

The children starving from malnutrition looked pitifully emaciated and lethargic.

- # 43 **taut** (adj) (1) stretched tight (a rope or line) ( $\neq$  drooping, loose)  
(2) tense, stretched to breaking point (nerves) ( $\neq$  relaxed)  
1) The tightrope walker prefers performing on a taut wire because a loose one sways too much.  
2) When my sister's nerves are taut, it takes very little to make her cry and scream.
- # 44 **doubtful** (adj) (1) doubtful, uncertain (2) of questionable character  
1) Because you haven't practiced, I'm dubious that you can win.  
2) The men loitering outside the schoolyard looked dubious to the school guard who notified the police.
- # 45 **uncouth** (adj) rude, unmannerly ( $\neq$  polite)  
You acted uncouth when you slurped your soup and wiped your mouth on the tablecloth.
- # 46 **bedlam** (noun) a scene of wild confusion; chaos  
[from St. Mary's of Bethlehem - London's Insane Asylum]  
When someone screamed, "Fire!" there was bedlam in the crowded theater; the audience panicked and stampeded toward the blocked exits.
- # 47 **ambiguous** (adj) having more than one possible meaning; unclear ( $\neq$  clear, easy to understand)  
**example:** "After John hit David, he ran away."  
Students were confused by the ambiguous directions on the math test.
- # 48 **reluctant** (adj) hesitant; unwilling ( $\neq$  eager)  
The teacher led the reluctant student to the principal.
- # 49 **bold** (adj) 1) without fear; brave; daring 2) too free in manner ( $\neq$  fearful, cowardly, intimidated)  
1) The bold fireman rescued the terrified woman from the narrow ledge of the burning skyscraper.  
2) The bold child stuck his tongue out at his mother and told her to shut up!
- # 50 **indigent** (adj) poor, needy (not so extreme as destitute) ( $\neq$  wealthy)  
Slums are home to many indigent families who can't afford more desirable housing.
- # 51 **elusive** (adj) hard to describe or understand (an idea or concept) tending to avoid, escape or get away from (a fox, bunny, athlete)  
1. I had trouble explaining the elusive concept when I was called upon in class. 2) The dogs were unable to track the elusive fox.

- # 52 **irascible** (adj) cranky, irritable, hot-tempered  
My mother is irascible until she's had her first cup of coffee; she'll snap at you over nothing if you talk to her when she first gets up.
- # 53 **repulsive** (adj) causing a strong dislike, disgusting (~~=~~ attractive)  
The rancid food in your locker was so repulsive people backed away from the stench.
- # 54 **evasive** (adj) avoiding, escaping by cleverness or trickery  
(evasive moves, strategies, answers)  
David gave his parents evasive answers to avoid being punished. The fighter pilot's evasive moves saved him from being shot down over enemy territory.
- # 55 **timid** (adj) shy (~~=~~ brave, bold, out-going)  
The timid little boy hid behind his mother's skirt and clung to her legs on the first day of kindergarten.
- # 56 **edible** (adj) fit to eat (~~=~~ poisonous, **inedible**)  
I am afraid to eat mushrooms I find in the woods because I don't know how to recognize the edible varieties.
- # 57 **scrutinize** (verb) to examine closely, to inspect carefully  
(the extreme of to glance at)  
The laboratory worker scrutinized the DNA sample before declaring without a doubt that it came from the suspected murderer.
- # 58 **loathe** (verb) to dislike intensely, to hate, to despise (~~=~~ love, adore)  
1) I loathe people who enjoy hurting animals and little children.  
**loath** (adj) reluctant, hesitant (~~=~~ eager)  
2) My sister was loath to open the admissions letter from Princeton.
- # 59 **lethal** (adj) deadly (a poison, injection for capital punishment etc.)  
As a little child, when I drank a lethal dose of ant poison, I had to have my stomach pumped out.
- # 60 **obsolete** (adj) out of date, no longer in use, replaced by more advanced technology (~~=~~ modern, state-of-the-art)  
My grandfather's obsolete car that had to be started with a hand crank is out in the barn under a blanket of dust.
- # 61 **boisterous** (adj.) - rough and noisily playful, romping, rollicking (like puppies and little boys rough-housing)
- # 62 **tentative** (adj.) - not definite (plans, a smile or handshake)
- # 63 **obese** (adj.) - extremely fat (~~=~~ emaciated)
- # 64 **dilemma** (noun) - a situation requiring a choice between two evils; a difficult choice  
She was faced with the dilemma of either telling a lie or betraying a friend.



- # 65 **current** (noun) - a flow of air, water or electricity  
 1) The raging current swept the frantic cow down the river.  
 (adj) - up to date; of the present time  
 2) We discuss current events in social studies class.
- # 66 **exterior** (noun, adj.) - the outside; for the outside, outer ( $\neq$  interior)  
 1) The exterior of the house was made of brick.  
 The gruff man has a harsh exterior but a kind heart.  
 2) Exterior paint must be durable to withstand the weather.
- # 67 **vivacious** (adj.) - lively, animated  
 The kindergarten teacher was exhausted at the end of each day from trying to keep up with her vivacious students.
- # 68 **idle** (adj.) - doing nothing, not working, not busy  
 ( $\neq$  involved in productive activity, working)  
 When students feel overwhelmed with school work, they long to relax during the idle days of summer.
- idol** (noun) - a person or thing worshipped or greatly admired
- # 69 **interior** (noun, adj.) - the inside; on the inside, inner ( $\neq$  exterior)  
 We hired an interior decorator to help furnish our livingroom.
- # 70 **prudent** (adj.) - very wise ( $\neq$  foolish)  
 It would be prudent to save some of your income for a time when you might not be able to work.
- # 71 **deter** (verb) - to keep back, block, or hinder (- someone from doing something, - something from happening)  
 1) The barking dog deterred me from crossing the neighbor's yard.  
**deterrent** (noun) - something that hinders  
 2) A warning sign and a strong fence are deterrents to intruders.
- # 72 **ponder** (verb) - to consider carefully, to think over seriously  
 to ponder a problem, a meaning, the cause of something)  
 You should ponder the long-term effects of dropping out of school.
- # 73 **herbivorous** (adj.) - plant-eating  
**herbivore** - (noun) animal that feeds exclusively on plants  
 Cattle are herbivorous animals. Cows are herbivores.
- # 74 **genial** (adj.) - friendly, cheerful, pleasant ( $\neq$  disagreeable)  
 Grandma was glad to see us again and gave us a genial welcome.
- # 75 **pugnacious** (adj.) - fond of fighting; quarrelsome (person only)  
 ( $\neq$  diplomatic, peace-loving)  
 The pugnacious taxi driver shouted at the driver whose car was stalled blocking the intersection.
- # 76 **carnivorous** (adj.) - meat-eating  
**carnivore** (noun) - animal that feeds exclusively on meat

- Cats, dogs, lions, tigers and bears are carnivorous animals.
- # 77 **omnivorous** (adj) - feeding on plants, grasses & meat  
**omnivore** (noun) - animal that eats all types of food  
 Human beings are omnivorous creatures.
- # 78 **desolate** (adj) (1) uninhabited, deserted (land, house)  
 Following the devastating volcano, the surrounding land remained desolate for years.  
 (2) unhappy, forlorn, lonely (person)  
 The lost child looked totally desolate until he was reunited with his parents.
- # 79 **charred** (adj) - scorched, burned to charcoal, blackened by burning  
 After the fire, a carpenter replaced the badly charred floor.
- # 80 **urban** (adj.) - having to do with a city (urban crime, pollution, transit)  
 Visitors from the Midwest farmland were overwhelmed by the crowds and excitement in East Coast urban centers.
- # 81 **rural** (adj.) - in the country (mountains, farmland, away from town)  
 Life in rural areas tends to be very quiet.
- # 82 **suburban** (adj.) - referring to area surrounding a city  
**suburbia**, the **suburbs** (noun) - the area outside of a city  
 Many people who live in Long Island suburban towns commute to work in New York City.
- # 83 **turmoil** (noun) - a disturbance, commotion, state of agitation  
 The classroom was in a state of turmoil when the guinea pigs escaped from their cage.  
 I experienced awful inner turmoil when the car hijacker pointed a gun at my forehead and told me to get out of the car and leave my sleeping baby on the seat.
- # 84 **conflict** (noun) - a fight or struggle  
 The Super Bowl is the most celebrated conflict in football.  
 The UN General Assembly discussed the never-ending conflict in the Middle East.
- # 85 **rival** (verb) to compete, to equal or match  
 (noun) an opponent or competitor  
 (1) No one could ever rival Frank Sinatra's singing.  
 The stores rival each other in beautiful window displays.  
 (2) Pepsi is CocaCola's chief rival in the soda industry.
- # 86 **random** (adj) - by chance or with no plan (a random guess, plan, choice)  
 Mrs. Skodol uses a lottery to make a random selection of students to go on trips with Mr. Barsky.  
**at random** (noun) - She picked a card at random from the deck.