that is easily recognized.

In order for Congress to declare war, the President must demonstrate an _____ threat.

Synonyms: clear, obvious, manifest, patent

Antonyms: secret, clandestine, covert, concealed

14. Pejorative: (adj.) tending to make worse; expressing disapproval or disparagement, derogatory, deprecatory, belittling.

The lawyer was accused of making a _____ remark when referring to the defendant's background.

Antonyms: complimentary, ameliorative

15. Propriety: (n.) the state of being proper, appropriateness.

The social worker questioned the _____ of the police's request to see confidential records.

Synonyms: fitness, correctness, decorum

Antonyms: unseemliness, inappropriateness

16. Sacrilege: (n.) improper or disrespectful treatment of something held sacred.

The anthropologist was accused of committing a _____ when she disturbed an ancient burial ground.

Synonyms: desecration, profanation, defilement

17. Summarily: (adv.) without delay or formality; briefly, concisely.

As soon as there was evidence of criminal wrongdoing, the official was _____ ousted from his post.

Synonyms: promptly, peremptorily, abruptly.

18. Suppliant: (adj.) asking humbly and earnestly. (n.) one who makes a request humbly and earnestly, a petitioner, suitor.

He made a _____ address to the parole board.

Stranded in the deserted city of Moscow, Napoleon had to turn to Czar not as a conqueror but as a _____.

19. Talisman: (n.) an object that serves as a charm or is believed to confer magical powers, an amulet, fetish.

Most people do not believe that rabbit's feet and other _____ actually bring good luck.

20. Undulate: (v.) to move in waves or with a wavelike motion; to have a wavelike appearance or form

The baseball fans began to _____ as they cheered, so that they appeared to move in a wave.

Synonyms: ripple, fluctuate, rise and fall