Grade 10 Academic English
Vocabulary Words



A

**abruptly** (adv.): suddenly; almost rudely

**acolyte**: (n) assistant or junior helper

**acre** (n.): An area of land a little smaller than a football field.

**aghast**: (adj) completely amazed, horrified or shocked

**agnostic**: (n) someone who is undecided as to whether there is or is not a god.

**alliteration**: (n) the word for a series of words sharing the same starting sound.

**aloof** (adj.): distant; removed; not very friendly

**alpha:** (n) first letter of the Greek alphabet

**ambled**: (v) walked in a slow, lazy way. (usually only tall people can do this)

**ampersand**: (n) the “and” symbol, e.g. &

**anguish** (n.): a feeling of great physical or mental pain.

**Apartheid**: (n) word used to describe the situation or the time period in south Africa in which black Africans were not allowed to vote, hold public office or eat in the same restaurants as white Africans. Stopped in the 90s by the efforts of pop stars and African religious figures.

**antitheist**: (n) someone who opposes anyone believing in a god.

**apex**: (n) the point or top part, as of a pyramid or mountain

**appraise**: (v) to judge the worth of

**apprehensive** (adj.): anxious; fearful

**arouse**: (v) to excite, or to cause a reaction, for instance, suspicion or sexual interest

**artificial**: (adj) not real, not naturally occurring

**atheist**: (n) someone who believes there is no god.

**axles** (n.): bars connecting two opposite wheels

B

**babble**: (v) to talk without making any sense

**bank** (n.): the part of land that meets a body of water

**barley** (n.): a type of cereal grass the grain of which is often used for making malts and for animal feed.

**barren**: (adj) unable to produce crops (or, in the case of women, children)

**bastion** (n.) : a safely held military position, a stronghold or fortification

**bemused**: (adj) preoccupied; deep in thought

**Beowulf**: (n) one of the oldest surviving works of Old English literature, an alliterative poem about a monster-slaying hero

**blatant** (adj.): unsubtle, in-your-face; very obvious

**bleat**: (n) a cry usually associated with a goat, sheep, or calf.

**beta**: (n) second letter of the Greek alphabet

**bovine**: (adj) relating to cattle; cow-like

**bridled** (v.): to pull one's head back in anger or pride; especially when one feels one has been offended

**bristle**: (n/v) a stiff hair, or to stiffen, like hair on an angry dog’s neck

**brusquely** (adv.): quickly; bluntly; abruptly; almost rudely

**burdened**: (adj) weighed down

C

**calculating** (adj.): shrewd; scheming and planning

**canine**: (adj) relating to dogs; dog-like

**cesspool** (n.): a deep hole in the ground into which sewage from sinks, toilets, etc. is drained.

**champing** (v.): chewing noisily

**clamor**: (n/v) the loud, confused shouting of an angry, demanding group, or else to speak up angrily and noisily as a group.

**cocky** (adj.): confident, conceited, overbearing, and aggressive.

**commit**: (v) to do (or promise to do)

**compel** (v.): to force to do; to exert a strong, irresistible force upon

**complacently** (adv.): in a pleased, satisfied manner

**conceited**: (adj) full of a sense of self-importance

**contemplated** (v.) To think about something

**contemptuous**: (adj) apt to act as if other people are not worthy of any respect whatsoever

**corpulent** (adj.): very large in the body; obese

**correspondence**: (n) written communication between people

**cowering**: (v) To shrink and tremble from fear.

**craftily** (adv.): in a sly, cunning manner

**crestfallen** (adj.): disappointed, dispirited and depressed; dejected

**crouch**: (v) To bend low with arms and legs drawn close to the body.

**cure**: (v) to prepare and preserve food by means of dense smoke.

**current** (n.): the strong flow of water in a definite direction

D

**debris** (n.): remains or left over garbage, such as peanut shells, bits of exploded building or rotting leaves.

**decorous** (adj.) : exhibiting appropriate behavior or conduct

**deduce**: (v) to figure out by putting the facts together

**defensive**: (adj) characterized by being on guard against attack, be it verbal or physical.

**delta**: (n) fourth letter of the Greek alphabet

**denunciation**: (n) a rant, an accusatory tirade

**derision**: (n) the mocking of a person.

**derogatory** (adj): characterized by being belittling and insulting

**Diana:** (n) the Roman or Latin version of Artemis, the Greek goddess or the hunt.

**diminish**: (v) to grow smaller or fewer

**does** (n.): female rabbits or deer

**douse** (v): to drench with liquid.

**draconian**: (adj) relating to dragons; dragon-like

**drake:** (n) a male duck

**dregs**: (n) the leavings on the bottom of a wine bottle

**dusk** (n.): the intermediate, shadowy period of time that comes just before nightfall.

E

**ebbed**: (v) (as in the case of the tide) lessened

**ebullience**: (n) eager enjoyment or approval

**ego**: (n) pride, sense of self; self-awareness

**ejector**: (n) the mechanism of a gun that throws out the empty cartridge of a fired bullet

**elaborate** (adj.): complicated, or expressed in great detail

**elaborate:** (v)to explain in detail

**emphasis** (n.): force; expression; stress, as in which word is said with most energy

**enmity** (n) : deep seated hatred; the state of being an enemy

**epsilon:** (n) fifth letter of the Greek alphabet

**equine:** (adj) relating to horses; horse-like

**euchre**: (n) a card game

**euphemism**: (n) a softer, gentler way of saying something harsh, awkward or rude, as in “his grandmother passed away.”

**exaggerate**: (v) to inflate the details for dramatic effect, to not be completely accurate

**exhalation**: (n) a breathing out of air.

**expire**: (v) to breathe out, run out, or die.

F

**feint:** (v) in fencing, to pretend one is about to strike.

**feline:** (adj) relating to cats

**fervor** (n.): great intensity of emotion

**fetid**: (adj) rotten

**flatter**: (v) to compliment insincerely as a means of manipulating someone.

**flaunt**: (v) to display proudly

**flirt**: (v) to playfully demonstrate romantic interest.

**foreboding**: (n) dread, feeling that something bad is going to happen

**fraught**: (adj) full of, for example, danger

**fumble**: (v) to handle clumsily

**furtive**: (adj) characterized by being secret and sly, stealthy

G

**gamma:** (n) third letter of the Greek alphabet.

**gander:** (n) a male goose; a city in Newfoundland with an airport; slang for “to look at”.

**gauntlet**: (n) a heavy glove

**gawp**: (v) to stare at with mouth hanging open

**generalization**: (n) a statement which talks about a number of people or things as if they were the same, for the sake of convenience, to make a statement about all, though there may be exceptions. Not quite a stereotype.

**genre**: (n) a category of creative work characterized by a particular style, form, or content. For example, horror movies or romantic comedies.

**glower** (v.) to look or stare at angrily

**gingerly** (adv.): in a careful, cautious way

**Grimm:** (n) last name of the German brothers who went around collecting ancient European folktales.

**gust** (n.): a strong, sudden rush of air

H

**harness** (n.): the leather straps and metal pieces by which a horse or mule is fastened to a vehicle.

**hatchet face** (n): a lean, sharp face with wide cheekbones and a pointed chin so it resembles an overhead view of an axe-head

**heifer**: (n) young female cow which has not had a calf

**Hel**: (n) the name of the female Norse god who ruled the land of the dead and was half-corpse.

**heron** (n.): a wading bird (that is, a bird that is often found wading in the water, usually in a search for food) with a long neck, beak, and legs.

**hiatus:** (n.) a gap or interruption; a break or pause

**hovel**: (n) shack

**hover** (v.): to linger, often in midair; to stay suspended

**hutch** (n.): A type of cage for keeping rabbits.

I

**illumination**: (n) light

**impervious** (adj.): characterized by being incapable of being penetrated or affected.

**implication**: (n) something that is inferred or hinted

**improvise**: (v) to make do with whatever is at hand, to Macgyver

**inadequate**: (adj) characterized by not being good enough

**inarticulate**: (adj) characterized by not being able to make oneself properly understood with words

**incredulous**: (adj) characterized by being full of amazement and disbelief

**indignant**: (adj) characterized by being angered at something unjust or wrong

**indulgently**: (adv) kindly, with fondness

**ineffectual**: (adj) characterized by not producing an intended effect; being useless

**inscrutable**: (adj) characterized by being difficult or impossible to understand the mood or meaning of, as in an unreadable facial expression or a confusing poem

**insensitive**: (adj) unkind, without regard for someone’s feelings

**inspire**: (v) to breathe in, or to give good ideas to.

**intensity** (n.): how concentrated, strong or sharp something (for instance a ray of light) is
**intricate** (adj): complicated, full of elaborate elements.

**iota:** (n) ninth letter of the Greek alphabet; any tiny, insignificant detail or quantity of a thing.

**irrelevance**: (n) the quality of being off-topic; the lack of a relating to the matter at hand

J

**jack:** (n) proper name for a male donkey

**jackal**: (n) a wild pack-hunting dog from Africa

**jaded**: (adj) toughened, insensitive

**jeer** (v.): to abuse vocally; taunt or mock; to “chirp”

**jest**: (n/v) a joke or to joke and tease

**joist**: (n) the small timbers or metal beams ranged parallel from wall to wall in a structure to support a floor or ceiling.

**jostle**: (v) to bump roughly, as in knocking someone’s elbow

**jot**: (v/n) to write down; a tiny amount of something.

**juncture** (n.): Where two things come together.

**Jupiter:** (n) Roman version of Zeus, the promiscuous thunder god.

**Jurassic**: (adj) one of the prehistoric time periods in which dinosaurs are believed to have existed

**jurisprudence**: (n) the science or practice of law

K

**kaleidoscope**: (n) toy for looking through and transforming one’s view with mirrors and coloured beads

**keel**: (n) the structure under a sea-going vessel that helps it sail straight.

**keen:** (adj) sharp; or else paying close attention.

**keg** (n): a barrel

**kin**: (n) blood relative

**kindle**: (v) to start a fire

**kinesthetic**: (adj) dealing with the movement of the human body and its interactions with terrain and physical objects

**kinetic**: (adj) term used to discuss motion, and the energy required to achieve motion

**kiosk** (n.) a small “building within a building,” often used as a desk for customer service, for example in a shopping mall.

**knead:** (v) to squeeze and flatten, as in the case of bread dough

**knoll** (n): a small rounded hill

L

**laboring** (adj.): working, particularly work that involves physical exertion.

**lame** (adj): To be crippled; especially to have an injured leg or foot.

**lapsed**: (v) ran out (in the case of a licence or warranty) or gave in to irresponsibility (in the case of an alcoholic drinking)

**lathered**: (v) created foam or bubbles, for instance with soap or shampoo

**lean** (adj.): thin

**leaves** (n.): pages in books, pieces of a tabletop or things on tree branches

**leonine:** (adj) relating to lions; lion-like

**leviathan** (n.): something very large; giant sea creature in the Bible

**lice**: (n) a type of parasite.

**lightweight** (n.): a boxer who weighs between 127 - 135 pounds

**liniment** (n.): a medicated liquid rubbed on the skin to ease sore muscles and sprains

**lobotomy**: (n) operation which disconnects the front part of the brain

**Loki**: (n) the name of the manipulative associate of the Norse gods who caused endless trouble.

**lousy**: (adj) characterized by being infested with lice; of poor quality.

**ludicrous** (adj.): characterized by being laughably and obviously absurd; foolish or ridiculous

M

**malevolent** (adj.) characterized by having an ill will or wishing harm to others; malicious

**malformed**: (adj) not shaped well

**meager** (adj.): of poor quality or small amount

**meandered**: (v) wandered

**melee**: (adj/n) fighting with close-range weapons or bare hands

**mesmerize** (v): to entrance or put under a spell.

**metaphor:** (n) a symbol; generally a concrete object used to represent an abstract concept**.**

**mimicking** (v.): imitating

**mollified** (adj.): soothed; pacified

**monotonous** (adj.): flat, with no expression or change in tone of any kind. The worst kind of singing

**moral**: (n/adj) a message saying what is thought to be right, a person who is judged to be good

**morosely** (adv.): in a sad, gloomy manner

**mottled** (adj.): having a blotchy pattern, like marble or camouflage pants, or the shadows created by sun through tree branches

**mules** (n): a load-bearing animal; also a type of shoe or slipper than does not cover the heel.

**mutinous**: (adj) characterized by a rebellion against authority; apt to overthrow authority

**myriad**: (n) an un-countably large number

N

**nomadic**: (adj) apt to move from place to place, rather than living in the same locale for extended periods

**nominate** (v.): to name, as in the case of suggesting who will fill a new position of responsibility

**nonchalantly**: (adv) without seeming to worry, showing no concern

**noose**: (n) a rope looped in such as way as to allow a person to be executed by hanging from the neck

**nostalgia** (n.): the state of enjoying past memories

**notary stamp:** (n) an official stamp on a contract, intended to ensure there is no fraud involved.

**numerous**: (adj) many, large in number

**nurture** (v.): to care for the needs of

O

**obliterate**: (v) to do away with completely, without leaving a trace

**obstetrics**: (n) dealing with childbirth

**obtuse**: (adj) dull, unintelligent, dim-witted

**ochre**: (n) red or yellow iron ore used as a pigment

**Odin:** (n) the name of the father of the Norse gods who sacrificed an eye for wisdom and had two ravens named Thought and Memory**.**

**offal**: (n) intestines and internal organs, once they are no longer in the abdominal cavity

**omega**: (n) final, twenty-fourth letter of the Greek alphabet.

**ominously** (adv): in a threatening way

**onomatopoiea:** (n) a word which sounds like a real-world noise, such as bam, snap, slap or thud.

**oppressive**: (adj) characterized by weighing heavily on the senses or mood, like a dark grey storm cloud overhead

**orchard** (n): an area where many fruit or nut trees are planted.

**ova:** (n) Latin word for more than one egg

**ovum:** (n) Latin word for an egg

**ox: (n)** a bull that has had its sex organs removed

**oxygen**: (n) common gas which is often used in welding.

P

**patriot**: (n) a person who is proud of his or her country and willing to defend it and make sacrifices for it

**peer** (v.): To look closely or squint at something to see it more clearly.

**penultimate**: (adj) second-last

**periscope** (n.): a device that, through a series of mirrors and prisms, allows one to view something not directly in the line of sight.

**Perpetuate** (v): to cause to continue

**persona**: (n) created identity one may use

**persuasive** (adj.): convincing

**pestilence**: (n) infestation of insects and/or germs

**pi**: (n) sixteen letter of the Greek alphabet; name of a number useful in calculations relating to circles.

**pier** (n): a platform built out from the shore into the water and supported by piles; provides access to ships and boats

**piety**: (n) quality of being dutifully pure and obediently religious

**platinum**: (n) precious metal more valuable than gold

**plausible**: (adj) believable, sensible sounding

**porcine**: (adj) relating to pigs; pig-like

**precede** (v.): go before or ahead of

**preposterous**: (adj) apt to invite ridicule; nonsensical and impossible to take seriously

**prestige**: (n) fame and recognition

**pristine**: (adj) unspoiled, undamaged

**prodigal**: (n) runaway child like a man’s son in the bible who ran away,

**prohibited**: (adj) disallowed

**prolific**: (adj) quality of having produced a great number of things

**promiscuous**: (adj) the quality of having numerous casual sex partners.

**pugnacious** (adj.): eager and ready to fight

Q

**quagmire:** (n) a mucky, disgusting swamp

**quaint:** (adj) attractively old-fashioned

**qualm:** (n) an uneasy feeling involving feeling uncomfortable with, for example, a decision being made.

**quandary:** (n) a dilemma, in the state of having to make a difficult decision.

**quarry:** (n) a pit from which sand and gravel can be dug; also, a prey one is hunting.

**quavered** (v): trembled, or spoke in a trembling voice

**quay (say: key)**: a platform built out from the shore into water;

**queer:** (adj) the quality of seeming unusual; a term used by the LGBTQ community which appears in the abbreviation.

**query**: (n/v) a question or to ask

**question**: (v) in legal terms, to interview in order to obtain information.

**quizzical**: (adj) describes the expression of someone who is curious to know something

R

**rebuke** (v.): to criticize sharply; to “tell off” for something

**receptive**: (adj) able and willing to listen to and accept information, new ideas, etc.

**recrimination** (n.) : The act of accusing in return; responding to an attempt to incriminate

**rectangular** (adj.): a square-cornered shape that is longer than it is wide.

**recumbent** (adj.): lying down still; without movement

**reeds** (n.): tall grass with hollow stems, often found in or near water.

**relentless**: (adj) characterized by not giving up or relenting, never-ceasing

**reprehensible**: (adj) horrible, improper and deserving of criticism. Used to describe very bad behaviour which makes one seem like a very bad person

**respiration**: (n) breathing

**restoration**: (n) the putting back or making the same as before of something

**rheumatism**: a painful condition involving the joints and muscles

**rogue:** (n) a un trustworthy person who may steal things.

**rouge:** (n) makeup used to colour cheeks. From the French word for red.

**rummy** (n.): a card game

S

**sanctioned**: (adj) officially supported by authority figure or expert, (v) to have done so

**saunter** (v.): to walk at a leisurely pace; stroll

**sceptical**: (adj) unlikely to believe someone or something

**scornful**: (adj) characterized by being filled with a feeling of contempt for someone or something; the belief that a person or thing is worthless.

**scourge** (n.): anything that inflicts discomfort or suffering; including plagues of insects, rodents or disease, or a whip

**scowled** (v.): an angry look achieved by frowning and scrunching the eyebrows together.

**serpentine:** (adj) relating to snakes; snake-like

**shards**: (n) broken pieces of a once-whole thing

**shell**: (n) either the outer covering of an egg, mollusk or turtle, or else an unfired bullet still attached to the casing with the propellant untriggered

**simultaneously**: (adv) at the same time

**sinewy:** (adj.) lean and muscular; stringy and tough.

**skeptical** (adj.): To be likely to doubt or question something.

**slum**: (n) a run-down, dirty and poorly-kept building or part of town

**speculation**: (n) the attempt to figure out a matter, while trying to arrive at difficult-to-reach answers, often involving educated guessing

**squawk**: (v/n) to make a harsh, abrupt noise, a harsh, abrupt noise, as in the vocal sound of a seagull

**squint** (v.): To look or peer with the eyes partly closed or narrowed.

**squirmed** (v.): twisted and turned; wriggled

**stake** (n.): an amount of money being saved for a specific purpose

**stimulant**: (n) a substance which increases moods, energy or performance

**stocky** (adj.): heavily, thickly and solidly built

**subsequent**: (adj) coming next

**subsided**: became less excited; calmed down or stopped

**sulkily** (adv.): in an annoyed, spiteful manner.

**sullenly** (adv.): in a depressed, angry, gloomy way

**summon**: (v) to call to come near

**supplement**: (n) additional material, also (v) to provide such material

T

**taboo:** (adj/n) understood to be unmentionable, or forbidden within a culture.

**tacit:** (adj) not spoken but understood, hinted at by actions or statements. Often used before the word “approval” or “agreement” when no approval or agreement is clearly communicated

**talon:** (n) A finger-like claw, used to describe the toes of eagles and dragons

**tart** (n.) insulting word for a woman of loose morals; one who is prone to be sexually unfaithful; also a dessert item.

**Thor:** (n) the name of the angry Norse god who threw lightning and his mighty hammer Mjolnir.

**thwart**: (n) to stop, keep from doing what was intended to be done

**tirade**: (n) a rant; an accusatory, dismissive speech **tittle:** (n) the dot over the letter “i.”

**toting**: (v) carrying

**tramp** (n.): a person who travels about on foot, usually doing odd jobs for a living; to travel on foot; also an insulting word for a promiscuous woman.

**tumult** (n.) : Commotion of a great crowd; disorder

U

**ulterior** (adj.): in the case of motives, motives which are not revealed

**undiminished**: (adj) not reduced nor made any fewer or less

**union:** (n) in employment terms, a group established to protect worker rights.

**unsullied** (adj): not soiled or made dirty; clean

**urn** (n): a vase used to contain the ashes of a dead person.

**ursine** (adj): relating to bears; bear-like

**usurp** (v): to wrongly take away power from someone who rightfully holds it

**utility**: (n) usefulness

**utopia** (n): an imaginary world or society, run perfectly so everything is awesome

**uvula** (n.): the fleshy tag which hangs down at the back of the throat.

V

**vacillate** (v.): to waver; to go back and forth indecisively between choices

**vagrant** (n.): homeless person

**valour** (n.): courage

**vanquish** (v.): to conquer or defeat

**veneer** (n.): a thin decorative coating, as in the case of real wood decorating a thicker piece of plastic or plywood.

**vials** (n.): small bottles

**vicarious**: (adj) word used to describe something being experienced through hearing about it from someone else

**viciously** (adv.): cruelly; in a mean way

**vicissitudes**: (n) changes in circumstances or luck **vitality**: (n) life, energy

**voluminous** (adj): full, heavy, bulky, having a large capacity

**vulpine:** (adj) relating to foxes; fox-like

W

**waive:** (v) to agree to give up a right, for example, to sue in the case of accident.

**waiver:** (n) a written agreement to give up a right, for example, to sue in the case of accident.

**wan**: (adj) pale and unhealthy looking

**wearily**: (adv) in a tired, worn-out way

**whimsical**: (adj) fanciful, spontaneous, subject to erratic behavior or unpredictable change

**wilful** (adj): knowingly and on purpose.

**willow** (n.): a type of tree with narrow leaves and strong, flexible twigs and branches.

**winnow:** (v) to separate grain from chaff

**wisp** (n): a tiny, slight strand or piece of something, such as hair or grass

**writ: (n)** a legal document issued by a court or judicial officer

**writhed** (v.): twisted and turned, perhaps in agony or delight.

**wry**: (adj) clever and often ironically or grimly humorous

X

**Xanadu:** (n)a mythical place famously mentioned in"Kubla Khan," an 1816 poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

**xenon** (n.): one of the noble gasses

**xenophobia**: (n) hatred or fear of strangers, foreigners or anything which is strange of foreign

**xylophone**: (n) musical instrument composed of wooden bars one strikes with mallets (from the Greek word for “wood”)

Y

**yahoo**: (n) in *Gulliver’s Travels*, a race of filthy, uncivilized wild men, an insulting term for a wild, loud, hick person

**yak**: (n) a large type of ox

**yammer (v**.): to talk pointlessly

**yarmulke**: (n) small black skullcap worn by Jewish men while worshipping

**yawn**: (v) to uncontrollably breathe in slowly.

**yield** (v): to produce or to give way to

**yore** (n): in the past

**yowling**: (v) making a noise like an enraged cat

**yule** (n): Christmas; there are times, tides and logs of this.

Z

**zeal** (n.): enthusiasm, passion

**zenith** (n.): the very top of an arc, for instance with a thrown object, or the point at noon when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky.

**zephyr**: (n) a small, gentle breeze

**zeppelin** (n.): a lighter-than-air flying ship.

**zest:** (n) joy of life.

**zeta:** (n) sixth letter of the Greek alphabet.

**Zeus** (n.): the name of the father of the Greek gods who lived on Mount Olympus and hurled lightning and seduced human women.

**zodiac:** (n) the system of twelve astrological signs, including Scorpio, Capricorn and Sagittarius

**zoology**: (n) the study of animals