

WORD POWER

In honor of Presidents' Day, we've elected to offer words from the inaugural addresses of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Stymied by this stately vocabulary? Don't demand a recount—just turn to page 120 for answers.

BY *Emily Cox* AND *Henry Rathvon*

1. sovereign *adj.*
(*'sah-vuh-rin*)
A communal.
B independent.
C from abroad.

2. discernment *n.*
(*dih-'surn-ment*)
A secession.
B lack of agreement.
C perception.

3. inviolate *adj.*
(*in-'vy-uh-let*)
A purplish.
B ravaged.
C pure.

4. propitious *adj.*
(*pruh-'pih-shuhss*)
A favorable.
B mighty.
C patriotic.

5. recant *v.*
(*rih-'kant*)
A take back.
B narrate.
C pour out, as wine.

6. pecuniary *adj.*
(*pih-'kyoo-nee-air-ee*)
A traitorous.
B related to money.
C insignificant.

7. maxim *n.*
(*'mak-sum*)
A upper limit.
B true saying.
C winter coat.

8. vicissitude *n.*
(*vuh-'sih-suh-tood*)
A shift of luck.
B legal exception.
C check on power.

9. scrutiny *n.*
(*'skroo-tuh-nee*)
A examination.
B uprising.
C mystery.

10. emolument *n.*
(*ih-'mawl-yuh-ment*)
A payment.
B essential piece.
C bronze.

11. magnitude *n.*
(*'mag-nuh-tood*)
A attractiveness.
B monarchy.
C great size.

12. compliance *n.*
(*kum-'ply-ents*)
A falsehood.
B obedience.
C makeshift tool.

13. impunity *n.*
(*im-'pyoo-nuh-tee*)
A devilishness.
B oneness.
C freedom from harm.

14. upbraid *v.*
(*up-'brayd*)
A criticize.
B pleat.
C improve.

15. reiterate *v.*
(*ree-'ih-tuh-rayt*)
A pay back.
B say again.
C flee from danger.

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A Blessed Beginning

In ancient Rome, an *augur* interpreted signs (often the flights of birds) to determine whether the gods favored a new venture. The words *auspices* (favorable signs), *augment* (to increase), and *august* (respected) all connect to this act of consecration. So etymologically, an *inauguration* is not just a beginning but a benediction.

Word Power ANSWERS

1. sovereign (B)

independent. In 1776, the 13 colonies declared themselves a sovereign nation.

2. discernment (C)

perception. Using her powers of discernment, Jen determined that the "free trip" she'd won was a scam.

3. inviolate (C) pure.

Jayden puts a splash of water in his bourbon, but his devotion to a good Scotch is inviolate.

4. propitious (A)

favorable. Fumbling the kickoff is hardly a propitious start to the Super Bowl.

5. recant (A) take back.

Given the new evidence, will you recant your earlier statements?

6. **pecuniary (B)** *related to money*. Ebenezer Scrooge is famously fixated on pecuniary matters.

7. maxim (B) true saying.

My favorite maxim is "Measure twice, cut once."

8. vicissitude (A)

shift of luck. Farmers are especially vulnerable to the vicissitudes of Mother Nature.

9. scrutiny (A)

examination. I doubt your theories about the Loch Ness Monster will hold up to scrutiny!

10. emolument (A)

payment. Since Pierre is headwaiter, his emolument includes free desserts.

11. magnitude (C)

great size. The sheer magnitude of the new soccer stadium is awe-inspiring.

12. compliance (B)

obedience. A couple of dog treats ought to assure Fido's compliance.

13. impunity (C)

freedom from harm. Carlos is the boss's son, so he's allowed to break the rules with impunity.

14. upbraid (A) criticize.

After his first novel was upbraided by reviewers, Melvin considered quitting writing altogether.

15. reiterate (B)

say again. "Let me reiterate what I stated last night: You are grounded!" Mom said.

Vocabulary Ratings

9 & BELOW: candidate

10-12: nominee

13-15: commander in chief

WORD POWER

Page Turners

You may recognise some of these terms if you enjoy reading sci-fi, historical romance or detective stories

BY Samantha Rideout

1. ansible – A: spaceship engine core. B: gadget enabling instantaneous communication over interstellar distances. C: universal translation device.

2. Dyson sphere – A: structure surrounding a star. B: military satellite. C: boundary between a planet's atmosphere and outer space.

3. cyborg – A: evil or harmful robot. B: self-conscious computer. C: human enhanced by electronic or mechanical parts.

4. terraform – A: transform a planet to resemble earth and sustain life. B: assimilate an alien culture. C: shaped like a globe.

5. sophont – A: easily capable of extrasensory perception. B: carrying the consciousness of more than one person. C: intelligent being.

6. debonair – A: confident, stylish and suave. B: in the countryside. C: musically gifted.

7. infatuation – A: adding padding

to a formal gown. B: intense but temporary passion. C: excessive praise.

8. assignation – A: lovers' secret appointment. B: arranged marriage. C: dance partner.

9. embonpoint – A: skilled at conversation. B: eligible bachelor. C: plumpness.

10. foolscap – A: wide-brimmed straw bonnet. B: feigned interest. C: writing paper.

11. shamus – A: private detective. B: traitor. C: fall guy.

12. flimflam – A: deadly mistake. B: swindle. C: international money-laundering operation.

13. extort – A: get a confession. B: obtain by force, threats or intimidation. C: smuggle something into prison in a pie.

14. stool pigeon – A: shooting-practice target. B: regular at a neighbourhood watering hole. C: police informer.

Answers

1. ansible – B: gadget enabling instantaneous communication over interstellar distances. It was the only way to contact Earth, so Quida guarded the ansible with her life.

2. Dyson sphere – A: structure surrounding a star. The visitors gasped in admiration at the colossal Dyson sphere the Torxians had built to harness the energy of their sun.

3. cyborg – C: human enhanced by electronic or mechanical parts. Nobody could tell that Chaya was a cyborg: her brain-computer interface was implanted in her skull.

4. terraform – A: transform a planet to resemble earth and sustain life. Greenhouse gases had been imported to terraform Mars's atmosphere.

5. sophont – C: intelligent being. Convinced the alien was a sophont, K'Wedi insisted it be treated as such.

6. debonair – A: confident, stylish and suave. Hugh wasn't debonair, but Amelia liked his quiet manner.

7. infatuation – B: intense but temporary passion. Louise insisted her son's interest in the neighbour was merely an infatuation.

8. assignation – A: lovers' secret appointment. Nobody saw Calliope returning from her midnight assignation with the duke.

9. embonpoint – C: plumpness. Henrietta chose a gown that exhibited her pleasant embonpoint.

10. foolscap – C: writing paper. Jane's heart leapt upon seeing a sheet of foolscap slide under the doorway.

11. shamus – A: private detective. Tailing cheating spouses was known to be the shamus's bread and butter.

12. flimflam – B: swindle. Stan was out to flimflam lonely widows out of their savings.

13. extort – B: obtain by force, threats or intimidation. The mayor was loaded, but extorting protection money out of him would be too risky.

14. stool pigeon – C: police informer. The mobster vowed to find the stool pigeon who'd turned him in.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5-8: Fair, **9-10:** Good, **11-14:** Word Power Wizard

Family Fun Answers See Page 138



◀ SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

▼ A KEY QUESTION

(D) is the only key without a hole in the top.





WORD POWER

Distinguishing fact from fiction isn't always easy. These words describe the many shades of truth and falsehood—and that's no lie.

BY Samantha Rideout

1. bona fide—**A:** faithful to the original version. **B:** reliable source. **C:** made with sincere intent.

2. unproven—**A:** not shown to be not true. **B:** not shown to be true. **C:** shown not to be true.

3. calumniate—**A:** overlook evidence. **B:** make false, malicious statements about someone. **C:** accept that something is unknown.

4. echo chamber—**A:** environment where you encounter only opinions that match your own. **B:** repeating a claim until you are believed. **C:** effect where information tends to get distorted as it spreads.

5. impugn—**A:** refuse to change your mind. **B:** reject a fact because it makes you feel bad. **C:** challenge the truth or honesty of something.

6. demagoguery—**A:** believing something because other people do. **B:** separating facts from opinions. **C:** using popular prejudices and dishonest claims to gain power.

7. embroider—**A:** add fictitious details to make a story more interesting. **B:** pay someone to express a particular opinion. **C:** assume a false identity.

8. verisimilar—**A:** plagiarized. **B:** having the appearance of truth. **C:** untrue yet persuasive.

9. truism—**A:** outdated information. **B:** belief that it's possible to know the truth. **C:** obvious truth that goes without saying.

10. four-flush—**A:** bluff. **B:** fact-check. **C:** behave gullibly.

11. taradiddle—**A:** misattributed quote. **B:** pretentious nonsense. **C:** intentionally confusing.

12. cogent—**A:** not contradicting the known facts. **B:** claimed by multiple sources. **C:** logical and convincing.

13. Gish gallop—**A:** spread a rumour. **B:** bombard an opponent with weak arguments. **C:** get something wrong because you researched it hastily.

14. verifiable—**A:** undeniable. **B:** able to be checked. **C:** sworn under oath.

15. malingering—**A:** treat with bogus medicine. **B:** pretend to be sick to avoid work. **C:** leave undetermined.

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READER'S DIGEST

WORD POWER ANSWERS

1. bona fide—C: made with sincere intent; as, Although he was forced to break it, Martin's promise had been *bona fide*.

2. unproven—B: not shown to be true; as, Some of the alleged health benefits of probiotics are so far *unproven*.

3. calumniate—B: make false, malicious statements about someone; as, The politician *calumniated* her rival, accusing her of corruption.

4. echo chamber—A: environment where you encounter only opinions that match your own; as, To transcend the *echo chamber* of his Facebook feed, Arun picked up a newspaper.

5. impugn—C: challenge the truth or honesty of something; as, The witness braced himself, knowing the defence lawyers would try to *impugn* his credibility.

6. demagoguery—C: using popular prejudices and dishonest claims to gain power; as, Bruce stooped to *demagoguery* by unfairly blaming immigrants for the crime rate.

7. embroider—A: add fictitious details to make a story more interesting; as, Pirouz got some laughs by *embroidering* an account of a family gathering.

8. verisimilar—B: having the appearance of truth; as, Khuyen's strength as a novelist was in writing *verisimilar* dialogue.

9. truism—C: obvious truth that goes without saying; as, Ana's book rehashed the *truism* that kids learn from their parents' example.

10. four-flush—A: bluff; as, The other poker players thought Kira was *four-flushing* when in fact she had a great hand.

11. taradiddle—B: pretentious nonsense; as, Hal thought his company's "holistic framework for achieving disruptive innovation" was *taradiddle*.

12. cogent—C: logical and convincing; as, Rhianon made a *cogent* case for a safe-injection site.

13. Gish gallop—B: bombard an opponent with weak arguments; as, *Gish galloping* is dishonest, but it still wins debates.

14. verifiable—B: able to be checked; as, "If you doubt the river is polluted, go see for yourself," maintained the ecologist. "It's a *verifiable* fact."

15. malingering—B: pretend to be sick to avoid work; as, Sasha spent the day *malingering* and watching his favourite show's new season.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 112

S	E	W	N		A	C	T	S
P	L	I	E		M	E	R	E
I	M	L	O	V	I	N	I	T
N	O	D		S	G	T		
	S	E	N	I	O	R	S	
		L	O	G		A	I	E
M	C	D	O	N	A	L	D	S
P	R	E	K		S	T	E	P
H	O	R	S		P	O	S	Y



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WORD POWER

Whether we seek precision, beauty or both, much of the subtlety of language comes from its adjectives. Here are some 10-dollar examples to add polish to your proclamations.

BY Rob Lutes

1. stygian—

- A:** stingy.
- B:** timeless.
- C:** dark and gloomy.

2. insidious—

- A:** indoors.
- B:** gradual but harmful.
- C:** strongly felt yet unexpressed.

3. whimsical—

- A:** unpredictable.
- B:** elegant and inexpensive.
- C:** fragile.

4. vulpine—

- A:** murderous.
- B:** cunning.
- C:** hungry.

5. brumous—

- A:** foggy and wintry.

- B:** rough in texture.
- C:** obnoxiously loud.

6. frugal—

- A:** silly.
- B:** cold.
- C:** thrifty.

7. inveterate—

- A:** habitual and unlikely to change.
- B:** soft and malleable.
- C:** untested.

8. threadbare—

- A:** self-evident.
- B:** shabby and barely adequate.
- C:** scantily clothed.

9. salutary—

- A:** beneficial.
- B:** welcoming.
- C:** verbal.

10. contumacious—

- A:** rounded.
- B:** stubbornly disobedient.
- C:** poisonous but not lethal.

11. feckless—

- A:** lacking poise.
- B:** ineffectual and irresponsible.
- C:** without skin blemishes.

12. dilatory—

- A:** rundown.
- B:** chatty.
- C:** tending to cause delay.

13. fastidious—

- A:** attentive to detail.
- B:** dietary.
- C:** recklessly rapid.

14. belligerent—

- A:** relating to the sea.
- B:** exhibiting hostility.
- C:** in a state of disrepair.

15. earnest—

- A:** serious and sincere.
- B:** wealthy.
- C:** overly generous.

WORD POWER ANSWERS

1. stygian—C: dark and gloomy; as, Ms. Mariner shuddered as she entered the *stygian* cave.

2. insidious—B: gradual but harmful; as, The *insidious* effects of eating too much sugar began to show themselves in Arjun's weight gain and lack of energy.

3. whimsical—A: unpredictable; as, Greer's *whimsical* personality meant she couldn't necessarily be counted upon to remain at a job for long.

4. vulpine—B: cunning; as, Well aware of the suspected drug lord's *vulpine* intelligence, the police kept a close eye on all of his activities.

5. brumous—A: foggy and wintry; as, Knowing night would bring even colder and darker conditions, Ezekiel set out immediately to cross the *brumous* valley.

6. frugal—C: thrifty; as, Having seen that Carita was organized and *frugal*, Hélène gave her budgeting responsibilities for the entire conference.

7. inveterate—A: habitual and unlikely to change; as, An *inveterate* worrier, Roone had learned how to get by on very little rest.

8. threadbare—B: shabby and barely adequate; as, Despite their *threadbare* uniforms, the tiny school's track team dominated the meet.

9. salutary—A: beneficial; as, The difficult but *salutary* two-week training session turned Adham into a first-rate salesman.

10. contumacious—B: stubbornly disobedient; as, Portia's *contumacious* behaviour left her day-care workers little choice but to call her parents.

11. feckless—B: ineffectual and irresponsible; as, Boonsri complained about her *feckless* brother who never seemed to get anything done.

12. dilatory—C: tending to cause delay; as, It appeared to Henry that the airport's customs had been set up in the most *dilatory* way possible.

13. fastidious—A: attentive to detail; as, Raoul's *fastidious* reporting won high praise from his demanding editor.

14. belligerent—B: exhibiting hostility; as, The school principal's *belligerent* behaviour toward parents led to her removal.

15. earnest—A: serious and sincere; as, Wei took an *earnest* approach to each and every issue raised by workers.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 96

O	L	A	V			A	N	G	S	T	
T	A	M	I	L		V	I	O	L	A	
T	H	E	C	A	N	A	D	I	A	N	
O	R	N	A	T	E			N	Y	Y	
				R	E	B	A		T	E	A
		M	U	S	E	U	M	F	O	R	
M	I	L		F	L	E	E				
A	S	L			A	L	I	C	I	A	
H	U	M	A	N	R	I	G	H	T	S	
A	S	A	M	I		E	N	A	C	T	
L	E	N	I	N		S	O	H	O		



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READER'S DIGEST **The Genius Section**

WORD POWER

This month, we visit the likes of *nuns*, *protons*, *sprouts*, and *soupspoons*— words made exclusively from the second half of the alphabet, letters *n* to *z*. If they make you feel *topsy-turvy*, turn to page 122 for answers.

BY *Emily Cox* AND *Henry Rathvon*

1. stuporous *adj.*

('stoo-puh-russ)

- A hunched over.
- B leaking.
- C impaired.

2. wry *adj.*

(ry)

- A ironically humorous.
- B disrespectful.
- C made with flour.

3. purport *v.*

(per-'port)

- A transfer.
- B commit a crime.
- C claim.

4. tryst *n.*

(trist)

- A final audition.
- B natural disaster.
- C lovers' meeting.

5. wonton *n.*

('wahn-tahn)

- A wild abandon.
- B Chinese dumpling.
- C great quantity.

6. spoor *n.*

(spoor)

- A animal tracks.
- B rude rejection.
- C plant cell.

7. yurt *n.*

(yert)

- A custard dish.
- B buffoon.
- C circular tent.

8. usurp *v.*

(yoo-'serp)

- A puree.
- B flip over.
- C seize.

9. sop *n.*

(sahp)

- A thick syrup.
- B bribe.
- C wetland.

10. tosspot *n.*

('toss-paht)

- A tantrum.
- B windstorm.
- C drunkard.

11. punt *n.*

(punt)

- A linebacker.
- B flat-bottomed boat.
- C smallest of a litter.

12. tortuous *adj.*

('tor-choo-us)

- A clumpy.
- B winding.
- C painful.

13. onyx *n.*

('ah-nicks)

- A antelope.
- B gemstone.
- C primrose.

14. tyro *n.*

('ty-roh)

- A rookie.
- B felt hat.
- C whirlwind.

15. ouzo *n.*

('oo-zoh)

- A firearm.
- B Greek liqueur.
- C slow drip.

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Word Power ANSWERS

1. stuporous (c)

impaired. I can't take medicine for my hay fever—just one pill leaves me sleepy and stuporous.

2. wry (A) ironically humorous.

Mr. Russo's students loved his wry sense of humor and unusual lesson plans.

3. purport (c) claim.

Jack purports to be a bad singer, but he always brings down the house at karaoke.

4. tryst (c) lovers' meeting.

Clara and Luis planned a midnight tryst in the garden.

5. wonton (B) Chinese dumpling.

I see you've left all the broth and eaten just the wontons.

6. spoor (A) animal tracks.

The park ranger followed the fox's spoor back to the den.

7. yurt (c) circular tent.

Hannah teaches meditation workshops in her backyard yurt.

8. usurp (c) seize.

"I left for one minute—and that guy usurped my seat!" exclaimed Alessandro.

9. sop (B) bribe.

If you give the doorman a few bucks as a sop, he'll let you in.

10. tosspot (c) drunkard.

I spent a lot of my 20s in bars, but I wasn't exactly a tosspot.

11. punt (B) flat-bottomed boat.

The travelers steered their punt down the Thames.

12. tortuous (B) winding.

The trail is tortuous and steep, but the reward is a spectacular view from the summit.

13. onyx (B) gemstone.

Harold gave Esme a black onyx ring for her birthday.

14. tyro (A) rookie.

I'm a tyro when it comes to social media; can you explain again what "tweet" means?

15. ouzo (B) Greek liqueur.

"I'd like to propose a toast!" said Nick, lifting his glass of ouzo.

Vocabulary Ratings

9 & BELOW: so-so

10-12: rosy

13-15: wo

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