

7 SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

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backing /'bækɪŋ/ Noun

backing for a person or a proposal is support from someone in a position of authority

Collocates: financial backing

with his backing, the project managed to get extra funding | the scheme has European backing | he has the unanimous backing of his party | the company received strong financial backing | unfortunately, our main sponsor withdrew his backing before we could finish the project

Verb: *back*

the government has refused to back the scheme

breakthrough /'breɪkθruː/ Noun

a *breakthrough* is an important discovery that is made, especially after a lot of effort

Collocates: a breakthrough in something | make a breakthrough

a major breakthrough in the fight against AIDS | scientists said it was an important breakthrough | thanks to a recent medical breakthrough, the condition can now be treated | the laboratory made a major breakthrough

breed /briːd/ Verb

when animals *breed*, they have baby animals. If people *breed* animals, they keep them and put them together so that they will produce baby animals

scientists have been breeding see-through frogs and fish | the frogs were bred for educational purposes | they bred dairy cows, horses, and pigs | two owls moved into our shed and bred successfully

Noun: *breeder* | Noun: *breed*

a horse breeder | a family of cattle breeders | there are many different breeds of rabbit around the world (many different kinds of rabbit)

conclusive /kən'kluːsɪv/ Adjective

conclusive evidence is evidence that proves something is definitely true

the evidence is pretty conclusive | the results were absolutely conclusive | there was no conclusive proof that Sneed had stolen the car | there is no conclusive research on this topic yet | the report claimed to have found conclusive scientific evidence

Adverb: *conclusively* | Verb: *conclude* |

Noun: *conclusion* || Opposite – Adjective: *inconclusive*

a scientific theory is worthless until it has been conclusively proven | the evidence conclusively shows the effects of global warming | an investigation concluded that the car manufacturers were to blame | he concluded that population growth will cause poverty | the judge arrived at the conclusion that Tyrrell was guilty | the results of the test were inconclusive

devise /dɪ'vaɪz/ Verb

if you *devise* something, you invent something new, or think of a plan for doing something

scientists have devised a way of predicting earthquakes | he has devised a number of vocabulary tests | we devised a plan to keep the hospital open at weekends | engineers devised a way of replacing the broken mechanism | students are encouraged to devise their own research methods

disorder /dɪs'ɔː(r)də(r)/ Noun

a *disorder* is a medical problem or illness

the genetic disorder was more common than they had realised | our daughter had an eating disorder | the hospital specialises in treating people with personality disorders | sleep disorders are very common

duplicate /'djuːplɪkət/ Verb

if you *duplicate* something, you do something that has already been done by you or by someone else

other scientists have yet to duplicate the results | the error was duplicated on both computers, suggesting it was a software issue | there's no reason you can't duplicate your sister's success at university | we had duplicated work already done in the Manchester laboratory

Noun: *duplicate* | Adjective: *duplicate*

he looks like an exact duplicate of his father | the letter was lost in the post but luckily we had kept a duplicate | a duplicate copy of the contract | my neighbour has a duplicate key in case I lose mine

extract /ɪk'strækt/ Verb

if you *extract* something from somewhere, you remove it from there, often with some difficulty

Collocates: extract something from somewhere

they had to extract DNA from a banana | olive oil is extracted by pressing the fruit | salt and other minerals are extracted here | this process allows them to extract the fat from the animal bones

Noun: *extraction*

the land was sold for oil and gas extraction | an efficient extraction method for obtaining coal

fragrance /'freɪgrəns/ Noun

a *fragrance* is a very nice smell. Perfume can also be called *fragrance*

he liked the delicate fragrance of the flowers | pineapples have a sweet fragrance when they are ripe | a lovely fragrance filled the room | please avoid wearing strong perfume or other fragrances in the office

Adjective: *fragrant*

the plants were highly fragrant | the leaves gave off a fragrant smell

insert /ɪn'sɜ:(r)t/ Verb

if you *insert* something into something else, you put it inside the other thing

Collocates: insert something in/into something

they insert probes into the brains of rats | insert the new battery into the back of the phone | how can I insert my signature into a pdf document? | the doctor inserted a needle into my arm | her hand shook slightly as she inserted the key in the lock

Noun: *insertion* | Noun: *insert*

Collocates: the insertion of something

regular insertion and removal of the plug can make the wires come loose | careless needle insertion can cause bruising | some advertisers place inserts in the magazine (loose pages carrying advertising)

pave the way /ˌpeɪv ðə 'weɪ/ Phrase

if something *paves the way*, it creates the right conditions for a later situation to develop

Collocates: pave the way for something | pave the way to something

the findings could pave the way for new techniques | greater understanding of the disease will pave the way for better treatments | his resignation paved the way for new elections | cultural exchanges paved the way to better diplomatic relations

probe /prəʊb/ Noun

a *probe* is a long thin medical instrument that doctors put inside part of someone's body in order to examine it. A *probe* can also be an investigation into something

they stuck probes into the brains of rats | the doctor inserted a probe into her ear | the probe was connected to a computer screen | police conducted a probe into the incident

Verb: *probe*

my wound was probed and cleaned | she gently probed the area for any sign of infection

procedure /prə'si:dʒə(r)/ Noun

a *procedure* is a set of actions that you follow in order to do something correctly. In a hospital, a *procedure* is a particular medical treatment or operation

Collocates: normal/correct/proper procedure

there are concerns about possible negative effects of the procedure | that's our normal procedure | what's the usual procedure for making reservations? | you didn't follow the correct procedure | the company's standard procedures for taking on new staff | he underwent two procedures to repair his heart | the university had failed to follow proper procedures

Adjective: *procedural*

the appeal was dismissed on procedural grounds (because the proper procedure had not been followed) | procedural irregularities (actions that are not part of the correct procedure)

shield /ʃi:ld/ Noun

a *shield* is an object that soldiers used to hold in front of themselves for protection when they were fighting. A *shield* is also any object that protects people from a particular danger

Collocates: a shield against something

they want to build a sun shield in space to prevent global warming | police started using riot shields in 1970 | the fence acted as a shield against the wind | a missile defence shield

Verb: *shield*

he used his hand to shield his eyes from the bright sunlight | thick walls effectively shielded the classroom from the summer heat

slippery slope /slɪpəri 'sləʊp/ Noun

if you say that something is a *slippery slope*, you mean that a situation will become much worse or more extreme and it will be almost impossible to prevent that from happening

to me, the whole experiment is a slippery slope | I agreed to help out at weekends, but I was afraid this was the top of a slippery slope

stimulus /'stɪmjʊləs/ Noun

a *stimulus* is something which causes a particular reaction or activity

Collocates: a stimulus for something

the development of the railways acted as a stimulus for the Industrial Revolution | the workshop is intended to provide a stimulus for creativity | research into how we process visual stimuli

Verb: *stimulate* | Noun: *stimulation*

the policy failed in its attempt to stimulate the economy | these toys will stimulate your child's imagination | the main aim is the stimulation of the global economy

thin end of the wedge /θɪn end əv ðə 'wedʒ/ Phrase

if you say that something is the *thin end of the wedge*, you mean that although it is not seriously bad at the moment, it will certainly lead to a situation becoming much worse

to me, this experiment represents the thin end of the wedge | closing the canteen in the evening is the thin end of the wedge – they'll shut it permanently next

undertake /ˌʌndə(r)'teɪk/ Verb

if you *undertake* a task, project, job, etc., you agree that you should do it and you start to do it

researchers undertook the survey to see if there was a link between attitudes and health | the new government undertook a programme of economic rebuilding | he gladly undertook the task of interviewing the candidates for the job | you'll need to undertake further training if you want to get ahead in your career

Noun: *undertaking*

building the railway during the winter was an ambitious undertaking | think before you buy a very old house – it can be a very expensive undertaking

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accelerate /ək'seləreɪt/ Verb

if something *accelerates*, it starts to move or happen more quickly

the arms race accelerated in the 1950s | the pace of technological change is accelerating | we need to accelerate our progress on this project | the arrival of the railway accelerated the growth of the town

address /ə'dres/ Verb

if you *address* a problem or difficult situation, you make a serious attempt to understand it and solve it

Collocates: address a problem/issue

I have some personal problems I need to address | many countries still refuse to address the issue of global warming | we help patients address the challenge of living with cancer | the committee failed to address the question

arms race /'ɑ:(r)mz reɪs/ Noun

an *arms race* is a situation where two countries are each trying to build more weapons than the other

the arms race was accelerating at the time | nobody believes the arms race will bring lasting peace | talks were held to try and slow down the arms race | both companies are in a technological arms race (each company is trying to get better technology than the other)

colonial /kə'ləʊniəl/ Adjective

a *colony* is a country that is ruled by another, more powerful country. *Colonial* means relating to a colony or its ruling country

the story had obvious parallels with colonial exploitation | the old colonial powers left Africa in the 1960s | a rebellion against French colonial rule began in Algeria | English place names reflect the city's colonial past

Noun: *colony*

Georgia became a royal colony in 1752 | the last African colonies were granted independence in 1972

devastation /,devə'steɪʃ(ə)n/ Noun uncount

devastation is a lot of destruction and damage over a wide area

it's difficult for us to understand the sheer scale of the devastation | the storm caused widespread devastation across the region | a scene of utter devastation

Verb: *devastate* | Adjective: *devastating* |

Adverb: *devastatingly* | Adjective: *devastated*

if there's an accident it could devastate the whole area | a bomb devastated the city centre | the country has been devastated by war | we saw the devastating effects of the bombing | the devastating consequences of flooding | the utterly devastating power of modern weapons | a devastatingly powerful bomb | the attack was devastatingly successful | aid was sent in to the devastated region | the rebuilding of devastated cities after the war

hang /hæŋ/ Verb

if something is left *hanging*, it has not been answered or dealt with properly. If people are left *hanging*, they have not been given enough information and are still wondering about something

the film's ending leaves several questions hanging | the last ten pages were missing, and I was left hanging | I can't believe you just left us hanging with no explanation at all

intent /ɪn'tent/ Adjective

if you are *intent* on doing something, you are concentrating very hard on it and determined to succeed

Collocates: intent on/upon (doing) something

the government is shown as being intent on disrupting the freedom of Internet users | she was intent upon winning the election | he was so intent on finishing his book that he forgot to get off the train

Noun: *intention* | Adjective: *intentional* |

Adverb: *intentionally* | Verb: *intend* | Adjective: *intended* ||

Opposites – Adjective: *unintentional* |

Adverb: *unintentionally* | Adjective: *unintended*

Collocates: intend to do something | intend doing something

it was always my intention to move back to Scotland | surely not everyone in the room has bad intentions! | I hope his dishonesty was not intentional | it was an act of intentional destruction | Gordon denied that he intentionally left the door open | I would never intentionally hurt anyone | I don't intend going back to school for another year | the two parties intend to work together after the election | several bombs missed the intended target | who is the intended audience for this book? | there were a few unintentional jokes in the speech | the mistake was my fault, but it was unintentional | the ending of the film was unintentionally funny | he worries about unintentionally hurting his children | the law of unintended consequences (the idea that when you try and achieve something positive, something negative will also happen by accident) | the announcement had the unintended effect of frightening the older residents

lame /leɪm/ Adjective

a *lame* argument, excuse, joke, etc. is one that is very weak and unconvincing

Collocates: a lame argument/excuse/joke

a chilling thriller became a lame comedy | saying your phone was in the other room is a rather lame excuse | it's a pretty lame argument to come up with after such a long time | the film was full of the lamest jokes imaginable

metaphor /'metəfɔ:(r)/ Noun

metaphor is a way of describing something by calling it something else which you think is the same in some way, though not in all ways. For example, if you say you saw an army of children, you mean there were a lot of them, because an army has a lot of people in it, but you don't mean that the children were soldiers

Collocates: a mixed/extended metaphor

Avatar can be seen as a metaphor for the struggles for control of the Internet | we create metaphors by exploiting basic word meanings in order to refer to something else | an extended metaphor (a metaphor that carries on into the next sentence and beyond) | his writing was rich in metaphor | a mixed metaphor (one which uses two different meanings in a confusing way) | the poem employs an extended metaphor in which anger is described as fire

Adjective: *metaphorical* | Adverb: *metaphorically*

Collocates: a metaphorical sense | metaphorically speaking

the plot describes a journey in both a literal and metaphorical sense | a highly metaphorical use of language | she used the word 'sugar' metaphorically | Russia is often metaphorically referred to as a bear |

she has her head in the clouds again, metaphorically speaking

mutate /mju:'teɪt/ Verb

if a living thing *mutates*, it becomes different from how it was before because of changes in its genes

Collocates: mutate into something

a sea creature that had been mutated by radiation | the two diseases combined and mutated into something much worse | the condition is the result of a number of mutated cells

Noun: *mutation* | Adjective: *mutant*

a genetic mutation that is found in 30% of the population | scientists were surprised to find mutant cells still alive after a week

plug /plʌg/ Verb

if people are *plugged* into something useful, they know about it and connect with it so that they can benefit from it
the planet is a living network that the natives plug into through fibre-optic cables | several local businesses are already plugged into the scheme | how can we help those people who aren't plugged into the community?

prompt /prɒmpt/ Verb

if something *prompts* an action or *prompts* someone to do something, it is the reason for the action to start happening or for the person to start doing something

Collocates: prompt someone to do something

the film prompted me to think about what makes sci-fi so great | the decision prompted loud protests from the unions | this large number of complaints prompted the creation of a quality control department | what he saw in the classroom prompted him to write a textbook

Noun: *prompt*

an on-screen prompt (something on a computer screen that tells you it is ready for the next instruction) | Harry started yawning, which was my prompt to get up and leave

rebel /rɪ'bel/ Verb

if people *rebel*, they start to fight against or oppose the people who have authority over them

Collocates: rebel against something

America rebelled against the high taxes on tea in 1773 | they rebelled against the cruelty of their working conditions | when she was told she could not go to university, she openly rebelled | he eventually rebelled and left home without even saying goodbye

Noun: *rebel* /'reb(ə)/ | Adjective: *rebellious* |

Noun: *rebellion*

the town was attacked by rebels during the night | 26 soldiers and eight rebels were killed in the battle | rebellious teenagers | his rebellious attitude caused him problems at school | the rebellion was quickly crushed | an armed rebellion

resonate /'rezəneɪt/ Verb

if something *resonates* with people, it seems important to them and has a special meaning for them

Collocates: resonate with someone or something

the film resonated with the political situation at the time | if our message resonates with you, please let us know

by liking our videos | Miller's play still resonates strongly with many Americans | the truth and importance of his words still resonate today

Adjective: *resonant* | Noun: *resonance*

the rally ended with an emotionally resonant speech from the president | his voice was resonant with menace | music of great power and cultural resonance

revelation /,revə'leɪʃ(ə)n/ Noun

a *revelation* is surprising information that suddenly becomes known after being secret

what emerged was a shocking revelation of misconduct at the highest levels of government | the revelation caused considerable embarrassment | revelations emerged that the journalist had bribed several police officers | revelations of an even more extraordinary nature were still to come

Verb: *reveal* | Adjective: *revelatory*

Collocates: reveal that

I can reveal that next week's guest on my show will be Lady Gaga | the article revealed the truth about corruption in the police | travelling across Asia when I was 19 was a revelatory experience

rouse /raʊz/ Verb

if something *rouses* you, or if you are *roused*, you are made to feel a strong emotion, often with the result that you feel very strongly that you have to take action about something

Collocates: rouse someone to/into (doing) something

fear roused them into action again | the speech roused our spirit of cooperation | he roused himself for a final effort | she was roused to anger by what she saw

send packing /send 'pækɪŋ/ Phrase

if you *send* someone *packing*, you tell them very firmly to go away or force them to go away

the invaders were sent packing | he knew she'd send him packing if she found out what he'd done | after a bad-tempered election campaign, voters sent him packing

strand /strænd/ Noun

a *strand* is one of several parts that make up an idea, plan, or story

the ending leaves a number of plot strands hanging | other cities didn't take up the other strands of Bilbao's regeneration project | there were two different strands to his argument | this is an important strand in current philosophical thinking

submit /səb'mɪt/ Verb

if you *submit* to something, you agree to allow it or obey it because you do not have the power or authority to refuse

Collocates: submit to something

in the book, the women all submit to their husbands' wills | I had to submit to a thorough search at the airport | he had been taught to submit to authority | I wasn't prepared to submit to bullying

Noun: *submission* | Adjective: *submissive* |

Adverb: *submissively*

he demanded complete submission to his will | they held their hands up in submission | his son was obedient and submissive | I don't want submissive employees – I want people who can make their own decisions | he crept submissively out of the room | she bowed her head submissively

test /test/ Noun

a *test* is something that tries to find out how well something works. If something stands a *test*, it is considered to be successful. To *stand the test of time* means to have survived successfully over a long period and still be considered good

Avatar is one story that has stood the test of time | it looked all right at first, but it didn't stand the test of proper examination | this theory cannot stand the test of serious reasoning | his nerves stood the test and he came through the interview well

unfold /ʌn'fəʊld/ Verb

if a story *unfolds*, events happen one after the other and more becomes known about it

Collocates: a story/mystery/plot unfolds

as the plot unfolds, we discover that they are actually robots | reading the letters is like seeing a great mystery unfold | I want to see how the story unfolds | news websites were updated every few minutes as the crisis unfolded

utter /'ʌtə(r)/ Adjective

you use *utter* to emphasise how bad something is or how strong a particular feeling is

I hate the utter stupidity of action films | everything you've just said was complete and utter nonsense | I had never experienced such utter despair | Conroy displayed utter contempt for his victims

Adverb: *utterly*

this whole situation is utterly absurd | he felt utterly helpless

wreak /ri:k/ Verb

if something *wreaks* havoc or destruction, it causes a lot of damage or disorder

Collocates: *wreak havoc/destruction/devastation, etc. (on something)*

the storm wreaked widespread destruction along the coast | a second computer virus wreaked havoc on our systems

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anomaly /ə'nɒməli/ Noun

an *anomaly* is something that looks like a mistake because it is different from what would normally be expected

they look like a statistical anomaly | there appeared to be several anomalies in the accounts | it was several weeks before anyone noticed the anomaly | scientists were unable to explain these anomalies

Adjective: *anomalous*

there was something anomalous about the test results | the description seemed rather anomalous

anonymously /ə'nɒnɪməsli/ Adverb

if you do something *anonymously*, you do it without your name being known

it was published anonymously on the Web | you can call this number anonymously and get advice | the articles were written anonymously | the newspaper will not publish letters sent anonymously

Adjective: *anonymous* | Noun: *anonymity*

she won over £1m on the lottery and chose to remain anonymous | an anonymous caller told the police where to find the body | no need to register, so anonymity is guaranteed | the witness demanded anonymity before agreeing to appear in court

attribute /ə'trɪbjʊt/ Verb

if something is *attributed* to something else, the second thing is considered to be the reason for or cause of the first thing

Collocates: *attribute something to something*

Can the fall in murders be attributed to government policy? | the deaths were attributed to heart disease | to what do you attribute your success? | the union attributed staff shortages to low wages, which meant no one wanted to work there | problems on the roads were attributed to a combination of fog and ice

belief /bɪ'li:f/ Noun

belief is certainty of the truth of something

Collocates: *belief in something*

my belief is that we will win the election comfortably | contrary to popular belief, crime has been falling (most people think the opposite) | she has a strong belief in God

commission /kə'mɪʃ(ə)n/ Verb

if you *commission* someone, you formally ask them to do an important piece of work, such as write an expert report, paint a portrait, or design a building. A *commission* is the job that has to be done. The group of people who work on preparing such a report are also called a *commission*

who was the report commissioned by? | we've commissioned some research into the matter | audience figures were good and the BBC commissioned a second series | in 1998, NPG began commissioning portraits of presidents, starting with George H. W. Bush | according to a report commissioned by Greenpeace, a serious accident could occur

Noun: *commission*

she has received several public commissions | another commission was established to investigate the bank's failure | the commission had 30 days in which to submit its report

contract /kən'trækt/ Verb

if you *contract* an illness, you start to have it

there are four common ways of contracting the disease | at least 20 people in the city contracted AIDS last year

counter- /ˌkaʊnt(ə)r-/ Prefix

you use *counter-* in front of some adjectives to make an adjective that is the opposite. For example, something that is *counterintuitive* is not what your intuition would

expect. Something that is *counterproductive* does not produce the result that was intended

this statistic seems counterintuitive, but only if you ignore the other evidence | too much time in the classroom can be counterproductive

dump /dʌmp/ Verb

if you *dump* something somewhere, you throw it there carelessly and untidily. When there is a lot of rain or snow, you can say that it was *dumped*

two feet of snow were dumped on the South of England last night | the storm dumped twice the usual annual snowfall in only three days | the cold snap (period of cold weather) that hit Europe has dumped snow as far south as Rome and even North Africa

empowering /ɪm'pauə(r)ɪŋ/ Adjective

if something is *empowering*, it helps you find the strength and authority to take control of a situation

knowing the difference between good and bad stats is empowering | I found the course empowering and life changing | it was an extremely empowering moment when I realised I could say no

Verb: *empower* | Noun: *empowerment*

we educate and empower consumers about health insurance decisions | the aim is to empower students to work independently | self empowerment has to come from within | the course gave me a sense of personal empowerment

end /end/ Noun

an *end* is a result that someone wants to achieve, or the purpose of what they are trying to do

the company twisted the figures to suit its own ends | the end justifies the means (if the result is important, it doesn't matter how you achieve it) | he was accused of misleading the public to achieve his own ends

exhibit /ɪg'zɪbɪt/ Verb

if someone *exhibits* a particular quality, emotion, or behaviour, they are seen to have that quality or emotion, or to behave in that way

those kids who had been kept at home exhibited more aggression | they're simply exhibiting normal childhood behaviour | many of them exhibit signs of clinical depression

flawed /flɔ:d/ Adjective

if something is *flawed*, it has some mistakes

Collocates: *fatally/fundamentally/deeply flawed*
the research was fundamentally flawed | he had a flawed understanding of economics | there was a good deal of flawed reasoning in the article | his argument was deeply flawed

Noun: *flaw*

Collocates: *a fundamental/serious flaw | a minor flaw*
the analysis had several fundamental flaws | we fixed a few minor flaws in the program

follow-up /'fɒləʊʌp/ Noun

a *follow-up* is something that is done to add to or to check that earlier work was done properly and successfully

a follow-up study confirmed the findings | a follow-up visit to the doctor two weeks after the operation | patients with this condition require follow-up on a regular basis | he refused to answer my follow-up questions

Phrasal verb: *follow up*

all patients were followed up within six weeks | there were several aspects of the project that needed following up

fundamentally /ˌfʌndə'ment(ə)li/ Adverb

fundamentally is used to emphasise that you are talking about the very basic and most important aspects of something

the research was fundamentally flawed | the analysis was fundamentally wrong | I fundamentally disagree with him on the topic | he promised to fundamentally transform the company | social media has fundamentally changed the way our marketing department works

Adjective: *fundamental*

there is a fundamental difference between the two approaches | this research is of fundamental importance for the future of the university | housing has been declared a fundamental human right

grip /grɪp/ Noun

if you have a *grip* on something, you are holding it firmly in your hand. If you have a *grip* on a problem or difficult situation, you are in control of it and able to prevent any problems developing. If you *get to grips* with something, you make a determined effort to understand it or learn how to do it

Collocates: *get/have/take a grip on something | get to grips with something*

we've got to get a grip on costs | Clara felt her grip on the situation slipping | I'm finally getting to grips with social media | we need to get to grips with stats | he needs to take a grip on himself (he needs to control his actions more) | luckily, he already had a grip on things by the time I got back

hole /həʊl/ Noun

if there are *holes* in a story, plan, or theory, there are serious weaknesses or faults in it

his account was full of holes | it was an interesting theory, but on closer scrutiny there were holes in it | there are more holes in his story than there are on a golf course

inflate /ɪn'fleɪt/ Verb

if you *inflate* something such as a tyre or balloon, you fill it with air. If you *inflate* the amount or influence of something, you make it bigger or more important than it really is or than it is meant to be

they were accused of inflating the figures | it is alleged that he artificially inflated his fees | hotels inflate their prices over the holiday period

Adjective: *inflated*

he had an inflated sense of his own importance | we pay inflated prices for our gas | British industry is suffering from inflated energy costs

inform /ɪn'fɔ:(r)m/ Verb

if something *informs* a decision or development, it influences it

statistics are used to inform policy development | our decision was informed by a desire to finish the project as soon as possible | lack of resources informed the later strategy

lead /li:d/ Verb

if a newspaper or news broadcast *leads* with a story, that is the most important story and is dealt with first

newspapers led with the state visit of the Emperor of Japan | TV news led with the story about flooding in Cumbria

Noun: *lead*

it was the lead story in every national paper that morning | the lead item on the news bulletin | the shooting made the lead on News at Ten

leap /li:p/ Verb

if a number or quantity *leaps*, it suddenly gets much bigger

the number of injuries leapt suddenly | inflation leapt to 20%

Noun: *leap*

the cost of petrol has taken a big leap | there's been another leap in unemployment

peer /piə(r)/ Noun

your *peers* are people who are the same as you in terms of education, age, and status. If a piece of research is *peer reviewed*, it is examined by several people who are also expert in that field to make sure it is of good quality

Collocates: peer review | peer pressure

has the research been peer reviewed? | engineers in the UK are not as well paid as their peers in France | all submissions for the journal have to undergo peer review | he started smoking because of peer pressure (because he wanted to be like the other people he was friends with and who smoked)

pressure /'preʃə(r)/ Verb

if someone is *pressured* into doing something they do not really want to do, they are forcefully persuaded to do it

Collocates: pressure someone into doing something | pressure someone to do something

researchers may get pressured into finding positive results | over 70% of girls in that age group felt pressured to be beautiful | party officials pressured several candidates to withdraw | the mayor pressured the police to make a swift arrest

Noun: *pressure*

Collocates: under pressure | apply pressure | put pressure on someone

the council is coming under pressure to save money | my dad put a lot of pressure on me to get into Oxford

random /'rændəm/ Adjective

random things or events happen without being planned or without a known method so you cannot know in advance what is going to happen

Collocates: at random

the sample group wasn't chosen at random | these were random events that were out of our control | English spelling often seems quite random | a set of completely random numbers | athletes have to submit to random drug tests

Adverb: *randomly* | Verb: *randomise*

the questions are randomly chosen | the computer randomly selects six numbers | the participants were randomised into three groups | each time, the cards appeared in a different randomised order

scrutiny /'skru:tɪni/ Noun uncount

scrutiny is careful examination and consideration of something. If something does not *stand up to scrutiny*, faults become apparent when you examine it carefully

the figures don't stand up to scrutiny | borrowers are facing increased scrutiny from the banks | their intention was to avoid public scrutiny | none of their claims survived scrutiny (they all turned out to be false)

Verb: *scrutinise*

the company figures were scrutinised by two independent accountants | all the details of the land purchase were closely scrutinised

time frame /'taɪm freɪm/ Noun

a *time frame* is a limited amount of time that is available for a task to be carried out

there was only a narrow time frame for the study | the time frame for each lesson is between 30 and 40 minutes | you must send in your application within a two-week time frame | all this had to happen in a five-minute time frame | the time frame is too short for me to be sure we can do everything necessary

toss /tɒs/ Verb

if you *toss* a coin, you throw it in the air and let it fall to the ground, then you look to see which side faces up. The two sides are called heads and tails. You sometimes do this to make a choice between two things. For example, if you can't decide whether to go to the cinema or a gig, you *toss* a coin, and if it's heads you go to the cinema, if it's tails you go to the gig

the probability of tossing a coin twice and getting two heads is 25% | let's toss a coin to see who goes first

Noun: *toss* | Noun: *toss-up*

the referee called the two captains over for the toss (at the start of a football match, to decide which team will kick off) | it's a toss-up where to go for the best food (several places are all equally good)

trustworthy /'trʌs(t),wɜ:(r)ði/ Adjective

someone or something that is *trustworthy* is reliable, truthful, and can be trusted

is the report trustworthy? | you need to appoint a trustworthy person to the job | his memory is not entirely trustworthy | we took financial advice from an independent, trustworthy source

twist /twɪst/ Verb

if you *twist* something such as the truth or someone's words, you present something in a slightly different and untrue way

the company twisted the figures to suit its own ends | don't twist my words, Jack | most politicians will twist the truth if they think it will win them a few more votes

Adjective: *twisted*

they'll justify what they do with their own twisted logic

variable /ˈveəriəb(ə)/ Noun

a *variable* is something which is different in different situations

a number of variables weren't covered by the data | water temperature is another independent variable | an example of a measured variable would be the height of a human being

Adjective: *variable* | Adverb: *variably* | Verb: *vary* |

Opposites – Adjective: *invariable* | Adverb: *invariably*

the quality of the paintings in the exhibition was variable | the colour of the apples is quite variable | one of the most variably sized mammals (there is a big range of sizes) | the car behaved variably over the 24 hours of the race | the cost varies according to the time of year | their range of skills varied widely | it was his invariable habit to wear a hat (he always wore a hat) | the effects of all the other factors was invariable | he was invariably late for meetings | the old man invariably wore a suit and tie

vested interest /ˈvestɪd ˈɪntrəst/ Noun

if you have a *vested interest* in something, you want it to happen or succeed because you will get a benefit or advantage from it. *Vested interests* are people or groups who will benefit from a particular situation

Collocates: a *vested interest* in (doing) something

the government has a vested interest in removing people from the unemployment figures | they have a vested interest in making sure all the students pass the exam | vested interests are eager for the war to continue so they can sell more weapons | the proposal was withdrawn following opposition from powerful vested interests

EXERCISES

PREPOSITIONS

- A Choose the correct preposition. Look up the word in bold if you need help.**
- 1 She was **intent** *for / upon / with* winning the election.
 - 2 He **rebelled** *against / about / for* his strict upbringing.
 - 3 She refused to **submit** *at / with / to* their unreasonable demands.
 - 4 They **attributed** the problems *about / to / over* the terrible weather.
 - 5 The team was chosen *with / after / at* **random**.
 - 6 She has a **vested interest** *for / in / about* her sister winning the prize.
- B Complete the sentences with the correct preposition. Look up the word in bold if you need help.**
- 1 A major **breakthrough** the fight against AIDS.
 - 2 The oil has to be **extracted** the land.
 - 3 The doctor **inserted** a needle my arm.
 - 4 This research will **pave the way** a better understanding of the disease.
 - 5 This cream is a powerful **shield** the sun's rays.
 - 6 His presentation will provide a **stimulus** discussion.

WORD FAMILIES

- C Complete the expressions on the right with the correct form of the word in bold.**
- 1 send it **anonymously** an caller
 - 2 **flawed** research there were some
 - 3 stand up to **scrutiny** the results
 - 4 an **anomaly** in the data provide data
 - 5 the genes **mutated** a genetic
 - 6 **undertake** a task an expensive
- D Tick the words in the unit that are both a verb and a noun.**
- 1 breed
 - 2 duplicate
 - 3 probe
 - 4 shield
 - 5 submit
 - 6 empower
 - 7 resonate

COLLOCATIONS

- E Match the adjectives (1–6) with the nouns (a–f). Look up the adjectives if you need help.**
- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 a trustworthy | a) stupidity |
| 2 random | b) excuse |
| 3 utter | c) evidence |
| 4 a lame | d) source |
| 5 conclusive | e) numbers |
| 6 colonial | f) powers |
- F Circle the noun that DOESN'T collocate with the verb. Look up the verb if you need help.**
- 1 a play / story / mystery unfolds
 - 2 wreak havoc / destruction / a mess
 - 3 address a problem / issue / breakthrough
 - 4 twist the truth / figures / logic
 - 5 undertake a task / profession / job
- G Complete the missing adjectives. Look up the nouns if you need help.**
- 1 f _ _ _ _ _ l backing
 - 2 a g _ _ _ _ c disorder
 - 3 follow the c _ _ _ _ t procedure
 - 4 a m _ _ _ d metaphor
 - 5 a s _ _ _ _ _ g revelation
 - 6 a d _ _ _ _ _ e fragrance