

Power Synonyms

Book Two

for
TOEFL, IELTS, ACT, SAT, GRE

by
Bruce Stirling

author of the bestselling TOEFL book

[Speaking and Writing Strategies
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Power Synonyms – Book One

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How to Use This Book

Hi! My name is Bruce Stirling. Welcome to *Power Synonyms, Book Two*. This is how it works. First, I look at your active English vocabulary (AEV). It contains English words you know. Because you know them, you use them correctly, for example, a word like MANY. Now here is the problem: On test day, if you use MANY when speaking or writing, will it increase your score? No. Why not? Because MANY does not demonstrate academic language use, the very thing the raters are looking for. But wait. What if you substitute MANY with the power synonym MYRIAD? Compare the two sentences below. Which demonstrates academic word choice when writing and/or speaking? Which will score higher on test day?

1. The world has many problems.

2. The world has myriad problems.

That's right. Sentence two—and all you did was change MANY to the power synonym MYRIAD! Easy, right? That is how synonym substitution works. I target a word in your active English vocabulary (AEV) and substitute it with a power synonym (PS). On test day, you might see myriad in a reading passage or hear it in a lecture. If you do, you will know that it means many. This will help you understand readings and lectures, and help you answer questions more quickly and easily for maximum scoring! That is synonym substitution. That is *Power Synonyms!*

#1: (AEV)* believable/possible (PS)* plausible

note: (AEV)* = Active English Vocabulary (PS)* = Power Synonym

GRAMMAR

adjective → Will man one day live on Mars? I don't know, but it definitely seems **plausible**.

USAGE

AEV → The late student gave her teacher a **believable** reason.

PS → The late student gave her teacher a **plausible** excuse.

SAMPLES

1. Before Trump was elected president, myriad believed that it was not **plausible**, that he was too much of a political tyro to win.

2. Does bigfoot exist? Scientists refuse to say; however, I think the most **plausible** conclusion we can construe is that bigfoot is a new type of undiscovered ape endemic to west coast forests.

3. Pierre got a perfect GRE score? I didn't think it was **plausible**.

4. Steve's thesis was supported by a plethora of **plausible** evidence most of which was fraught with specious logic.

5. Why was Kennedy assassinated? After all these years, a **plausible** explanation has yet to be found.

#2: (AEV) with energy/eagerness (PS) alacrity

GRAMMAR

noun → Dave studies with **alacrity**. No wonder he's an A student.

USAGE

AEV → Joe is lazy whereas Al is always full of **eagerness**.

PS → Joe is lazy whereas Al is always full of **alacrity**.

SAMPLES

1. The **alacrity** with which European nations went to war in 1914 is still hard to contemplate.
2. At work, Jeff accepts the most grueling jobs with **alacrity**.
3. The professor told her class that "There was a paucity of **alacrity** in their attitude towards the homework."
4. Finishing the job on time was not plausible even with every team member demonstrating such **alacrity** to get it done. For all intents and purposes, they just ran out of time.
5. Students begin each semester with **alacrity**, which tends to abate after the first big assignment.

#3: (AEV) honest/sincere (PS) candid

GRAMMAR

adjective → Please be **candid** when you assess my essay.

USAGE

AEV → The politician delivered an **honest** speech.

PS → The politician delivered a **candid** speech.

SAMPLES

1. Ann's **candid** assessment of the company's performance was succinct. The company, she said, was fraught with problems that must be resolved or else the company would go bankrupt.
2. The professor was **candid** about Mike's performance: if Mike had demonstrated more alacrity, his grade would have been higher.
3. Today in court, the witness was **candid** whereas yesterday he was quite ambiguous.
4. The adverbial form of **candid** is candidly, as in "Actresses are speaking **candidly** about sexual harassment in Hollywood."
5. Let me be **candid**: I did not vote for Trump.

#4: (AEV) enjoyable/delicious (PS) delectable

GRAMMAR

adjective → My wife's peach cake is **delectable**.

USAGE

AEV → That hamburger was **delicious**.

PS → That hamburger was **delectable**.

SAMPLES

1. There is nothing better than a **delectable** cup of coffee first thing in the morning before work.
2. That cake was not only meticulously decorated but also quite **delectable**, albeit full of butter and cream.
3. My English class was **delectable** whereas my history class was so prosaic.
4. Watching the sun set over the ocean was **delectable**. The colors in the sky were astounding.
5. We had such a **delectable** time at the theater last night that we are apt to go to again very soon.

#5: (AEV) blend/fuse/mix (PS) conflate

GRAMMAR

verb → Do video games **conflate** fantasy with reality?

USAGE

AEV → Many **blend** Turks and Arabs. This is wrong. Turks and Arabs are distinct cultures.

PS → Many **conflate** Turks and Arabs. This is wrong. Turks and Arabs are distinct cultures.

SAMPLES

1. The problem with Ted's essay is that he **conflates** fact with fantasy and ends up with an argument that is quite specious.
2. Do not **conflate** race and class. Race categorizes humans into groups based on shared physical traits whereas class is a system of ordering people based on social and economic status.
3. Many **conflate** stationery with stationary. The former is paper while the latter means not moving, as in a stationary exercise bike.
4. Peter was dumbfounded when the mayor **conflated** the issue of higher taxes and higher crime.
5. *Star Wars* conflates two movie genres: the cowboy movie and the space movie. The result is a cowboy movie in space.

#6: (AEV) not sure/mixed feelings (PS) ambivalent

GRAMMAR

adjective → Jack is **ambivalent** about going to college.

USAGE

AEV → Cindy thought the meal was delectable whereas Sarah had **mixed feelings**.

PS → Cindy thought the meal was delectable whereas Sarah was **ambivalent**.

SAMPLES

1. Marty wants to buy a new car, but his wife is **ambivalent**. She knows they need a new car but also knows they can't afford it.
2. Bryan is usually full of alacrity at work, but today he seemed so **ambivalent** about everything.
3. The professor gave Sue an A+ on her essay, yet Sue was **ambivalent**. She was quite candid when she said that grades don't mean anything to her.
4. The noun form of ambivalent is ambivalence, as in "Mary's **ambivalence** to Joe's marriage proposal was clear."
5. In America, **ambivalence** to politics has resulted in low voter turnout, especially among Democrats: hence, people like Trump get elected.

#7: (AEV) praise highly (PS) laud

GRAMMAR

verb → Bart's new book was **lauded** by the New York Times.

USAGE

AEV → The audience **praised highly** the band with a standing ovation.

PS → The audience **lauded** the band with a standing ovation.

SAMPLES

1. Sherlock Holmes is always ambivalent when the police and the press **laud** his genius for solving crimes.
2. The new teacher is cognizant of the fact that she should **laud** her students' achievements when she talks to their parents.
3. Tracy was ebullient when her boss **lauded** her ability to bring the project in under budget.
4. When Titanic was launched, it was **lauded** as a ship that would never sink.
5. Tim expected the committee **to laud** his dissertation, yet he was dumbfounded when he failed to win their approbation.

#8: (AEV) apt to argue/start an argument (PS)
contentious

GRAMMAR

adjective → Don't be fooled. Jean's friendly smile belies her **contentious** nature.

USAGE

AEV → Jose, the star player on the team, is always challenging the referee. He is so apt **to argue**.

PS → Jose, the star player on the team, is always challenging the referee. He is so **contentious**.

SAMPLES

1. Phil loves to discuss **contentious** issues in class whereas Tina is ambivalent is about everything but her phone.
2. Many believe that Americans are **contentious**. Is that true? Yes. We Americans are very candid and apt to argue.
3. While many lauded the president's new economic plan, Hank rejected it and was, for all intents and purposes, responsible for such **contentious** debate in class.
4. My brother has always been **contentious**, albeit in a friendly way.
5. A **contentious** person is not apt to be malleable. He or she will be intransigent and attempt to gainsay everything you say.

#9: (AEV) waste foolishly (PS) squander

GRAMMAR

verb → Bob **squanders** his money at the casino every week.

USAGE

AEV → Eva **wasted foolishly** her talent on drugs and alcohol.

PS → Eva **squandered** her talent on drugs and alcohol.

SAMPLES

1. Some think that you **squander** your time playing video games whereas others think playing video games is innocuous.
2. George dropped out of chemistry class inasmuch as he was **squandering** his time and money on a subject he did not like.
3. Jack is impecunious because he **squandered** all his money on the stock market.
4. Let me be candid: don't **squander** your chance at happiness by making poor decisions.
5. Napoleon **squandered** his chance at beating Wellington at Waterloo when he, Napoleon, paused in the middle of the battle to let the rain-soaked ground dry out. This pause gave Wellington the chance to regroup and ultimately defeat Napoleon.

#10: (AEV) sad/depressed (PS) crestfallen

GRAMMAR

adjective → Dave is **crestfallen** because he failed the test.

USAGE

AEV → When Brexit passed, many Brits were **depressed**.

PS → When Brexit passed, many Brits were **crestfallen**.

SAMPLES

1. Marge is **crestfallen** inasmuch as her husband squandered all their savings on a new boat.
2. Ray arrived full of alacrity for the interview but left **crestfallen** after the interviewer said he was not right for the job.
3. Lou is **crestfallen** because he conflated Lucy's help for love. She soon set him straight.
4. The losing team remained **crestfallen** even though they were lauded by the crowd for their effort.
5. Paul said he is not **crestfallen**. He is just contemplating the professor's candid remarks on his essay.

Quiz #1

Task: Fill in the blanks with a Power Synonym. Conjugate as needed.

1. plausible 2. alacrity 3. candid 4. delectable
5. conflate 6. ambivalent 7. laud 8. contentious
9. squander 10. crestfallen

1. Do not _____ TOEFL and the GRE. They are quite different.
2. Last night's meal was great. The dessert was especially _____ .
3. Somebody should talk to Ricardo. He is looking _____ .
4. Many believe that the universe started with a "big bang." Yes, it's _____ , but I am not convinced.
5. The doctor was quite _____ when he told Christina that she needed to lose weight.
6. The invention of the polio vaccine was _____ all over the world.
7. Beth did not _____ a lot of money at the mall. On the contrary, everything she bought was on sale or half price.
8. The right to own a gun is one of the most _____ issues in America.
9. When the first iPhone appeared on the market, the public greeted the news with great _____ .
10. Jane is _____ about cars. To her, they are just a means of transportation.

Answer Key – Quiz #1

1. Do not **conflate** TOEFL and the GRE. They are quite different.
2. Last night's meal was great. The dessert was especially **delectable**.
3. Somebody should talk to Ricardo. He is looking **crestfallen**.
4. Many believe that the universe started with a "big bang." Yes, it's **plausible**, but I am not convinced.
5. The doctor was quite **candid** when he told Christina that she needed to lose weight.
6. The invention of the polio vaccine was **lauded** all over the world.
7. Beth did not **squander** a lot of money at the mall. On the contrary, everything she bought was on sale or half price.
8. The right to own a gun is one of the most **contentious** issues in America.
9. When the first iPhone appeared on the market, the public greeted the chance to buy one with great **alacrity**.
10. Jane is **ambivalent** about cars. To her, they are just a means of transportation.

#11: (AEV) short and precise (PS) brevity

GRAMMAR

noun → Tim is a great writer. He writes with such **brevity**.

USAGE

AEV → Summary writing is an exercise in **short and precise** writing.

PS → Summary writing is an exercise in **brevity**.

SAMPLES

1. The president's last speech lacked **brevity**. It was convoluted, fraught with ambiguous promises, and so prosaic.
2. The surgeon was lauded for the **brevity** of the operation and the speed at which the patient recovered.
3. The TOEFL speaking section tests your ability to speak with **brevity**.
4. "**Brevity** is the soul of wit." This famous line by Shakespeare means that the best humor, the funniest jokes, are short and precise.
5. Succinct is analogous to **brevity**, as in "Ryan's business plan was succinct. His boss lauded him for his **brevity**."

#12: (AEV) very persuasive (PS) cogent

GRAMMAR

adjective → Tim's presentation was **cogent** from start to finish.

USAGE

AEV → Al's essay is not **very persuasive**. He needs to rewrite it.

PS → Al's essay is not **cogent**. He needs to rewrite it.

SAMPLES

1. Betty's presentation, albeit long, was quite **cogent**.
2. The Gettysburg Address, a speech by Abraham Lincoln, is only 272 words. Yet despite its brevity, Lincoln's **cogent** message makes this speech the greatest in American history.
3. To make a **cogent** argument, you need to be meticulous with your evidence in order to avoid specious claims.
4. Nick wants me to peruse his speech and suggest how he can make it more **cogent**.
5. Sue Ann's **cogent** exegesis of the John Keats poem *Ode to a Nightingale* won her professor's approbation.

#13: (AEV) clear/easy to understand (PS) lucid

GRAMMAR

adjective → A good teacher should be **lucid**.

USAGE

AEV → Pam's plan is too convoluted whereas Hank's plan is **easy to understand**.

PS → Pam's plan is too convoluted whereas Hank's plan is **lucid**.

SAMPLES

1. The two disparate ideas converged in a way that was unexpectedly **lucid**.
2. The doctor's diagnosis was both candid and **lucid**.
3. Brad is quite **lucid**, albeit extremely contentious.
4. Can you drink a lot of alcohol and still be **lucid**? It is plausible, I suppose. It depends on the individual. Just don't drive.
5. Josh astounded the class. Usually, he is ambivalent when presenting, but for his final project, he was so **lucid** and cogent. Everyone lauded his effort.

#14: (AEV) deep in meaning (PS) profound

GRAMMAR

adjective → Religion has had a **profound** effect on her life.

USAGE

AEV → The argument that we evolved from apes is a claim **deep in meaning**, and one that changed the world.

PS → The argument that we evolved from apes is a **profound** claim, and one that changed the world.

SAMPLES

1. The fact that Manhattan might be under water in ten years due to global warming is a **profound**, and frightening, thought.
2. Children will often surprise you with **profound** questions, such as "Why is the sky blue?"
3. Reading a Shakespearean play can be quite grueling; however, you should endeavor inasmuch as they contain myriad **profound** ideas about life and death.
4. Nathan's idea might sound **profound** and cogent, even lucid, but if you examine the evidence closely, you will soon realize that it is specious and is little more than gainsaying.
5. A feeling of **profound** sadness swept the land when news of the Queen's death was announced.

#15: (AEV) tiring/exhausted (PS) enervating/ed

GRAMMAR

adjective → Studying for TOEFL is so **enervating**.

adjective → I feel so **enervated** after I study for TOEFL.

USAGE

AEV → Learning a new language can be **tiring**.

PS → Learning a new language can be **enervating**.

AEV → The grueling exam left everyone **exhausted**.

PS → The grueling exam left everyone **enervated**.

SAMPLES

1. Working all day has left Beth **enervated**. All she wants to do is go home and sleep.

2. Frank eschews opera because for him, it is so **enervating**. He prefers a good Hollywood action movie instead.

3. The professor **enervated** her students by talking all class about her new hobby: stamp collecting.

4. One reason why reading books has become less popular is that reading is an **enervating** process whereas jumping around from one web page to another is facile and fun.

5. The verb form of **enervated** is enervate, as in "Does studying power synonyms **enervate** you?"

#16: (AEV) increase/improve (PS) enhance

GRAMMAR

verb → Spices **enhance** the flavor of food.

USAGE

AEV → Fertilizer **increases** crop yields.

PS → Fertilizer **enhances** crop yields.

SAMPLES

1. How can you **enhance** your essay and get a higher score? One way is be meticulous when you proof read. By doing so, you will eliminate myriad mistakes.
2. Bob is quite ebullient inasmuch as he got a raise at work. The extra money will really **enhance** his monthly salary.
3. Mary won her boss's approbation when she suggested that the company should **enhance** the food in the cafeteria.
4. Before an interview, you should think about how you look and how you can **enhance** your appearance to make a good first impression.
5. Josh bought a new modem, but it did not **enhance** the speed of his internet. In fact, it only exacerbated it.

#17: (AEV) strongly disapprove of (PS) censure

GRAMMAR

verb → Congress **censured** the president's immigration bill.

USAGE

AEV → Parents should **strongly disapprove of** a child's bad behavior.

PS → Parents should **censure** a child's bad behavior.

SAMPLES

1. Be careful not to conflate **censure** and censor. **Censure** means to disapprove of greatly whereas censor means to block from being seen or read, etc., as in censorship.
2. The teacher **censured** Allen for always texting in class.
3. At work, Phil always took long lunch breaks, but he was never **censured** for it. After all, he was the boss.
4. If you **censure** yourself, you are cognizant of the fact that you might have done something wrong.
5. **Censure** can also be used as a noun, as in "Trump's election was greeted with universal **censure**."

#18: (AEV) extremely strict (PS) martinet

GRAMMAR

noun → Al hates English because his professor is a **martinet**.

USAGE

AEV → Ann's father is **extremely strict** whereas her mother is easy going.

PS → Ann's father is **a martinet** whereas her mother is easy going.

SAMPLES

1. Is Sherlock Holmes a **martinet**? Definitely. That is why he is the greatest detective in the world.
2. Don't be fooled. Jon's shy smile belies the **martinet** inside.
3. Why are Apple products so great? Simple. Steve Jobs was a **martinet**. He demanded the best from his employees, and he got it.
4. **Martinets** are not malleable. They are apt to be intransigent and contentious.
5. Even though Napoleon was a **martinet**, the people of France lauded his fame and his name.

#19: (AEV) inspire (PS) kindle (an interest in)

GRAMMAR

verb → A good teacher should **kindle** a love of learning in his or her students.

USAGE

AEV → Shakespeare **inspired** Sally to write plays.

PS → Shakespeare **kindled** Sally's **interest in** writing plays.

SAMPLES

1. Sometimes it is hard to get kids **to kindle an interest** in school. For many of them, school is prosaic and grueling.
2. From Ray's ambiguous reply, I could construe that going to college **kindled no interest** in him.
3. Amazon's eBook reader is called Kindle. From that name, we can construe that Kindle is designed to **kindle an interest** in reading books online.
4. **Kindle** also means to start a fire, as in "Jan used dry grass to **kindle** the fire."
5. How do you **kindle** hope in someone who has lost everything?

#20: (AEV) do really well (PS) flourish

GRAMMAR

verb → A plant will **flourish** if you give it lots of water and light.

USAGE

AEV → Mark, albeit a tyro, is **doing very well** at his new job.

PS → Mark, albeit a tyro, is **flourishing** at his new job.

SAMPLES

1. Some foreign students **flourish** when they study in the United States whereas others have a hard time fitting in.
2. Jason is **flourishing** in class because his teacher always kindles a positive learning environment.
3. If a teacher is a martinet, students will not **flourish**. Instead, many will become crestfallen and will study without much alacrity.
4. Many anachronisms **flourish** even to this day, for example LP records. Many believe that their sound quality is superior to digital recordings.
5. Just because Wall Street is **flourishing** does not mean that the average American is **flourishing**, quite the contrary.

Quiz #2

Task: Fill in the blanks. Conjugate as needed.

1. brevity 2. cogent 3. lucid 4. profound 5. enervated/ing
6. enhance 7. censure 8. martinet 9. kindle 10. flourish

1. Will taking a lot of vitamin C _____ your immune system? It is plausible.

2. Howard is not only mercurial, but he is also a _____ ; hence, some think he should be _____. Not I. I believe in freedom of speech for all.

3. Our teacher believes that each of us is the center of the universe. That is such a _____ thought.

4. Polar bears are no longer _____ at the North Pole inasmuch as global warming is rapidly melting the ice upon which they hunt and survive.

5. Steve writes with such _____ whereas Marcus's writing is fraught with errors and not very _____ .

6. Al's argument for a return to the gold system was quite _____ however, returning to that system would be anachronistic.

7. Beth's love of French cooking has _____ an interested her one day taking cooking lessons in Paris.

8. For Melanie, flying is no fun. She thinks it's noisy, expensive, and _____ .

Answer Key – Quiz #2

1. Will taking a lot of vitamin C **enhance** your immune system?
It is plausible.
2. Howard is not only mercurial, but he is also a **martinet**;
hence, some think he should be **censured**. Not I. I believe in
freedom of speech for all.
3. Our teacher believes that each of us is the center of the
universe. That is such a **profound** thought.
4. Polar bears are no longer **flourishing** at the North Pole
inasmuch as global warming is rapidly melting the ice upon which
they hunt and survive.
5. Steve writes with such **brevity** whereas Marcus's writing is
fraught with errors and not very **lucid**.
6. Paul's argument for a return to the gold system was quite
cogent; however, returning to the gold system would be
anachronistic, to say the least.
7. Beth's love of French cooking has **kindled** an interested her
one day taking cooking lessons in Paris.
8. For Melanie, flying is no fun. She thinks it's noisy, expensive,
and **enervating**.

#21: (AEV) average/adequate (PS) mediocre

GRAMMAR

verb → Brad is a **mediocre** student. He always gets C's.

USAGE

AEV → That new restaurant got good reviews, but I thought the food was **average**.

PS → That new restaurant got good reviews, but I thought the food was **mediocre**.

SAMPLES

1. How does the company expect to make a profit if it keeps producing **mediocre** products?
2. One way to enhance a **mediocre** meal is to add salt.
3. Unhappy with her **mediocre** grades, Debbie endeavored to be the top student in her class.
4. Do video games make **mediocre** students? That is a good question, and also quite contentious.
5. The new star player promised a championship, yet so far his performance has been **mediocre**.

#22: (AEV) cautious/watchful (PS) wary

GRAMMAR

adjective → Zebras are **wary** of lions.

USAGE

AEV → You should be **cautious** of emails with links requesting that you change your password.

PS → You should be **wary** of emails requesting that you change your password.

SAMPLES

1. His smile was friendly whereas his eyes were **wary**.
2. Dave was candid. He told me that Roger was really a mediocre employee and that I should be **wary** of promoting him.
3. When walking in the forests of California, you should be **wary** of mountain lions.
4. When Neil Armstrong first stepped onto the moon he was no doubt **wary** of what he would find but also cognizant of the fact that he was making history.
5. Joe became **wary** when he realized that the road he was on had converged with another going in the wrong direction.

#23: (AEV) useless/hopeless (PS) futile

GRAMMAR

adjective → My computer crashed. I've tried to restart it, but it is **futile**.

USAGE

AEV → If you're a mediocre student, then applying to Harvard would be **hopeless**.

PS → If you're a mediocre student, then applying to Harvard would be **futile**.

SAMPLES

1. Jean has been trying to emulate Picasso's style, but it is **futile**. She is cognizant of the fact that she is still a tyro at painting.
2. If you don't study for an exam, your efforts are apt to be **futile** and result in a poor score.
3. Lee squandered all his money at the casino. He thinks he can get it back by continuing to gamble, but that idea is **futile**.
4. For Sylvia, following a diet is **futile**, especially when she sees a delectable dessert on the menu.
5. Arguing with Joe is **futile**. All he does is gainsay and use specious evidence fraught with ambiguities.

#24: (AEV) large amount of (PS) copious

GRAMMAR

adjective → Bart always takes **copious** notes in class.

USAGE

AEV → Al's thesis is supported by a **large amount** of evidence.

PS → Al's thesis is supported by **copious** evidence.

SAMPLES

1. After a marathon, runners should drink **copious** amounts of water to rehydrate.
2. Jan's cake is delectable inasmuch as she added a **copious** amount of butter and sugar.
3. The Dean received myriad student emails giving **copious** reasons why the school needs a new biology lab.
4. In *Titanic*, when Jack let go of Rose and drifted off to die in the freezing cold water, the audience shed copious **tears**.
5. When John drinks **copious** amounts of alcohol, he becomes mercurial and contentious. It is plausible that he's an alcoholic like his father.

#25: (AEV) avoid/delay (PS) procrastinate

GRAMMAR

verb → Many will **procrastinate** when there is no deadline.

USAGE

AEV → Because of fear, many will **delay** when they have to see a dentist.

PS → Because of fear, many will **procrastinate** when they have to see a dentist.

SAMPLES

1. Tim is a mediocre employee for myriad reasons. One is he always **procrastinates**; hence, his work is always late.
2. Ryan has copious chores to do, yet he is **procrastinating**. He would rather play his new video game instead of clean.
3. Do you **procrastinate** when you have to pay a bill or do you pay as soon as you receive it?
4. The noun form of **procrastinate** is procrastinator, as in "A **procrastinator** is usually cognizant of that fact that he or she is avoiding completing a task for a reason other than illness."
5. Sarah is such a **procrastinator**. She waited until the last minute to write her essay yet got an A. Astounding.

#26: (AEV) bold/daring (PS) audacious

GRAMMAR

adjective → Living on Mars is such an **audacious** idea.

USAGE

AEV → **Bold** thinkers, like Steve Jobs, change the world.

PS → **Audacious** thinkers, like Steve Jobs, change the world.

SAMPLES

1. In some cultures, **audacious** thinking is perilous inasmuch as new ideas are construed as being a threat to the established social order.
2. Bob is so **audacious**. He really wanted to work at Google so he called Larry Page directly—and got a job!
3. The internet is filled with **audacious** behavior captured on video. Peruse youtube and you will see what I mean.
4. Doing something **audacious**, like swimming with a great white shark outside a cage, can be fraught with peril.
5. Mavericks are often **audacious**, for example Malala Yousafiz. When she was fifteen, she was shot for supporting the right of girls to be educated. She recovered and went on to win the 2014 Nobel Peace prize for defending Children’s Rights.

#27: (AEV) declare/strongly state (PS) aver

GRAMMAR

verb → Politicians are always **averring** the need for lower taxes.

USAGE

AEV → The student **declared** that he did not plagiarize.

PS → The student **averred** that he did not plagiarize.

SAMPLES

1. Did the mayor take a bribe? Her spokesperson **avers** that she did not, and that she still has the voters' approbation.
2. Tim, albeit a tyro, **avers** that he is the man for the job.
3. The CEO **averred** that the company was profitable whereas analysts on Wall Street expressed disparate views.
4. Anyone who has taken TOEFL, IELTS or the GRE will **aver** that such tests are quite grueling and that you must prepare.
5. Trent **avers** that when he was young, he dwelled in a forest and was raised by wolves. Personally, I think that you should be wary of Trent's stories.

#28: (AEV) struggle with (PS) grapple with

GRAMMAR

verb → Cassy is **grappling with** her diet.

USAGE

AEV → Many who study English **struggle with** phrasal verbs.

PS → Many who study English **grapple with** phrasal verbs.

SAMPLES

1. It is plausible that if you **grapple with** that conundrum long enough, you will eventually figure it out.
2. Ann is procrastinating when she knows that she should be **grappling with** her essay inasmuch as it is due tomorrow.
3. After another mass shooting, many Americans are once again **grappling with** the fact that such a crime is endemic to America, and that there is no solution to the problem.
4. Hollywood is **grappling with** myriad revelations of sexual abuse by famous stars, namely powerful men who aver they are innocent.
5. Mike recalls how he used to **grapple with** calculus in high school, and how it seemed so arcane to him.

#29: (AEV) part by part/gradually (PS) piecemeal

GRAMMAR

adjective → The company was sold off **piecemeal**.

USAGE

AEV → The manager told Sue he wants the complete report not **part by part**.

PS → The manager told Sue he wants the complete report not **piecemeal**.

SAMPLES

1. After the house was built, extra rooms were added **piecemeal**.
2. Bob's lecture notes are so copious and complete whereas Sally's notes are rather **piecemeal**. She only notes what she thinks is interesting.
3. The journalist was quite candid when he said that Trump's White House is run **piecemeal**. "There is no organization," the journalist averred. "No vision. No unifying purpose. Trump just makes it up as he goes along."
4. Historians aver that Robert E. Lee lost the battle of Gettysburg because he attacked the Union army **piecemeal** when he should've concentrated his army and attacked in strength.
5. Do you prefer to be served a meal **piecemeal** or do you prefer have all the dishes served at the same time?

#30: (AEV) reject/not support (PS) repudiate

GRAMMAR

adjective → Ban guns in the U.S.? Many **repudiate** that idea.

USAGE

AEV → The American Revolution **rejected** British rule.

PS → The American Revolution **repudiated** British rule.

SAMPLES

1. The company's new business plan was **repudiated** by Wall Street because it is piecemeal and faces copious risks.
2. If you hand in an essay that is full of specious evidence, the professor will **repudiate** it and censure your effort.
3. Trump **repudiates** the idea that Russia got him elected president and that he is always emulating Putin.
4. Why do scientists **repudiate** the existence of sasquatch when there is a plethora of evidence that cannot be gainsaid?
5. The noun form of repudiate is repudiation, as in "The French revolution was a **repudiation** of the French aristocracy."

Quiz #3

Task: Fill in the blanks with a Power Synonym.

1. mediocre 2. wary 3. futile 4. copious 5. procrastinate
6. audacious 7. aver 8. grapple with 9. piecemeal 10. repudiate

1. The fundamental purpose of a democracy is to allow citizens to accept or _____ the ideas of politicians by voting.

2. If you are an early bird, and you always get the worm, then you do not _____.

3. Jack my dog is always _____. Trying to sneak by him is _____.

4. "It is like trying to squeeze blood from a stone" is an idiom you use when what you are doing is _____.

5. Mike has always _____ that drinking _____ amounts of coffee is actually quite healthy. Maybe that is why he never _____!

6. The team has been _____ the issue of how to increase profit share while reducing costs, and still come up with a plan that is not _____.

7. Years ago, the suggestion that marijuana should be legalized in the U.S. was an _____ yet _____ idea. Now, that idea is a reality.

8. Ralph's speech was really _____. He jumped from topic to topic and never really had much focus. It ended up being quite _____.

9. In his paper, Tim _____ that Shakespeare was in fact a woman. How _____.

Answer Key – Quiz #3

1. The fundamental purpose of a democracy is to allow citizens to accept or **repudiate** the ideas of politicians running for office by way of voting.
2. If you are an early bird, and you always get the worm, then you do not **procrastinate**.
3. Jack my dog is always **wary**. Trying to sneak by him is **futile**
4. “It is like trying to squeeze blood from a stone” is an idiom you use when what you are doing is **futile**.
5. Mike has always **averred** that drinking **copious** amounts of coffee is actually quite healthy. Maybe that is why he never **procrastinates!**
6. The team has been **grappling with** the issue of how to increase profit share while reducing costs, and still come up with a plan that is not **mediocre**.
7. Years ago, the suggestion that marijuana should be legalized in the U.S. was an **audacious** yet **futile** idea. Now, that idea is a reality.
8. Ralph’s speech was really **piecemeal**. He jumped from topic to topic and never really had much focus. It ended up being quite **mediocre**.
9. In his paper, Tim **avers** that Shakespeare was in fact a woman. How **audacious**.

#31: (AEV) rework/relive (PS) rehash

GRAMMAR

verb → Mick is **rehashing** his final project inasmuch as his teacher didn't like the topic he had chosen.

USAGE

AEV → Writers **rethink** sentences to make them lucid.

PS → Writers **rehash** sentences to make them lucid.

SAMPLES

1. Sally and Cindy met for lunch. Old friends, they **rehashed** their college days and how much fun they had.
2. During the trial, the witness **rehashed** what she saw. She was able to recall most of it though it was grueling.
3. Politicians always promise new ideas, but all they do is **rehash** old ones with great alacrity.
4. Listening to Trump **rehash** why he is so great is so enervating.
5. Many war veterans refuse to **rehash** their combat experience even for family members. The experience of war was just too grueling for them; hence, they prefer not to dwell in the past.

#32: (AEV) require/note (PS) stipulate

GRAMMAR

verb → The job application form **stipulates** four references.

USAGE

AEV → The law **requires** that you be sixteen to drive in the U.S.

PS → The law **stipulates** that you be sixteen to drive in the U.S.

SAMPLES

1. The rules of soccer **stipulate** that you cannot touch the ball with your hands or you will be penalized.
2. The U.S. Declaration of Independence **stipulates** that "All men are created equal."
3. The noun form of **stipulate** is **stipulation**, as in "A contract is a list of **stipulations** that both parties agree to."
4. When you sign up for a google account, you must first agree to a list of **stipulations** before you can proceed.
5. On the first day of class, the professor **stipulated** that she would not tolerate phone usage during class time, and that she would censure anyone using their phone in class.

#33: (AEV) tendency (PS) have a penchant for

GRAMMAR

Phrasal verb → Mac **has a penchant for** strong coffee.

USAGE

AEV → It would seem that politicians **have a tendency for** lying.

PS → It would seem that politicians **have a penchant for** lying.

SAMPLES

1. When Mary was pregnant, she **had a penchant for** sour pickles and chocolate. She said together they were delectable.

2. If you are dieting, it is hard to **have a penchant for** sweets inasmuch as you will squander any chance of losing weight.

3. Marta **has a penchant for sushi** whereas Carmen is ambivalent about Asian food in general.

4. Paula **has always had a penchant for** audacious behavior. She is such a maverick. You never know what she'll say or do.

5. Bob **has never had a penchant for** procrastinating though he does tend to do things piecemeal.

#34: (AEV) highest/furthest point (PS) apogee

GRAMMAR

noun → When the Moon has reached its furthest point from the Earth, we say the Moon has reached its **apogee**.

USAGE

AEV → Van Gogh reached his **highest point** of artistic genius with the painting *Starry Starry Night*.

PS → Van Gogh reached his **apogee** of artistic genius with the painting *Starry Starry Night*..

SAMPLES

1. Everyone empire has an **apogee**. Britain's **apogee** was Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee whereas America's was winning the Second World War in 1945.
2. When Kurt Cobain was at his **apogee**, he committed suicide.
3. The American Civil War reached its **apogee** at the Battle of Gettysburg in July, 1863. The South lost that battle and never recovered.
4. The "unsinkable" *Titanic* was considered the **apogee** of nineteenth century technology and innovation, then it sank.
5. How do you know when you have reached your **apogee**?

#35: (AEV) strong/critical language (PS) invective

GRAMMAR

noun → The judge censured the lawyer with **invective**.

USAGE

AEV → Contentious people often trade **strong language**.

PS → Contentious people often trade **invective**.

SAMPLES

1. Stan has a penchant for **invective**. He really needs to learn how to control his tongue.
2. Donald Trump always employs **invective** in his speeches. He thinks by doing so he proves that he is indeed a tough guy.
3. **Invective** is ubiquitous on the internet, especially on Twitter.
4. I was dumbfounded when **invective** started pouring from quiet Jane's mouth. I had no idea she could be so mercurial.
5. Terry avers that rap is nothing but **invective**; hence, she eschews it. She prefers music that is less contentious.

#36: (AEV) dislike/disgrace/evil (PS) anathema

GRAMMAR

noun → Jesus was **anathema** to the Romans; Gandhi to the British, and Martin Luther to the Catholic church.

USAGE

AEV → The idea that you can't use your hands when playing a sport, like soccer, is **disliked** by many Americans.

PS → The idea that you can't use your hands when playing a sport, like soccer, is **anathema** to many Americans.

SAMPLES

1. Did we evolve from lower life forms over millions of years? To aver that is **anathema** to organized religion.
2. For years, Elvis Presley was **anathema** to parents. They construed his music as being the work of the devil whereas teenagers had a real penchant for it.
3. Stealing books, movies and music from the web is no big deal to a lot of people; however, for artists, it is **anathema**.
4. Originally, anathema meant a formal curse delivered by the Catholic Pope, as in "Those who worship the devil are anathema."
5. To say that Shakespeare is old fashioned is **anathema** to English professors and is apt to precipitate a contentious debate.

#37: (AEV) claim/argue (PS) maintain

GRAMMAR

verb → Some **maintain** that angels do in fact exist.

USAGE

AEV → The Flat Earth Society **argues** that the earth is flat.

PS → The Flat Earth Society **maintains** that the earth is flat.

SAMPLES

1. In *Power Synonyms*, author Bruce Stirling **maintains** that the best way to learn academic vocabulary is by association.
2. Scientists **maintain** that global warming is real that the constant use of fossil fuels will only exacerbate the process.
3. Doris has always **maintained** that eating meat is anathema to her since she is a vegetarian.
4. Historians once **maintained** that homo sapiens and Neanderthals did not interbreed, but that position has been repudiated by DNA evidence proving the contrary.
5. When it comes to gun control, I'm not sure which position Harold **maintains**. He is quite ambivalent about the issue whereas Scott has stipulated that his is pro-gun ownership while Barb avers against it.

#38: (AEV) add/include (PS) incorporate

GRAMMAR

verb → *Star Wars* **incorporates** drama, action, and romance.

USAGE

AEV → To enhance her essay, Ann **added** more examples.

PS → To enhance her essay, Ann **incorporated** more examples.

SAMPLES

1. Karl maintains that if company does not **incorporate** its new cost cutting plan, it will eventually go bankrupt.
2. For the TOEFL independent essay, you must **incorporate** your personal experience when you write.
3. Joan's muffins are delectable inasmuch as she **incorporates** a secret ingredient.
4. To get a high IELTS speaking score, you must **incorporate** a variety of grammatical forms.
5. Picasso **incorporated** African motifs in his 1907 painting *Les Demoiselles D'Avignon*, an audacious artistic invention which, as art historians maintain, was the start of Cubism and modern art.

#39: (AEV) tendency/inclination (PS) propensity

GRAMMAR

noun → Ryan has a **propensity** for procrastinating.

USAGE

AEV → Louise had a **tendency** to eschew contentious people.

PS → Louise had a **propensity** to eschew contentious people.

SAMPLES

1. Dave has a **propensity** to study hard and long before an exam whereas Dwayne tends to cram at the last moment.
2. Professor Smith has a **propensity** to be quite candid when grading essays. Don't be surprised or crestfallen if he tells you to rehash your thesis.
3. How can educators control their students' **propensity** to text while in class? What strategies can teachers incorporate so that their students don't squander class time texting friends?
4. Mavericks are rebels; hence, they have a **propensity** to disrupt the social order, such as Jack in *Titanic*, Hans Solo in *Star Wars*, and Deadpool in *Deadpool*.
5. Hollywood is quite predictable. If a movie is popular, there is a **propensity** to produce a sequel. Yet, more often not, the sequel just rehashes the same ideas as in the original.

#40: (AEV) hidden and can develop (PS) latent

GRAMMAR

adjective → Joe discovered he had a **latent** talent for cooking.

USAGE

AEV → The Samsung Galaxy Note 7 had a **hidden** problem: the batteries had a propensity to explode.

PS → The Samsung Galaxy Note 7 had a **latent** problem: the batteries had a propensity to explode.

SAMPLES

1. A **latent** infection, such as shingles, lies hidden in the body until one day it begins to develop and becomes a problem that must be treated medically.
2. Morris has always had a **latent** desire to quit his job and see the world. Maybe one day his dream will come true.
3. Some **maintain** that smartphones have a **latent** danger, namely electromagnetic radiation, which can cause cancer.
4. Franklin's intransigence was a **latent** characteristic his wife discovered only after they were married.
5. Movies contain many **latent** messages. In *Titanic*, one latent message is *love conquers all*.

Quiz #4

Task: Fill in the blanks with a Power Synonym. Conjugate as needed.

1. rehash 2. stipulate 3. have a penchant for 4. apogee
5. invective 6. anathema 7. maintain 8. incorporate
9. propensity 10. latent

1. Some of the best dishes _____ few ingredients. In other words, less is more.

2. Smoking used to be ubiquitous in the U.S. Now it is an _____ to many.

3. The _____ to organize constantly, and meticulously, is an example of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

4. After the referee made a bad call, the crowd showered him with _____.

5. Mariah has _____ shopping. She is not a _____ shopaholic. Oh, no. She is definitely a shopaholic.

6. The instructions on the prescription bottle _____ that you must take a pill once every twelve hours.

7. In the presidential debate, candidate Trump _____ that he was "the smartest guy in the world." The man definitely has _____ self-love.

8. Historians _____ that the _____ of President Nixon's presidency was his trip to China in 1972.

Answer Key – Quiz #4

1. Some of the best dishes **incorporate** few ingredients. In other words, less is more.
2. Smoking used to be ubiquitous in the U.S. Now it is an **anathema** to many.
3. The **propensity** to organize constantly, and meticulously, is an example of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).
4. After the referee made a bad call, the crowd showered him with **invective**.
5. Mariah has **a penchant for** shopping. She is not a **latent** shopaholic. Oh, no. She is definitely a shopaholic.
6. The instructions on the prescription bottle **stipulate** that you must take a pill once every twelve hours.
7. In the presidential debate, candidate Trump **maintained** that he was “the smartest guy in the world.” The man definitely has **a penchant for** self-love.
8. Historians **maintain** that the **apogee** of President Nixon’s presidency was his trip to China in 1972.

#41: (AEV) irritated/annoyed (PS) dyspeptic

GRAMMAR

adjective → What's wrong with Ted? He looks **dyspeptic**.

USAGE

AEV → After listening to Trump, Briana really felt **annoyed**.

PS → After listening to Trump, Briana really felt **dyspeptic**.

SAMPLES

1. **Dyspeptic** means your stomach's digestion is upset. If your stomach is **dyspeptic**, how do you look? **Dyspeptic!**
2. Gerald is always so ebullient. I have never seen him look **dyspeptic**. Have you?
3. If your professor look **dyspeptic**, it is a harbinger of bad news.
4. Shrek always looked and sounded **dyspeptic**. And for good reason: the world thought he was evil just because he was ugly. Then he met Fiona, and their love flourished.
5. Don't conflate **dyspeptic** with dystopia. **Dyspeptic**, as you know, means upset and/or irritated whereas a dystopia is a dark world without hope, a place where people lead fearful lives, such as Gotham City in the movie *The Dark Knight*.

#42: (AEV) honest and moral (PS) probity

GRAMMAR

noun → Pope Francis is the definition of **probity**.

USAGE

AEV → Religious teach **honesty and morality**.

PS → Religious books teach **probity**.

SAMPLES

1. The judged doubted the witness's **probity**.
2. Has the internet resulted in an increase or a decrease in **probity** in your culture? What do you think?
3. Hillary Clinton was quite candid when she said that Donald Trump lacked **probity**.
4. Jack used to drink and gamble all the time. Now he is a model of **probity**.
5. In Shakespeare's Henry IV, Falstaff's lack of **probity** makes him both a comedic and a tragic character.

#43: (AEV) make better/improve (PS) ameliorate

GRAMMAR

verb → Procrastinating will not **ameliorate** your low grades.

USAGE

AEV → Jock **made** his headache **better** with Aspirin.

PS → Jock **ameliorated** his **headache** with Aspirin.

SAMPLES

1. How can we **ameliorate** the opioid problem in America?
2. By dedicating himself to a life of probity, Terry began to **ameliorate** his problem with drugs and alcohol.
3. Before antibiotics, nothing could **ameliorate** infections caused by bacteria.
4. The last time Janice baked a cake, it was terrible. This time it is a delectable. She definitely **ameliorated** the recipe.
5. The rain has not **ameliorated** the drought.

#44: (AEV) contain/demonstrate (PS) embody

GRAMMAR

verb → Al's essay **embodies** an excellent thesis and examples.

USAGE

AEV → Great presidents, like Obama, **demonstrate** probity.

PS → Great presidents, like Obama, **embody** probity.

SAMPLES

1. *The Great Gatsby* is a great American novel inasmuch as it **embodies** characters searching for the American dream.
2. New ideas **embody** arguments that do not always win the approbation of those who do not like change.
3. Many Americans love to fix up and drive old cars inasmuch as they **embody** a nostalgia for the past.
4. Apple products are popular because they **embody** the "cool factor" whereas PCs are considered prosaic.
5. In *Titanic*, Jack **embodies** the spirit of a maverick, a man who goes his own way by breaking social rules.

#45: (AEV) perfect example (PS) paragon

GRAMMAR

noun → The Joker, in *The Black Knight*, is a **paragon** of evil.

USAGE

AEV → A saint is a **perfect example** of virtue.

PS → A saint is a **paragon** of virtue.

SAMPLES

1. Michelangelo, albeit a contentious and dyspeptic individual, is considered to be a **paragon** of artistic achievement in the Italian renaissance.
2. This semester, Jon, who was famous for procrastinating, really worked hard and was lauded by all his teachers for being a **paragon** of success.
3. Even though the restaurant is called **Paragon**, the food is, unfortunately, terrible.
4. *Titanic* was considered to be the **paragon** of shipbuilding design for its time.
5. Charles eats and drinks too much and always squanders his money. He is a **paragon** of excess.

#46: (AEV) action causing a reaction (PS) catalyst

GRAMMAR

noun → Gasoline needs a **catalyst**, such as a match, to burn.

USAGE

AEV → Consumer demand often **causes a reaction** that results in new products.

PS → Consumer demand is often a **catalyst** that results in new products.

SAMPLES

1. A major **catalyst** for the American Revolution was England's increasing the tax on tea.
2. Corruption in the Catholic church was the **catalyst** that led Martin Luther to nail his ninety-five theses to the door of the Wittenberg church in 1515 thereby starting the Protestant Reformation.
3. The **catalyst** for many forest fires is lightning.
4. Scientists maintain that a giant asteroid hitting the Earth 65 million years ago was the **catalyst** that wiped out the dinosaurs and started the evolution of mammals.
5. Beth needs a **catalyst** to wake her up in the morning. Jogging ten miles, she avers, is a good way to get her engine running.

#47: (AEV) weak/thin/fragile (PS) tenuous

GRAMMAR

adjective → Some maintain that the link between global warming and fossil fuels is **tenuous** whereas others claim that raising ocean levels are a harbinger of even greater natural perils.

USAGE

AEV → Don't walk on that ice. It looks **fragile**.

PS → Don't walk on that ice. It looks **tenuous**.

SAMPLES

1. How do penguins survive? Their lives seem so **tenuous**, yet they manage to flourish in the most inhospitable places on Earth
2. Steve really grappled with the chemistry exam. The chance of his getting an A is **tenuous** at best.
3. Students often give **tenuous** excuses for why their homework is late.
4. Brad and Kevin have been dating for a year now, yet their relationship seems a little **tenuous**. Have you noticed that they have a propensity for arguing over every little thing? And the invective!
5. Lily feels that her position at work is growing ever more **tenuous**, and for good reason. The company is bankrupt.

#48: (AEV) support/promote (PS) espouse

GRAMMAR

verb → Mitch **espouses** the right to die.

USAGE

AEV → Jack, albeit a smoker, **supports** the smoking ban in bars.

PS → Jack, albeit a smoker, **espouses** the smoking ban in bars.

SAMPLES

1. The argument that Ralph **espouses** is really quite convoluted. He needs to rehash it to make it more lucid and cogent.
2. Doris has a penchant for **espousing** strange diets, such as only eating food that has fallen from a tree.
3. A work of art is a catalyst designed to **espouse** an argument we may or may not agree with.
4. During the Great Depression, extreme right-wing politicians rose up around the world and **espoused** nationalist policies, which precipitated World War Two.
5. The voters were not surprised when their senator **espoused** eliminating all taxes. He has always had a propensity to make contentious pronouncements.

#49: (AEV) educational (PS) didactic

GRAMMAR

adjective → **Didactic** software is designed to educate.

USAGE

AEV → That movie was both entertaining and **educational**.

PS → That movie was both entertaining and **didactic**.

SAMPLES

1. Harold is very **didactic**. I think he has a latent desire to be a teacher.
2. Melissa is not only a martinet, but she is overly **didactic**. She can be so enervating at times.
3. Great works of religion are **didactic**. They espouse probity and other virtues.
4. The noun form of **didactic** is didact, as in "Socrates was not only a great philosopher but a great **didact** as well."
5. Mary, albeit a businesswoman, is such a **didact**. Her alacrity to share her experience as a CEO is an inspiration and catalyst to emulate.

#50: (AEV) criticism (PS) opprobrium

GRAMMAR

noun → For his constant **opprobrium** of Athenian society, Socrates was sentenced to death.

USAGE

AEV → Al's **criticism** of Jane's new boyfriend was very harsh.

PS → Al's **opprobrium** of Jane's new boyfriend was very harsh.

SAMPLES

1. Voters greeted the plan to build a new airport with heated **opprobrium** and censure.
2. Much **opprobrium** has been directed at ETS, the designer of TOEFL and the GRE, for charging too much for each test.
3. Do you know what precipitated the boss's **opprobrium** of our new budget?
4. **Opprobrium** is not going to ameliorate Tad's behavior. The fact is he is a mediocre student with a propensity to procrastinate.
5. Lynn is looking a little dyspeptic today. Be wary. She greets everything you say with **opprobrium**.

Quiz #5

Task: Fill in the blanks with a Power Synonym. Conjugate as needed.

1. dyspeptic 2. probity 3. ameliorate 4. embody
5. paragon 6. catalyst 7. tenuous 8. espouse
9. didactic 10. opprobrium

1. Phil _____ his cold with his grandma's chicken soup. Is chicken soup a real cure? The research is _____ at best.

2. As First Lady, Michelle Obama _____ grace and virtue while her husband was a _____ of _____.

3. Ralph is cognizant of the fact that he is _____, yet he does nothing to _____ his behavior.

4. Jack received much approbation for his presentation, which was wonderfully _____ and not at all enervating.

5. For many, Diego Maradona is the _____ of soccer greatest whereas for others, he deserves nothing but _____ for his "Hand of God" goal in the 1986 World Cup final.

6. How can we _____ the situation in the Middle East? What policy do you _____?

7. The Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 was the _____ that forced America to enter World War Two.

8. Many Americans _____ a universal healthcare system.

Answer Key – Quiz #5

1. Phil **ameliorated** his cold with his grandma's chicken soup. Is chicken soup a real cure? The research is **tenuous** at best.
2. As First Lady, Michelle Obama **embodied** grace and virtue while her husband was a **paragon** of **probity**.
3. Ralph is cognizant of the fact that he is **dyspeptic**, yet he does nothing to **ameliorate** his behavior.
4. Jack received much approbation for his presentation, which was wonderfully **didactic** and not at all enervating.
5. For many, Diego Maradona is the **paragon** of soccer greatest whereas for others, he deserves nothing but **opprobrium** for his "Hand of God" goal in the 1986 World Cup final.
6. How can we **ameliorate** the situation in the Middle East? What policy do you **espouse**?
7. The Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 was the **catalyst** that forced America to enter World War Two.
8. Many Americans **espouse** a universal healthcare system.

#51: (AEV) complete set/wide range (PS) panoply

GRAMMAR

noun → At the Louvre, you will see a **panoply** of artistic styles.

USAGE

AEV → You will find a **wide range** of spices in Joan's kitchen

PS → You will find a **panoply** of spices in Joan's kitchen.

SAMPLES

1. At the Queen's coronation there was a **panoply** of celebrities, including royalty, politicians, and actors.
2. Bruce's **panoply** of guitars used to fill an entire room.
- 3, Behind every President and Prime Minister is a **panoply** of civil servants who ensure the daily running of government.
4. Rod sold his **panoply** of stamps inasmuch as he felt as if he were squandering too much time and money collecting them.
5. Visit Times Square in New York City and you will experience not only a **panoply** of sights but also of people.

#52: (AEV) original/groundbreaking (PS) seminal

GRAMMAR

adjective → A **seminal** idea is a revolutionary idea.

USAGE

AEV → Newton, Einstein, and Picasso were **original** thinkers.

PS → Newton, Einstein, and Picasso were **seminal** thinkers.

SAMPLES

1. Steve Jobs was a marketing genius who brought to market myriad **seminal** products, including the iPod, the iPhone, the iPad, the Macintosh, and the notebook computer.
2. Simone de Beauvoir's **seminal** book *The Second Sex* was the first to illustrate how society treated women as objects and not as individuals equal to men.
3. The world is full of **seminal** moments, from Neil Armstrong landing on the moon to Elizabeth Smith Miller, the first woman to wear pants. Can you think of any **seminal** events?
4. As you can see, a **seminal** moment changes the world in a new and often audacious way. Those responsible for such events are mavericks by nature and lauded for their genius.
5. Often a **seminal** event occurs when two ideas converge to create a moment of genius, such as Steve Jobs combining music and the internet and calling it iTunes.

#53: (AEV) describe clearly/outline (PS) delineate

GRAMMAR

verb → Joe's plan **delineates** the company's new direction.

USAGE

AEV → The politicians **outlined** their positions on the issue of mass shootings yet offered no solutions to end the problem.

PS → The politicians **delineated** their positions on the issue of mass shootings yet offered no solutions to end the problem.

SAMPLES

1. Before he **delineated** his thesis on paper, Brad did a copious amount of research using a panoply of sources.
2. Briana, at the professor's request, **delineated** the problem she was having on the classroom screen for all to see.
3. Most scientists do actual experiments to prove an idea, then **delineate** the idea on paper. Not Einstein. He eschewed physical experiments. His seminal $E=MC^2$ came straight out of his head.
4. When you write a summary, you are **delineating** the main ideas in a way that is easy for your audience to comprehend.
5. In the *Gettysburg Address*, the most famous speech in American history, Abraham Lincoln **delineated** the history and future of America, and the cost of the Civil War, in 272 words.

#54: (AEV) cause sleep (PS) soporific

GRAMMAR

adjective → Mary's speech was **soporific**. I could not stay awake.

USAGE

AEV → Nick procrastinates because homework **makes him sleepy**.

PS → Nick procrastinates because homework is **soporific**.

SAMPLES

1. Leon thinks opera is **soporific** whereas his wife loves it.
2. *When you maintain that something is **soporific**, it infers that the activity in question is enervating and probably boring.*
3. The professor's voice is so **soporific**. No wonder everybody falls asleep in class.
4. When something or someone is **soporific**, the remedy is a strong cup of tea or coffee.
5. Do not conflate **soporific** with sophomoric. **Soporific** means *the thing you are doing makes you sleepy* whereas sophomoric means *juvenile behavior*, as in "Donald Trump's sophomoric behavior is often greeted with censure and opprobrium."

#55: (AEV) idealistic but impractical (PS) quixotic

GRAMMAR

adjective → Bruce has a propensity to be **quixotic**. He thinks he can change the world by writing TOEFL books.

USAGE

AEV → A moon vacation is an **idealistic but impractical** idea.

PS → A moon vacation is a **quixotic** idea.

SAMPLES

1. Before he returned home, Hamlet was probably a **quixotic** young man, yet upon returning, he became crestfallen when he learned about the death of his father.
2. Seminal ideas are often borne in the minds of those who are **quixotic**, for where do ideas come from if not from dreamers.
3. In *Harry Potter*, are there any **quixotic** characters? Everyone seemed so serious all the time.
4. The Conquistadors, searching for "El Dorado" in South America, were certainly on a **quixotic** quest.
5. Talk to Biff and you will soon be presented with a panoply of **quixotic** arguments for why all students should wear uniforms.

#56: (AEV) state of uncertainty (PS) quandary

GRAMMAR

noun → Mary is in a **quandary**. She is running out of money.

USAGE

AEV → Lovers in romance movies are always in a **state of uncertainty** that is resolved in the end.

PS → Lovers in romance movies are always in a **quandary** that is resolved in the end.

SAMPLES

1. The 1962 Cuban Missile crisis put President Kennedy in a **quandary**. Should he stop Russia from putting nuclear missiles on Cuban soil or not? Do you know how the crisis ended?
2. Jon is in a **quandary**. He just won the lottery and does not know what to do with all that money.
3. A synonym for **quandary** is **dilemma**, as in "Carl is faced with a **dilemma** at work. His boss wants him to work next week, but Carl has a vacation scheduled."
4. Being in a **quandary** implies that you are faced with myriad choices. Hopefully, one choice will ameliorate your **dilemma**.
5. The English Language Institute is in a **quandary**. Their favorite teacher left and now the students have no TOEFL teacher.

#57: (AEV) evil/criminal (PS) nefarious

GRAMMAR

adjective → Hollywood superheroes battle **nefarious** characters with alacrity.

USAGE

AEV → I never liked clowns. Their make-up is so **evil**.

PS → I never liked clowns. Their make-up is so **nefarious**.

SAMPLES

1. In the movie *The Godfather*, a panoply of **nefarious** Mafioso's work for Don Vito Corleone, a paragon of criminal corruption.
2. Al Capone averred that he was not **nefarious**. Instead, he maintained that he was just a businessman supplying a product, namely alcohol, to a market that demanded it.
3. If you suspect **nefarious** activity, call the police immediately.
4. Is plagiarism a **nefarious** act? Good question. Calling it criminal is tenuous at best; however, it is still a serious academic offense that will get you kicked out of school.
5. As a teen, actor Mark Wahlberg had a **nefarious** reputation. He used to steal cars, deal drugs, and attack black people.

#58: (AEV) chatty/talkative (PS) loquacious

GRAMMAR

adjective → Barb is so **loquacious**. She is great at parties.

USAGE

AEV → Foreigners tend to believe that Americans are **chatty**.

PS → Foreigners tend to believe that Americans are **loquacious**.

SAMPLES

1. In *Finding Nemo*, Dory is **loquacious**. She never stops talking whereas Nemo's dad is crestfallen and dyspeptic until he finds Nemo, who got into trouble because he was a maverick.

2. The opposite of **loquacious** is **laconic**, as in "Donald Trump is **loquacious**. He loves talking about himself whereas his wife Melania is **laconic**. She rarely speaks."

3. My friend Pete is usually quite laconic; however, after a few beers, he becomes **loquacious**. Alcohol is the catalyst that gets his tongue moving.

4. For the speaking part of the test, do not be **loquacious**. You must instead demonstrate brevity and lucidity while managing your time.

5. In the novel *The Great Gatsby*, the narrator Nick Carraway tells us that **loquacious** people are attracted to him because he has a sympathetic ear.

#59: (AEV) confused/puzzled (PS) bewildered

GRAMMAR

adjective → Long ago, eclipses left people **bewildered**. Even today, some believe they are harbingers of evil.

USAGE

AEV → Deb has a **confused** look. I wonder what is wrong?

PS → Deb has a **bewildered** look. I wonder what is wrong?

SAMPLES

1. When you start to study a new language, you will definitely feel **bewildered** and enervated too.
2. When Rick suddenly resigned, many were **bewildered**. They suspected he'd done something wrong, but nobody spoke candidly about it. Water under the bridge, they said.
3. Don's piecemeal approach to managing a company has left investors quite **bewildered**. He really needs to delineate his intent and ameliorate investor doubt.
4. No wonder Ann looks **bewildered**. Her husband squandered ten-thousand dollars at a casino—and he never gambles.
5. Judith always talks about painting, of becoming "a fine artist," but most of the time she just looks **bewildered**, like she has no clue about the direction her life should take.

#60: (AEV) because (PS) owing to the fact that

GRAMMAR

phrase → I hurried **owing to the fact that** I was late for work.

USAGE

AEV → You should study **because** you have a test tomorrow.

PS → You should study **owing to the fact that** you have a test tomorrow.

SAMPLES

1. **Owing to the fact that** winning the lottery is futile, Owen decided he would no longer squander his money on tickets.
2. Terry is looking for a new job **owing to the fact that** she just got her MBA and really needs to enhance her salary.
3. Ric's vegetable garden is flourishing **owing to the fact that** he regularly enhances the soil with fertilizer.
4. Mandy is in a quandary: Should she continue to save money and use her old flip-up phone or buy a new iPhone? **Owing to the fact that** her old flip-up phone is an anachronism, she decided to buy an iPhone.
5. **Owing to the fact that** his botany professor is so soporific, Stan bought an extra-large coffee and took it to class.

Quiz #6

Task: Fill in the blanks with a Power Synonym. Conjugate as needed.

1. panoply 2. seminal 3. delineate 4. soporific
5. quixotic 6. quandary 7. nefarious 8. loquacious
9. bewildered 10. owing to the fact that

1. Edgar Allen Poe's story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* is a _____ piece of fiction _____ it is the first detective story.

2. Dave is a dreamer; hence, he tends to be _____. He also has a propensity to be _____. He just goes on and on.

3. Before World War One, a _____ of _____ artists was working in Europe. When war broke out, many of these same artists were in a _____: should they fight or not? Many did, and died, such as Franz Marc, Egon Schiele, and Umberto Boccioni.

4. Life is full of _____. Some are more convoluted than others while others lead to a more profound understanding of what it means to be human.

5. This bookstore offers a _____ of mystery books with lots of _____ characters.

6. The ending of that new movie left many _____. Had the hero turned into a _____ villain or not? That idea was not clearly _____.

Answer Key – Quiz #6

1. Edgar Allen Poe's story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* is a _____ piece of fiction _____ it is the first detective story.

2. Dave is a dreamer; hence, he tends to be **quixotic**. He also has a propensity to be **loquacious**. He just goes on and on.

3. Before World War One, a **panoply** of **seminal** artists was working in Europe. When war broke out, many of these same artists were in a **quandary**: should they fight or not? Many did, and died, such as Franz Marc, Egon Schiele, and Umberto Boccioni.

4. Life is full of **quandaries**. Some are more convoluted than others while others lead to a more profound understanding of what it means to be human.

5. This bookstore offers a **panoply** of mystery books with lots of **nefarious** characters.

6. The ending of that new movie left many **bewildered**. Had the hero turned into a **nefarious** villain or not? That idea was not clearly **delineated**.

Final Quiz

Task: Fill in the blanks with a Power Synonym. Conjugate as needed.

1. anathema 2. repudiate 3. mediocre 4. candid
5. copious 6. brevity 7. ameliorate 8. paragon
9. piecemeal 10. maintain 11. catalyst 12. enhance
13. profound 14. wary 15. owing to the fact that
16. tenuous 17. lucid 18. propensity for 19. grapple with

1. Bruce _____ that good writing should demonstrate _____; it should also have a _____ message that _____ the reader's understanding of the topic.

2. The Prime Minister has provided _____ reasons for why she is not _____ but instead _____ the new immigration bill.

3. In early nineteenth America, a lack of land in the east was the _____ that sent many settlers west in search of new land. They had to be _____ _____ that they were entering Indian territory, and that the Indians had a _____ distrust of the white man, for the white man was to the Indian a _____ of evil.

4. Andrew has been _____ with his final project _____. As a result, he has a _____ understanding of what he needs to do so that his final grade won't be _____.

5. Americans can be quite _____. For some cultures, this _____ speaking frankly is an _____.

Answer Key - Final Quiz

1. Bruce **maintains** that good writing should demonstrate **brevity**; it should also have a **lucid** message that **enhances** the reader's understanding of the topic.

2. The Prime Minister has provided **copious** reasons for why she is not **ameliorating** but instead **repudiating** the new immigration bill.

3. In early nineteenth America, a lack of land in the east was the **catalyst** that sent many settlers west in search of new land. They had to be **wary owing to the fact** that they were entering Indian territory, and that the Indians had a **profound** distrust of the white man, for the white man was to the Indian a **paragon** of evil.

4. Andrew has been **grappling with** with his final project **piecemeal**. As a result, he has a **tenuous** understanding of what he needs to do so that his final grade won't be **mediocre**.

5. Americans can be quite **candid**. For some cultures, this **propensity for** speaking frankly is an **anathema**.