

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #1

1. alliteration
putting together two or more words which start with the same sound
Abundant use of alliteration is almost always annoying.
2. anecdote
a short account of something interesting or funny that happened in the past
She told a humorous anecdote regarding her grandparents' dog.
3. culminate
to reach a climax or highest point
Hopefully, all his training will culminate in his being chosen for the team.
4. denouement
the outcome, solution, the final revelation
The denouement did not come until the last paragraph of the book.
5. deus ex machina
in writing, any sudden, unlikely event used by a writer to solve a problem and end the story
The deus ex machina in science fiction can seem very plausible.
6. dialect
colloquial speech, a regional language or way of speaking
The dialect in Uncle Tom's Cabin was very hard to read because I haven't had much experience with this type of dialect.
7. dramatic illusion
the willing suspension of disbelief; the brief assumption that a fictional event is real
The dramatic illusion created by *Jurassic Park* had me believing I could see a live dinosaur.
8. flashback
an interruption in the chronological plot sequence which shows an earlier event
The use of flashbacks can be confusing if the story is not well-written.
9. foreshadowing
hints about what is to come; a plot device to create suspense and anticipation
A good mystery writer's use of foreshadowing throughout the story that will culminate in a believable but exciting climax and denouement.
10. genre
a type or category of writing or other works of art
Adventure, fantasy, historical fiction and biographies are some of the different literary genres.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #2

1. botanist
one who studies plant life
The botanist was amazed at the color of the hybrid rose.
2. cataract
large waterfall; heavy downpour; opacity of the eye, causing partial or total blindness
Portaging around some smaller rapids, we could hear the cataract long before we could see it.
3. doughty (doubt-ee)
brave, valiant, eminent, noble
The doughty hero in fairy tales is likely to be a prince.
4. foray
a sudden or irregular military advance, invasion, or raid
The successful foray into enemy territory won the young officer a field promotion.
5. forging
shaping of metal by hammering; pushing onward
The blacksmith is forging a new set of shoes for the horse.
6. kayaks
canoes which are completely covered except for an opening in the middle for the paddlers or kayakers to sit
Our friends took their kayaks on a trip through the Queen Charlotte Islands.
7. limbo
a place of oblivion (neither heaven nor hell); temporary suspension
I was between jobs and felt like I was living in limbo.
8. nomadic
wandering, not having a permanent residence
He lived a nomadic life in Europe for a year after he left college.
9. roil
to churn up; to make muddy by stirring
He felt his stomach roil as the time for the test drew near.
10. sojourn
to dwell for a time, a longish visit
The doctor prescribed a long sojourn in a hot, dry climate to cure my asthma.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #3

1. almanac
a book containing useful information on weather, tide tables, holidays, etc., published annually
We looked in the almanac to determine when low tide would be.
2. computations
mathematical numberings or reckonings to arrive at an answer
Our computations were incorrect and our simulated rocket missed its target.
3. foul
offensive, dirty, disgusting, unfair, out of bounds
The referee ruled that the ball was over the line and therefore it was foul.
4. latitude
freedom from narrow restrictions;
a region considered with reference to its distance north or south of the equator
The teacher allowed some latitude when we were designing the posters for the Open House.
5. longitude
a region considered with reference to its position east or west of Greenwich, England, measured in degrees and running from pole to pole
Navigators use degrees of longitude to compute locations.
6. meridian
any imaginary circle through the earth that includes the poles
The Prime Meridian runs through Greenwich in England.
7. slate
a thin-layered, hard, fine-grained rock; a list of proposed candidates;
a small, hand-held blackboard
The children in the old schoolhouse wrote their answer on a slate.
8. slew
turn or swing around a fixed point
The car slewed over the center line because of ice.
9. swagger
to strut arrogantly, to boast or brag
The bully liked to swagger across the playground.
10. zenith
the high point, culmination, peak, summit
The sun is at its zenith at noon.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #4

1. authorities
those in command or in charge;
persons with credibility in specific areas of knowledge
In order to prove her point in the debate, she went to the library to research the authorities.
2. cower
back away from in fear, cringe
The dog cowered under the bed during the storm.
3. crone
an old ewe; an old withered woman
The children were unkind to the hunchbacked crone who lived in the neighborhood.
4. crotchety
cantankerous, crabby, full of peculiar whims
The crotchety man yelled at the children when they played ball near his house.
5. gourd
a plant belonging to the squash family;
the dried, hollowed-out shell of a squash-like plant
They used a gourd to dip water from the stream.
6. gratify
please, satisfy
The teacher was gratified to see all her students graduate.
7. hearth
the floor of a fireplace which often extends out into the room
We gathered close to the hearth during the last cold spell.
8. heiress
a female who is expected to inherit great wealth
All the young men swarmed around the heiress and ignored the other young ladies at the party.
9. passion
extreme, compelling emotions; the object of any strong desire or fondness
His passion for buying electronic gadgets led to financial problems.
10. thatch
a roof or roofing of straw, rushes, palm leaves, etc.;
the material for this type of roof; to apply this type of roof
They replaced the thatch on the cottage at the lake.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #5

1. aerial
placed in the air, high, lofty, elevated
The car's aerial had been broken by the falling branch.
2. conservation
preservation from loss, decay or injury
Through conservation, we shall save the rain forests.
3. debris
scattered fragments, remains, rubbish
The debris from the accident was scattered over the roadway.
4. embryonic
in an early stage, undeveloped
Negotiations to buy the property were in an embryonic stage.
5. forage
to search for food or supplies; fodder for animals
The horses were left to forage for food in the old field.
6. incubate
keep in a favorable environment for development
The eggs were incubating behind the stove in the kitchen.
7. membrane
a thin layer or sheet used as a covering or lining
The membrane that surrounds the heart is quite strong.
8. migratory
roving, wandering, nomadic
The field workers led a migratory life.
9. rupture
break apart, burst
The boy's appendix ruptured during surgery.
10. shanty
a hut or shabby dwelling
The hobo used the shanty underneath the railroad bridge.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #6

Words missed spelling lists!

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #7

1. accelerate
speed up, hasten, bring nearer in time
Scientists believe exposure to the sun accelerates aging of the skin.
2. accent
n. a stress of the voice on a certain syllable;
a striking feature of an artistic composition
v. to stress or emphasize
The pillow added just the right color accent to the room.
3. maneuver
to manage or plan skillfully, to manipulate
They tried to maneuver the ship between the reefs.
4. massive
huge, large, imposing, ponderous, weighty
Cataloguing the books turned into a massive task.
5. orbiting
circling of an object, such as a planet moving around the sun
We couldn't see the comet that was orbiting our solar system.
6. reef
n. a ridge of sand or rock lying near the surface of the water
v. haul in on, cut down to size
The coral reefs near Australia are a popular diving site.
7. rendezvous
a previously appointed time and place for a meeting
The rendezvous for the different scouting parties was set for sunrise on Wednesday.
8. revolt
n. a rising up against some situation
v. to rise up against
The cause of the revolt was more than just lack of jobs.
9. secretive
tendency to conceal, not to be open or frank
The secretive way they were acting made me suspicious of them.
10. sullied - dirtied, soiled, tarnished, defiled
She felt sullied after overhearing the dirty joke.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #8

1. abroad
widely, with expansion, not confined to narrow limits; out of the country
My sister went abroad to study art.
2. appease
to calm, still, pacify, conciliate
The snack appeased my hunger pains.
3. compact
adj. dense, terse, taking little space
n. contract between two parties, a small case
v. to press closely together, to consolidate
They made a compact to only trade with each other.
4. conspicuous
easy to see, obvious, striking
The red shirt was certainly conspicuous with the white background.
5. indifferent
neutral, impartial, unconcerned, apathetic
Her parents were not indifferent concerning her progress report from school.
6. peril
danger, risk, jeopardy
With all the rain, the dam was in peril.
7. simultaneously
at the same time, in synchronization
The synchronized swimmers dove simultaneously.
8. submit
to yield or surrender, to defer to another; to offer one's own opinion, to suggest
The architect had to submit the building plans to the county.
9. trifle
n. something of little value; an English dessert
v. to act or talk without seriousness; to toy with
Please don't trifle with my affections.
10. verge
the edge, the brink, a boundary
He was on the verge of being through with his research paper.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #9

1. balk
v. to delay or thwart, to obstruct
n. anything left untouched; anything acting as an obstruction or hindrance
I knew he was going to balk at my suggestion that he turn off the television and finish his homework.
2. blemish
n. a spot, flaw, stain, defect, or shortcoming
v. to mark with deformity, to mar, to sully
The speeding ticket was the only blemish on her 30-year driving record.
3. cunning
adj. skillful, clever, shrewd, pleasingly attractive
n. knowledge, art skill, dexterity
He displayed a cunning knowledge of rare baseball cards.
4. dappled
marked with variegated spots, mottled
The rain created a dappled effect on her silk shirt.
5. dissent
v. to disagree, to differ from an established view
n. a declaration of disagreement; a minority opinion
The letter of dissent was sent to the Archbishop's office.
6. ledge
a shelf or shelf-like projection
She cowered beneath the ledge on the cliff to avoid the rockslide.
7. revel
v. to make merry, to be festive, to take pleasure in
n. merrymaking, boisterous festivity
He seemed to revel in the competition for the team.
8. serene
fair, clear, calm, undisturbed
Her serene expression led us to speculate she was not the waif she cunningly portrayed.
9. speculate
to contemplate or consider; to buy or sell with the intention of making quick money, to invest in a risky business venture
I asked them not to speculate on the situation until they had more information.
10. waif
a homeless child, a strayed animal found by chance that is without an owner
The waif was found wandering by the river in the park.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #10

1. assert
to declare with assurance, to insist on one's rights, to thrust oneself forward
Shy people are often told that they need to assert themselves.
2. boor
a rude, ill-mannered person
Only a boor would express himself by making obscene remarks.
3. contempt
a feeling toward something considered worthless or beneath notice; scorn, disregard
He showed his contempt for the speaker by walking out before the presentation was finished.
4. dogged
not giving in readily, persistent, stubborn
His dogged pursuit of rock stardom gave him little time to do homework or chores.
5. foil
v. to frustrate, to thwart, to balk
n. a long, thin fencing sword; a thin sheet or leaf of a metallic substance
The hero in the melodrama foiled the villain's plans.
6. forthright
straightforward, direct, frank
We appreciated the doctor's forthright approach when telling us about the treatment of the disease.
7. fracas (fray-cus)
a noisy quarrel, a brawl, a disturbance
The police were called because of the fracas in the stadium.
8. hamper
n. a large basket, usually with a cover
v. to shackle, to entangle, to impede progress
Not having transportation would hamper the social life of many teenagers.
9. lamine
to cover with thin layers, to press into a thin sheet or layer
Teachers often laminate posters with plastic so they will last for more than one school year.
10. recluse
one who lives alone, avoiding contact with other people; a hermit
Living by himself in the wilderness, the recluse became friends with many wild animals.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #11

1. annihilate
to reduce to nothing, to destroy absolutely
Scientists hope to annihilate the disease with a new vaccine.
2. collateral
anything of value that is pledged as additional security for a loan
My parents used their house as collateral for my college loan.
3. consensus
unanimity; general agreement especially in opinion
The jury finally reached a consensus on the tenth day of deliberation.
4. finesse
skill, craft, artfulness
He played the game with great finesse and won despite his small size.
5. fuselage
the body of an airplane without the wings and tail
The investigators were amazed that the fuselage was still in one piece after the crash.
6. mar
v. to make imperfect, to damage or spoil
n. a blemish or disfigurement
The scar did not mar her beauty but gave her an air of mystery.
7. rampant
violent and uncontrollable, widespread, flourishing, unchecked
The group tried to stop the rampant growth of pollution.
8. shiftless
lacking the will to accomplish, inefficient, lazy
No one wants other people to think they are shiftless.
9. tumult
commotion, disturbance, great noise, uproar
The tumult was tremendous when the school announced that there would be no Winter Break that year.
10. vendetta
a feud in which one tries to get revenge; a seeking of vengeance
The vigilante's vendetta against crime in the streets only succeeded in making matters worse.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #12

Words missed spelling lists!

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #13

1. abashed
disconcerted, ashamed, confused
He was abashed when his lack of knowledge on the subject was pointed out.
2. comprehend
understand, discern, grasp
The score on your test will show us whether you comprehend the text material.
3. converse
v. to associate, talk, commune, chat
n. the opposite
It is quite nice to hear the students converse in moderate decibels.
4. dispute
v. to argue, disagree, debate
n. strife, controversy, argument
It turned out that the playground dispute was over a rumor heard in the bathroom.
5. gape
yawn, stare at something wide-eyed
She gaped as she watched the tornado race through the town.
6. impulse
incentive, push, incitement, force, motive
He had a sudden impulse to walk away from his friends and talk to the new student.
7. intruder
one who thrusts in where he is not welcome, one who has no right to be where he is
The intruder sneaked quietly through the house.
8. melancholy
n. sadness, depression of spirits
adj. gloomy, pensive
A great melancholy had settled over the whole community after the defeat of their number one team.
9. soliloquy
speech given in a drama expressing one's feelings to the audience; talking to oneself
Alone on the stage, he soliloquized about the injustice of the court system.
10. vagrant
a tramp, hobo, a rover, idle wanderer
The vagrant came to the door hoping for a free meal.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #14

1. authentic
real, genuine, authorized
The letter telling me I had won the grand prize was authentic!
2. desolate
forlorn, barren, uninhabited, miserable, lonely
There are some desolate spots in eastern Washington.
3. emerge
come forth, become visible, appear
As I watched, the Loch Ness monster emerged from the lake.
4. errant
deviating from a particular course, wandering; itinerant, rambling, roving
The errant knight was having trouble finding a damsel in distress.
5. inflection
a turn, bend or curve, a change in the pitch or tone of the voice
Listening to the inflection of the speaker's voice is like reading between the lines.
6. malevolent
evil; wishing harm or ill toward others
The malevolent wind threatened to tear the rock climbers from their precarious perch.
7. menacing
threatening harm or evil
The large dog certainly looked menacing.
8. tamper
meddle with, interfere, change from the original
The police suspected the lock had been tampered with because of the scratch marks on the door.
9. twang
a sharp, vibrating sound, a nasal-sounding speaking
The release of the arrow made the bowstring twang loudly.
10. wheezily
hard, breathy sounds, whistling sounds
A person with allergies may breathe wheezily.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #15

1. antedating
preceding, belonging to an earlier time, happening earlier
Historians are discovering folktales that antedate written language.
2. literary
dealing with literature, belonging to letters
The literary discussions were fun and gained us points in reading.
3. luxuriant
elaborate, ornate, richly appointed; lush, fertile, thickly growing
Her luxuriant hair made her a candidate for shampoo commercials.
4. muse
ponder, meditate, study in silence
He mused about the future of his job as he read the latest government findings about environmental destruction.
5. patronizing
showing kindness in a condescending manner (treating someone like a child)
Her compliment was made so patronizingly that I felt insulted.
6. pensively
in a thoughtful manner; with seriousness or a degree of melancholy
He pensively considered career options now that he had failed the bar exam.
7. quiver
v. to shimmy or shake with fear, to tremble
n. a case for holding arrows
Did you quiver with fear when the earthquake struck?
8. reluctance
a feeling of not wanting to do or agree with someone; unwillingness
I felt a great reluctance to go along with the crowd as they booed the speaker.
9. stimulating
invigorating, exciting
Stimulating conversation at bedtime does not make it easy to go to sleep.
10. testily
fretfully, petulantly, in an irritated manner
He replied rather testily when I told him that his book had not come in with the latest shipment.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #16

1. belligerently
in a hostile or warlike manner
The toddler belligerently faced his mom and said, “NO!”
2. exotic
strangely beautiful, foreign; having charm of the unfamiliar
The horticulturist was unduly proud of his exotic tree that came all the way from Tibet.
3. flamboyant
bright, eye-catching, exotic; overdone
Her flamboyant hat was bright red, had a broad rim drooping over one eye, and was embellished with lace and long feathers.
4. meddlesome
inclined to interfere without right or propriety; bossy or nosy
The meddlesome sixth grader wouldn’t let the little kids play their version of four-square.
5. nauseating
sickening, disgusting
It was a nauseating experience listening to the lady describe all her surgeries in detail.
6. rangy
long-limbed and long-bodied, slender
The basketball player’s build could be described as rangy.
7. staid
sedate and reserved
Her staid hat was small and dark with a narrow brim.
8. stolid
not excitable, dull, impassive, expressionless
The teacher felt challenged to replace the stolid look of her new student with an aspect of interest and excitement.
9. surge
a large mass sweeping or swelling; a short sudden rush; a sudden increase
We have a protector on our computer so a power surge will not damage the internal chips.
10. technique
the method or procedure used in carrying out an operation of science, mechanics or artistry
The football player took ballet lessons to improve his catching technique.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #17

1. anguished
agonized, distressed, showing extreme pain
Her anguished expression led us to believe the worst about her father's illness.
2. antitoxins
serums developed to immunize against specific diseases
The antitoxins provided by the government helped prevent the spread of anthrax to other ranches in the area.
3. dominate
rule, govern; tower over
The new 70-story building dominated the skyline.
4. dual
two-fold, double, consisting of two
Many words in our language have a dual meaning. For example, *bright* means two different things: *smart* and *shiny*.
5. intent
 - a. engrossed, fixed, earnest, intense
 - n. a purpose or objective

What do you think was the intent of the work stoppage?
6. maintain
to continue, to keep or hold, to carry on; to uphold or defend, to support or affirm
In order to maintain our level of expertise, we need to practice daily.
7. oasis
a fertile place in the desert
The camels did not want to leave the coolness of the oasis.
8. perturb
to disturb greatly in mind, to throw into confusion
The major earthquake and its aftershocks greatly perturbed the residents.
9. refuse
 - v. to decline, reject, disallow
 - n. rubbish, trash, garbage

The Supreme Court will probably refuse to hear the case because of a lack of evidence that a real loss occurred.
10. residential
suitable for homes and living
The residential atmosphere of the area was shattered by the new shopping center.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #18

Words missed spelling lists!

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #19

1. affable
adj. easy to approach, kindly, gracious
It was an affable group that met to discuss the plans for the upcoming fundraiser.
2. brazen
of brass, like brass in color; impudent, shameless, bold;
having a harsh and piercing sound
The brazen idol was found buried near the old temple.
3. cudgel
n. a short, thick stick of wood used as a weapon
v. to beat with a thick stick of wood
She used the broken branch as a cudgel to protect herself from the angry dog.
4. incite
to move to action, to stir up, to spur on
The yelling crowd seemed to incite the boys to continue fighting.
5. morass
a marsh, a bog, a piece of soft, wet ground
I felt like I was sinking into a morass of undone projects.
6. plateau
tableland, a mesa, an elevated tract that is relatively level.
The graph showed a plateau in sales for the last few months.
7. quash
to beat down, to crush, to subdue, to suppress
The National Guard moved quickly to quash the rioting crowd.
8. reserved
set apart, held back for a purpose or use; withdrawn in manner, reticent, restrained
Until we got to know him, his reserved manner made him seem unfriendly.
9. scoff
to scorn or show mocking contempt
She used to scoff at warnings about wearing seatbelts until she was in an accident.
10. shifty
given to deception, evasion or fraud; elusive; tricky
The carnival concession operator was on the lookout for shifty characters who might try to cheat at the game.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #20

1. abet
to help or assist, to sanction or aid (especially to help an enemy or criminal)
You need to be aware that if you abet a criminal, you may also be charged with a crime.
2. assent
n. agreement with a proposal, compliance, consent
v. to approve, to yield or concede
Her father's nod of assent was all she needed to start the process of buying a new car.
3. baffle
v. to frustrate or balk by bewildering, to thwart
n. an obstructing device such as a screen to hold back or turn aside a flow of liquids
It was a great challenge to ask questions that could baffle the experts.
4. churlish
rude, surly, sullen, uncivil
A churlish attitude would keep you from being chosen to represent your team at a sportsmanship conference.
5. enlighten
to give light to, to inform or give clarification to, to free from ignorance
A speaker who survived the Holocaust enlightened us about the dangers of racial bigotry.
6. extravagance
a going beyond reasonable limits, excessive expenditure, unreasonable excess
Buying a new car every year would be considered an extravagance by many families.
7. frugal
economical, not spending freely; sparingly provided; not costly or luxurious
A frugal government is appreciated when they are spending our hard-earned dollars.
8. impoverished
made poor, reduced to poverty, exhausted the strength of something
Our extravagant spending impoverished us and now we will have to work many years to pay back all the money we owe.
9. jibe
v. to sneer at, to taunt, to jeer, to scoff at
n. a jeer, an expression of sarcastic scorn
The bully would jibe at me because I was short and skinny.
10. recess
n. a temporary withdrawal from or halting of work; secluded, withdrawn; a niche
The students felt a recess was necessary if they were to complete the testing in one day.

20th Century—VO CABULARY/SPELLING #21

1. cacao
the bean or seed from which cocoa and chocolate are made
The cacao tree will only grow in tropical climates.
2. engrossed
absorbed in, totally occupied, wholly attentive to
He was so engrossed in the book that he did not notice when the bell rang.
3. extract
v. to take out of, draw from, to take a part away
n. an excerpt, a concentrated form
The dentist wanted to extract only one wisdom tooth at a time.
4. flourishing
thriving, blooming, at the peak of development
The new espresso bar seemed to do a flourishing business.
5. fragrant
sweet-smelling, aromatic
We could smell the fragrant lilacs as soon as we entered the room.
6. froth
something of a light, trifling nature; bubbles or foam
She found that the marshmallows would ride on top of the froth on the hot cocoa.
7. ingenuity
cleverness, originality
The boys showed much ingenuity in their new kite design.
8. nourishment
sustenance, nutriment, nutrition
I read books for the nourishment of my mind.
9. persisted
kept at, persevered, endured, refused to quit
He persisted in his claim of innocence until the jury finally began to recheck the testimony.
10. wistfully
pensively, thoughtfully, longingly
She thought wistfully about her former friends and home.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #22

1. aimlessly
without purpose, direction or goal, wandering
They strolled aimlessly through the arboretum.
2. disposition
method, distribution or arrangement; tendency; temperament, inclination or power to settle
The disposition of the defunct company's assets displeased the creditors.
3. instinct
an inborn tendency, a natural gift, bent or knack
The instinct to survive is seen in the animal kingdom.
4. mousy
drab, timid, quiet; characteristic of a mouse
The mousy little man lurked in the shadow of the building.
5. optimism
looking on the bright side; taking the most hopeful view of a situation (the glass is half full)
The team's optimism seemed to be the deciding factor in the outcome of the season.
6. pension
v. to pay off an employee
n. a payment given for past services; a retirement
Grandpa received his monthly pension check from the Teamsters' Union.
7. stealthily
in a surreptitious or clandestine manner, sneakily
The hunter approached the deer stealthily but it did no good because the animal's instincts made it aware of the danger.
8. vacant
unoccupied, empty, void
The vacant lot had become the neighborhood dumping ground.
9. wincing
shrank back from, flinched, started back suddenly
The lady winced in pain as the soccer ball hit her in the back.
10. wiry
like wire in shape or substance; lean, sinewy, and strong
The wrestler with the wiry build seemed to have the advantage over his opponent who was much heavier.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #23

1. abundance
an overflowing amount, more than ample or sufficient
There was an abundance of advice from the spectators as to how the child should be freed from the picket fence.
2. barricade
to stop up a passage, obstruct, fortify to hinder the enemy
The hijacker barricaded himself in the galley of the plane.
3. caribou
any of several varieties of reindeer of North America
The Eskimo hunted caribou for food as well as for the skin.
4. ebb
to flow back, recede, return, wane, withdraw
The sense of expectancy ebbed as the arrival time of the plane was again delayed.
5. gallery
the cheapest seats in the theater; a long, narrow corridor or room; a displayed collection of art
The students went to the gallery to view the new exhibit of wildlife paintings.
6. harpoon
a spear with a line used to hunt large sea animals
The harpoon caught the whale just behind the blow hole.
7. hew
to chop with an axe, hack; form with an axe
The park rangers hewed a passable trail through the deadfall in the ravine.
8. numb
having no feeling; deadened; insensitive
His arm felt numb after pitching his first no-hitter.
9. statistics
numerical data that is assembled, classified, and tabulated into a usable form
The statistics seemed to prove that the prevention program was successful.
10. warily
in a cautious manner
The hunter approached his prey warily even though he had a weapon.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #24

Words missed spelling lists!

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #25

1. brandish
to move or wave a weapon (or potential weapon) in a threatening manner
The man was brandishing his rake in the air to scare the crows from the garden.
2. cravenly
in a cowardly manner
She hid cravenly in the corner while her mother was looking for the cause of the broken vase.
3. defiance
n. open or bold resistance to authority, opposition (“No! I won’t!”)
His continual defiance of the law resulted in a long jail term.
4. din
noise; long, continuing clattering or rumbling sound
The din from the loading dock made it almost impossible to hear the telephone until I closed the windows.
5. grandeur
greatness, splendor, magnificence, nobility
The grandeur of the palace was almost overpowering.
6. insolent
adj. disrespectful of authority, impertinent, impudent (“Oh, yeah? Try to make me.”)
An insolent attitude can get you in trouble even if you don’t actually “do” anything.
7. jubilation
a rejoicing, a happy celebration
The jubilation at the victory dinner was evident by all the excited voices.
8. rebellious
adj. opposing any control, defiant, resisting authority
The rebellious mob refused to disperse until the mayor came out to bargain with them.
9. resolution
a determination or deciding opinion, a solution
The resolution of the conflict between the two countries was not decided overnight.
10. retort
to answer back in the same terms as the previous speaker, to reply in kind
She retorted with a remark about bald heads when her co-workers teased her about having gray hairs.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #26

1. astral
from the stars; a ghost-like double of the human body
The astral ship entering the Earth's atmosphere created a display resembling a fireworks show.
2. auxiliary
adj. helping, assisting, giving aid, supplementary
n. an assisting group or organization
The astronauts had trouble controlling the auxiliary arm outside the space shuttle.
3. claustrophobia
fear of being confined in a small space
A person with claustrophobia would not like to be assigned to a submarine voyage.
4. conspirators
plotters, ones engaged in plotting a crime or secret action
The conspirators gave away the secret because of all the whispering and note passing.
5. curfew
a time limit for someone to be inside or off the street
The teenagers were protesting the midnight curfew set by the city council.
6. fissure
a narrow crack or cleft in a rock, a longitudinal opening
The water entered the cave through the fissure in the rock.
7. seismographic
indicated or reported instance of an earthquake
The seismographic studies predicted a large earthquake in the near future.
8. stifle
to hold back by force, suppress, arrest
She stifled her laugh and started to choke violently.
9. stride
v. to walk with long steps in a vigorous manner; "to take in stride" is to cope with easily
n. a measure of the distance covered in a step; progress or advancement
The coach measured the runner's stride in order to improve his technique.
10. synthetic
something produced by chemicals rather than natural origins; artificial;
putting together of two or more facts to form a hypothesis or creative solution
They found that the baby was allergic to synthetic material, and so they had to dress him in all-cotton clothing.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #27

1. cacophony
discordant sounds, a jarring mixture of words or noise
The cacophony in the room reminded me of a chicken coop.
2. concave
a hollow or curved surface such as the inner surface of a sphere
The concave surface collected dew and created rainbows on the side of the building.
3. flaw
n. a defect, a blemish, a faulty place
v. to break or crack
The flaw in the material was too big to cut around.
4. grapple
n. a device for seizing or grasping, such as tongs
v. to grip and hold, to come to grips (as in wrestling)
The rescuers used a grapple to try and extricate the victim from the hole.
5. gullible
easily fooled or duped, believing almost anything
After being fooled by my brother's stories many times, I finally learned not to be so gullible.
6. hinder
to keep back, to restrain, to get in the way of
My help on the project seemed to hinder progress rather than being a help because I didn't know how to work with wood.
7. lanky
awkwardly tall and lean, long and slender
The lanky teenager looked awkward on the basketball court.
8. mellow
softened and made gentle, not bitter, aged to ripeness
The mellow colors in the room seemed to lull me to sleep.
9. plunge
n. a dive or downward leap
v. to thrust or dive into something suddenly
I took a plunge in the cold water to help me wake up.
10. tranquil
calm, free from disturbance, serene
Liberty Bay's tranquil waters reflected the mountains and boats.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #28

1. artless
natural, free of artificiality; without guile or cunning; innocent;
uncultured, ignorant, lacking skill
The preschooler's drawings were fresh and appealing, and he artlessly answered his admiring audience's questions.
2. cavity
a hole or hollow place, a natural hollow place; a hole in a tooth caused by decay
His abdominal cavity filled with fluid so the doctor had to operate to relieve the pressure.
3. clamber
to climb over in a clumsy manner
We had to clamber over the wet rocks in order to get to the beach.
4. convex
having a surface that curves outward such as a lens or sphere
The convex lens on the telescope was 30 inches in diameter.
5. crest
n. a tuft on the top of an animal's head;
an insignia of a family name used on silverware, note paper, etc.;
the top or summit of something
v. to reach the summit or ridge, to crown
He was panting hard by the time he reached the crest of the hill.
6. gregarious
sociable, enjoying the company of others; tending to move in groups
Everyone flocked to the house parties given by the gregarious playwright.
7. jar
n. a container with a large, cylindrical body
v. to clash; to shake by sudden impact; to make a harsh, grating sound
We were able to jar loose the crowbar by pounding on it with a hammer.
8. qualm
a twinge of conscience; a feeling of uneasiness or doubt
I only had a slight qualm about attending the formal affair.
9. spendthrift
one who spends money carelessly or wastefully; a squanderer
He was a spendthrift who spent all his family's money buying race cars.
10. squabble
n. a noisy quarrel over a small matter, a brawl
v. to wrangle over something trivial, to fight
The two children seemed to squabble over every toy that was in the toy box.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #29

1. candor
openness, frankness, sincerity of heart
His candor in discussing the problem helped bring about a solution.
2. carp
v. to find fault, especially without reason
n. a large-scaled, fresh water fish
It seemed as though my mother would always carp at me about the music I listened to.
3. detect
to discover or find out, to expose
It was hard for the jeweler to detect the flaw in the diamond.
4. dictatorial
dogmatic, overbearing, ruling in an absolute manner
The captain of the ship had a dictatorial attitude and most of the crew wanted to transfer to another ship.
5. disconsolate
comfortless, hopeless, sorrowful
She wandered the field disconsolately searching for her lost earring.
6. fascination
a strong attraction, allure or charm, captivation
From the time he was a toddler, he had a fascination with any type of machinery.
7. intact
untouched, complete, undamaged, unimpaired
She managed to get through her employment evaluation with her self-esteem still intact.
8. overbearing
disregarding the wishes of others, arrogant, domineering
His overbearing attitude made it difficult for his co-workers to be around him.
9. provisions
stock of food or other supplies; preparations, arrangements, conditions
The provisions of the contract seemed fair to both sides.
10. tyranny
cruel and unjust use of power or authority; harsh, unjust government
The slaves lived in fear because of the tyranny of their owner.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #30

Words missed spelling lists!

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #31

1. abyss
a bottomless pit, an immensity of time, space or depth
The soap opera characters always seem to be in an abyss of total despair.
2. bachelor
a man of any age who has not been married;
any person who has received a baccalaureate degree (B.A. or B.S.)
My uncle remained a bachelor until he was 75.
3. cafeteria
an eating place where food is displayed on counters and customers serve themselves
My parents like to take us to cafeteria restaurants because we will only take food that we like and many of them let us go back for more servings.
4. cellophane
a thin, transparent material made of cellulose and used for moisture-proof wrapping
My grandmother used waxed paper instead of cellophane to keep sandwiches from drying out.
5. cemetery
a place set apart for burial, a graveyard
Many people make a special visit to a cemetery on Memorial Day.
6. cordially
warmly, affectionately, cheerfully
We were cordially welcomed by our host for the weekend.
7. dirigible
a motor-driven balloon with a cabin underneath, a blimp
The most famous dirigible is the Hindenberg, which exploded when landing in the United States.
8. fallible
capable of making errors; tending or likely to be incorrect
Even Mrs. Kragen is fallible.
9. inertia
a tendency to remain in a fixed condition, a disinclination to move or act
Inertia kept me lying on the couch after I had eaten Thanksgiving dinner.
10. kerosene
a thin, volatile oil used for fueling stoves and lamps, coal oil
My mother is extremely nervous when the power is out and we have to use a kerosene heater.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #32

1. cinema
a motion picture or a motion picture theater
We went to the cinema to see the latest Star Trek production.
2. hurtle
to move violently or swiftly, to move noisily with a crashing sound
They saw the bottles and cans hurtle through the window of the passing car.
3. initial
n. a beginning, as in the first letter of a name
v. to write one's initials as a signature
We were in on the initial planning session for the new school.
4. matinee
an entertainment or performance held in the daytime, especially in the early afternoon
We decided to go to a matinee performance of the new musical because the tickets were half price.
5. playwright
one who writes plays, a dramatist
Her goal was to be a successful playwright and have her plays performed on Broadway.
6. scenario
an outline of a plot of a play or photoplay giving the scenes and stage directions;
an outline for any proposed series of events, real or imagined
The scenario presented by the prosecutor was dismissed because it was purely speculative.
7. sympathy
sameness of feeling, harmony, accord
We felt real sympathy for the people who became ill.
8. symphony
harmony of sounds or color, an extended composition for full orchestra
We went to hear a newly-discovered symphony by Mozart.
9. tournament
a series of contests, usually for a championship, such as in chess, bridge or sports
We were really excited to be able to win back-to-back championships at the local soccer tournament.
10. transfer
to convey or send from one person, place or position to another;
make over a legal title, right or ownership
He transferred from the Portland office to the Poulsbo office but kept the same job title.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #33

1. accomplice
one who aides or abets an unlawful or criminal act
The little boy was aided by his accomplice, his younger brother, in the stealing of some cookies.
2. amateur
one who pursues any study, art or sport without payment;
a person who does something unskillfully
The wallpaper was hung by an amateur, but looked like it had been done by a professional.
3. benign
gentle, kind, favorable; not harmful
What a relief to learn that the tumor was benign--she didn't have cancer after all!
4. elite
the choice or most carefully selected part of a group
It was an elite gathering of scientist and journalists that were invited to the unveiling of the newest passive solar energy complex.
5. etiquette
manners or ceremonies established by convention as acceptable in society
We had lessons in etiquette before we had the afternoon tea for our mothers.
6. gallivant
to go about in search of excitement, to gad about
We were cautioned not to gallivant through the museum.
7. genial
showing warmth of disposition, amiable, cordial
He was a genial host, and all of us felt very welcome at his house.
8. indomitable
not easily discouraged or subdued, unyielding
Her indomitable courage kept her alive until the rescuers were able to reach her.
9. intricate
complicated, hard to follow, entangled, complex
The intricate embroidery on the gown was all done by hand.
10. solace
comfort in sorrow, misfortune, distress; that which furnishes comfort or consolation
Finding solace in drugs or alcohol is short-term and self-defeating; the pain is still there—and sometimes worse!—after the “high” is gone.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #34

1. affect
to produce an effect upon; to influence, impress, sway
If you use “affect” as a verb meaning “influence” and “effect” as a noun meaning “something produced by an agent or cause,” you won’t run into much trouble with these words!
2. bolster
n. a long, narrow cushion or pillow
v. to support or hold up, to maintain with difficulty
He whistled to bolster his courage as he walked through the dark.
3. coincide
to occur simultaneously, to agree
It was fortunate that our vacation plans would coincide with my mother’s family reunion.
4. elixir
a medical compound, a remedy for all ailments, a magical potion
The man told us the elixir he was selling would cure baldness.
5. fiat
an authorization, or sanction, an order issued by legal authority
The fiat gave them authority to search any home in the area.
6. garret
a room just below the roof of a house, usually unfinished, a turret or watchtower
My favorite place to hide was in the garret at my grandmother’s house.
7. honorarium
a payment to a professional person for which no fee is set or can be legally obtained
She used the honorarium from the commencement address to help the homeless.
8. malodorous
having a bad smell or odor
I did not enjoy the malodorous atmosphere in the crowded room.
9. redolent
sweet-smelling, fragrant
The room was redolent of lilacs and sunshine.
10. swatch
a small piece of cloth or other material cut off to use as a sample
The decorator gave us a swatch of the curtain material to see if it would match the carpet.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #35

1. brevity
shortness, succinctness, conciseness
The brevity of the visit made us doubt that the doctor had time to completely review the tests.
2. diatribe
a dispute, malicious criticism and/or abuse
Her diatribe against the neighbors at the meeting made us all very uncomfortable.
3. discreet
prudent, cautious, careful, wary; polite, courteous
We needed to make discreet inquiries in order to find out if the company was reputable.
4. frenetic
mad, frantic, frenzied
It seems that the last few weeks of school go by at a frenetic pace.
5. inarticulate
unable to speak, mute, not able to speak understandably or expressively
I was so angry at her accusations that I became inarticulate and could not defend myself.
6. languid
drooping, sluggish, dull, spiritless, faint, weak
His languid pose did not motivate me to do my aerobic exercises.
7. nebulous
unclear, vague, indefinite, cloudy, hazy
The instructions were certainly nebulous as to which road we were to take from the freeway exit.
8. nonchalant
lacking enthusiasm, not interested, casually indifferent, unconcerned
His parents did not approve of his nonchalant attitude toward his school work.
9. obliterate
to erase or wipe out, to demolish, to destroy all trace of
The criminal tried hard to obliterate the evidence of a burglary.
10. placate
to appease or pacify, to calm
It did no good to try to placate the toddler with another toy after his truck broke.

20th Century—VOCABULARY/SPELLING #36

Words missed spelling lists!