

a

a

'I'm going to be staying with a friend,' he said. 'I'll phone up as often as I can.' — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

abate

Towards dawn the storm had abated a little, and they had pushed on again until long past noon. — *Rosemary Sutcliffe, The Eagle of the Ninth*

able

If you only had twelve of us instead of thirty-two you'd manage much better. You'd be able to keep order. — *K. M. Peyton, 'Who, Sir? Me, Sir?'*

about

He didn't want to think about her because it upset him. But he didn't want to not think about her either. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

Charlie's mother, and especially little Charlie himself, went about from morning till night with a horrible empty feeling in their tummies. — *Roald Dahl, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

accurate

Atomic clocks are so accurate, they are even more accurate than the earth going round! — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

ache

Every muscle ached to stop, to give up. It was only his brain that kept him going. — *Gillian Cross, On the Edge*

across

Daniel whipped a purple-spotted handkerchief from his pocket and handed it to his daughter across the table. — *Anne Fine, Mrs Doubtfire*

act

Mr Dursley tried to act normally. When Dudley had been put to bed, he went into the living-room in time to catch the last report on the evening news. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

action

Gerry was so deep in his plans he did not even hear... There were long lists of things to bring, and a detailed plan of the action. — *Raymond Briggs, Midnight Adventure*

activate

'Activate the tracking device as soon as you've found the dishes,' Blunt ordered. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

actually

One of these days, Callum's going to forget himself and actually look pleased to see me. — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

add

'Simon,' his mother called from the kitchen. 'Is Jessica awake?' 'No,' Simon called back. 'But I could arrange it,' he added under his breath. — *Theresa Breslin, Simon's Challenge*

administer

Walter got me back into his lab and administered the antidote in a few seconds. — *John Wyndham, The Day of the Triffids*

adventure

He was not, you would have thought, the sort of boy to plunge into an adventure of this sort. He was small and thin and shrinking. — *Gillian Avery, A Likely Lad*

afoot

There's a plan afoot to send a deputation to the masters to state our grievances. — *Sue Reid, My Story: Mill Girl*

after

He heard Becky call, and her feet coming after him, but he could not wait. — *Philippa Pearce, Minnow on the Sway*

afterwards

This is the story of a Polish family, and of what happened to them during the Second World War and immediately afterwards. — *Ian Serrallier, The Silver Sword*

again

It'd be bacon and eggs again, or they'd go and have chips in Jubilee Road. — *Ann Pilling, Henry's Leg*

against

From time to time a stronger gust of wind would make one of the branches of a cedar or a fir move against another and groan like a cello. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

age

We didn't settle down to sleep for ages. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Sleepovers*

age

Because I was a half-vampire I aged at only a fifth the rate of humans, which meant that though eighteen months had passed, my body was only three or four months older. — *Darren Shan, Tunnels of Blood*

air

He had never liked Queen Yolande with her haughty airs and fastidious manner. — *P. C. Doherty, Crown in Darkness*

along

Billy changed direction and ran along the side of the wall. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

always

The Grandpa she'd always known had been a man of vigour, energy, passion. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

any

He didn't have any particular expertise in the matter of curses, as far as Harry knew. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

anyway

Skin would get him in the end anyway, so what difference did it make where he ran for sanctuary? — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

apropos

Apropos Giles there's a bit of a crisis with the funds apparently. Nothing serious. A chum's let him down. — *Alan Bennett, Talking Heads*

arrive

Aunt Patsy arrived the morning after the accident. — *Honor Arundel, The High House*

ashamed

Will searched his mother's bedroom first, ashamed to be looking through the drawers where she kept her underclothes. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

askew

Chudleigh Pomeroy came storming in, his toupee askew and his round face red with indignation. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

assuage

Doubts assuaged, Butler returned to his copy of 'Guns and Ammo', leaving his employer to unravel the secrets of the universe — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

astir

At earliest dawn our camp was astir and an hour later we had started upon our memorable expedition. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Lost World*

babble

Frosya was beaming at the lost man, babbling into his ear and patting his hair as if he were her son, come back after twenty years away. — *Gillian Cross, Calling a Dead Man*

babyish

My dress ... had embroidered teddy bears all across the chest. I'd liked them at first but now I felt sure Chloe would say I looked babyish. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Sleepovers*

back

The wire sprang back and cut Hermux sharply across his cheek. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

backwards

'Anything interesting?' yawned Pandora, slumping backwards onto Titus's bed. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Wicked*

badger

If he badgered that pathetic librarian often enough, she'd find the hypnotism book. — *Georgia Byng, Molly Moon's Incredible Book of Hypnotism*

baleful

Frodo and Sam, horror-stricken, began slowly to back away, their own gaze held by the dreadful stare of those baleful eyes. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Two Towers*

balloon

The troll ballooned its cheeks and howled. Scare tactics. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

ban

'Today is the one day in the year when all visitors are banned, on pain of death.' — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza: City of Masks*

bane

Kay was six years older than I was and the bane of my young life. — *Michael Morpurgo, Arthur, High King of Britain*

bang

One last kiss, rushed and clumsy so that they banged cheekbones. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

barrage

Twig quaked under the barrage of insults and recriminations. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

bathe

We never bathe in the moat until July or August—and even then we usually regret it.

—Dodie Smith, *I Capture the Castle*

batter

There are guys so desperate or so crazy, they'll knife you or batter your head in for your sleeping bag and the coppers you've got in your pocket.

—Robert Swindells, *Stone Cold*

bear 

A fortnight was all she thought she'd be able to bear of her aunt and uncle's hospitality.

—Meg Cabot, *Victoria and the Rogue*

bearing

He knew he was a winner now; he had the bearing, the quiet arrogance of a winner.

—Roald Dahl, *Taste*

beastly

Matilda decided that every time her father or her mother was beastly to her, she would get her own back in some way or another.

—Roald Dahl, *Matilda*

becalmed

The fishing fleet stood becalmed at the horizon as if it had come to the end of the world and could go no further.

—Anita Desai, *The Village by the Sea*

bedraggled

At three o'clock on the afternoon of May 20, 1916, three bedraggled, hairy men staggered into Stromness.

—Paul Dowswell, *True Polar Adventures*

being

'The dragons do not dream. They are dreams. They do not work magic: it is their substance, their being.'

—Ursula Le Guin, *The Farthest Shore*

belong

'I do not belong there, in the great cities among foreign men. I do not belong to any land.'

—Ursula Le Guin, *The Tombs of Atuan*

beset

'The shadow of Mordor lies on distant lands,' answered Aragorn. 'Saruman has fallen under it. Rohan is beset.'

—J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

besides

Ransom had met other things in Mars besides the Martians.

—C. S. Lewis, *Perelandra*

better

'You'd better put on your moustache so as you get used to it.'

—Roald Dahl, *The Great Automatic Grammatizator*

beyond

Their electronic machines were far beyond anything London's Engineers have been able to build.

—Philip Reeve, *Mortal Engines*

bide 

'Truly,' said Aragorn ... 'I would do as the master of the house bade me.'

—J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers*

billabong

The bush boy moved quickly. Skirting the outcrop of rock, he came to a place where a chain of billabongs went looping into the desert.

—James Vance Marshall, *Walkabout*

bitterly

Tom was bitterly disappointed that he was not allowed to climb the tower.

—Philippa Pearce, *Tom's Midnight Garden*

blacken

A fire crackles in the hearth and a small, blackened cauldron hangs above the flames.

—Chris Priestley, *Witch Hunt*

bland

Liz Finch, our student teacher, is bland, harmless and has no known habits.

—Nicky Singer, *Feather Boy*

blank

'Which way?' Buffy demanded, but Xander looked blank. 'I don't know.'

—Richie Tankersly Cusick, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: The Harvest*

blast

A bright red pall blasted from the cannon into the black sky.

—G. P. Taylor, *Shadowmancer*

blur

The moon was almost complete, its outline well defined, except for the blur on the waxing curve.

—Barry Hines, *A Kestrel for a Knave*

boast

Born in 1848 and taken to the Great Exhibition as a toddling child—not many people still alive could boast a thing like that.

—James Hilton, *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*

bolster

So bolstering up his pride, he set his strong will on the work they gave him.

—Ursula Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*

border

The cottage itself, though bordered by trees, occupied a small clearing. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

bore 

During the lemon meringue pie, Uncle Vernon bored them all with a long talk about Grunnings, his drill-making company. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

bother

I don't bother to dress up or anything. I change out of my school uniform, obviously, but just into my black baggy trousers. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

bother

'It seems to me,' said Wayne, 'that if people had the faintest idea what a bother they were, no one would ever have a baby.' — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

bovine

Claud's fat bovine face glimmered with a mawkish pride. — *Roald Dahl, Parson's Pleasure*

branch

They made the long circuit, past one false lead, to the passage that branched rightwards towards the Painted Room. — *Ursula Le Guin, The Tombs of Atuan*

brave

I wasn't that brave. In fact I was having enough difficulty staving off the dread which swamped through me as I descended. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

breach

It was the grossest breach of etiquette imaginable to touch another person's *dæmon*. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

break

We were sitting on some steps that led up to the tennis courts during the afternoon break. — *Bali Rai, (Un)arranged Marriage*

breath

For a second, Mr. Sir's pain seemed to recede. He took several long, deep breaths. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

brief

Last week there was a brief interruption in our monotonous routine. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

bright

Bright sunlight was still pouring through the open hatch. — *Cornelia Funke, Dragon Rider*

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

brim

Undaunted, Mrs McLachlan unlocked the cage door and edged inside, dragging the brimming cauldron behind her. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Magic*

bring

'Did you bring the sandwiches?' I interrupted, patting the bulging pockets of Mum's anorak. — *Anne Fine, Goggle-Eyes*

Email can sometimes bring Internet users ginormous problems. — *Michael Cox, The Incredible Internet*

brink

Haouy struggled back from the brink of sleep to find his uncle kneeling over him. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

brush

My coat was brushed every day till it shone like a rook's wing. — *Anna Sewell, Black Beauty*

build

One day Hrothgar made up his mind to build a great hall with some of the spoils he had won in war. — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

bulk

He came to stand near her, also looking out at the misty horizon of the sea, the stars, the dark bulk of the mountain above them. — *Ursula Le Guin, Tehanu*

burn 

Warlords and brigands roam the countryside burning and pillaging at will. — *Michael Morpurgo, Arthur, High King of Britain*

bury

Golda's family performed the traditional rites and buried the body near some small acacia bushes. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

business

Your father and I have been friendly rivals in business for some time now. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

bustle^o

The little man ... was in a terrific hurry. He was bustling along the pavement, sidestepping the other pedestrians. — *Roald Dahl, The Umbrella Man*

busy

Nobody seemed to be paying me much attention — too busy chatting loudly. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

canopy

Beneath the dark canopy of leaves and smoke the fire laid hold on the forest and began to gnaw. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

cantankerous

I hated the new donkey on sight. He was a big, strong beast, carrying his nose high and with a cantankerous set to his ears. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

canter

Hrun's warhorse cantered through a creaking archway and reared up by its master, its mane streaming in the gale. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

caption

It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU**, the caption beneath it ran. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

care

I also said that I cared about dogs because they were faithful and honest, and some dogs were cleverer and more interesting than some people. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

career

The beast was careering through the tunnels, crashing, bellowing, thundering through the maze. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

cast

The oil-burning torches had been lit and the flames cast flickering shadows across the square. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

cast

We stood, our shadows lengthening in the last rays of the sun, the dust beneath our feet taking on a golden cast. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

cause

Mother died eight years ago, from perfectly natural causes. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

cause

Football teams are extraordinarily inventive in the ways they find to cause their supporters sorrow. — *Nick Hornby, Fever Pitch*

centaur

A centaur was standing over him, not Ronan or Bane; this one looked younger; he had white-blond hair and a palomino body. — *J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

chair

The meeting was being chaired by an elderly man in the robes of a Cardinal. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

chatter

No one speaks to a stranger at a funeral: they just chatter idly. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

check^o

At the entrance to the Community Hall, a lady Assistant Examiner sat checking names against a list. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

chilly

The sun hadn't cleared the ridge of mountains opposite and it was still chilly in the shadows. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

choppy

The men in the boat below looked very small indeed. It was a long, long way down to the water's choppy, whitecapped [= having patches of white foam] surface. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

chore

I spent the time hanging out with Inderjit and Jasbir as they went about their daily chores. — *Bali Rai, (Un)arranged Marriage*

chuck^o

What am I expecting now? That if I chuck a few pebbles up at the windows the family will come down and rescue me? — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

chug

The vessel chugged slowly out into the deep, blue waters of the open sea. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

chunky

The phone was a fairly chunky black thing that had probably gone out of fashion within a couple of months. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

churn

Alex sat hunched up in the back of the low-flying C-130 military aircraft, his stomach churning behind his knees. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

clad

Look at him. Scrawny, like most wizards, and clad in a dark red robe. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

clamber

The ghosts clambered out of the earth, pale forms paler still in the midday light. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

clammy

Katie's throat went dry as she tried to speak. She felt clammy perspiration on her brow. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

clatter

I started awake to the sound of horses' hooves clattering on cobblestones. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

cleave^o

For the second time in an hour Harry felt as though his head had been cleaved in two. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

clog

My arms were aching and my skin was stinging. Dust and pollen clogged my nose and throat. — *David Almond, Skellig*

clump

Magda automatically stands wherever there's a clump of likely looking boys. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

clutch^o

We moved off quietly sideways, in the direction the water was coming from, clutching our unlit candles and trying to keep out of sight. — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

cock

Nanny sat with her head cocked to one side, as though listening to a voice only she could hear. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

collide

The men had a frantic distracted look, and kept colliding with each other on the narrow platform. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

commodious

The rent is forty pounds a year, which seems little for a commodious castle, but we have only a few acres of land. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

complement

'Right,' says Miss Raynham, doing a quick count-up. 'I make that eight. So, if we add in young Wesley Parr and Mr Niker here, I think we have a full complement.' — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

complicated

People believe in God because the world is very complicated and they think it is very unlikely that anything as complicated as a flying squirrel or the human eye or a brain could happen by chance. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

comprise

At the restaurant we have zakuski—an hors d'oeuvre comprising slices of tomato, cucumber, pickle, tinned ham, beef and pork. — *Michael Palin, Pole to Pole*

comrade

Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

concern

Rushing this way and that, everyone was far too wrapped up in their own concerns to spare a thought for anyone else. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

conch

By the time Ralph finished blowing the conch the platform was crowded. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

conclusion

I've come to the shocking conclusion that I have only one long-sleeved dress and three cardigans to wear in the winter. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

concoct

Over the next few days, Lyra concocted a dozen plans and dismissed them impatiently. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

consecutive

Ninety-two coins spun consecutively have come down heads ninety-two consecutive times. — *Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*

consensus

One of West Brom's goals was by general consensus hundreds of yards offside, provoking the crowd into invading the pitch. — *Nick Hornby, Fever Pitch*

consummate

Even Butler, the consummate professional, was beginning to dread the long nights of damp and insect bites. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

cool

It was still kind of cool to have someone in your family robbed by a famous outlaw. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

cordon

The whole area had been cordoned off. Police cars had moved in from every direction. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

cover

Lennie covered his face with his huge paws and bleated with terror. — *John Steinbeck, Of Mice and Men*

covet

Crane looked up at the bedraggled corpse and coveted the new boots it was wearing. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

crackle

There is a storm on its way. The air crackles with static as I let myself softly onto the front door. — *Theresa Breslin, Whispers in the Graveyard*

cram

Adam reached up both hands to cram his bonnet closer down on his head. — *Mollie Hunter, The Thirteenth Member*

crony

My mum and some of her cronies stood in the doorway and poured saffron oil onto the step just before I left. — *Bali Rai, (Un)arranged Marriage*

cruise

The moment dusk fell, several police cars began to cruise the quiet streets. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

crummy

They gave me this very crummy room, with nothing to look out of the window at except the other side of the hotel. — *J. D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye*

curt

Except for a curt 'You girls awright back there!', the policeman didn't speak to them or tell the girls where he was taking them. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

dampen

Mr Cartright shook his head. It saddened him to have to dampen enthusiasm in any educational sphere. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

dangle

The speaker was an old man in a shabby coat, a cigarette dangling out of the corner of his mouth. — *Anthony Horowitz, Groosham Grange*

dare

He didn't dare look up. A shadow fell across the window as the two men passed. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

dark

Night had fallen but through the window she could see the dark outline of trees. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

dart

The police darted off in different directions, their rifles forward, while the white officer spoke into a radio which he held close to his face. — *Beverly Naidoo, Chain of Fire*

Katie darted one quick glance behind her. She'd never get away from them. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

dauntless

Lili, I thought, would be dauntless in darkened rooms. — *Alice T. Ellis, The Clothes in the Wardrobe*

dawn

Before the next day dawned their journey to Mordor was over. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Two Towers*

dazzle

The brightness was still dazzling, blinding their closed eyes with blood-red light. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

dead

I thought he was dead. He was sitting with his legs stretched out, and his head tipped back against the wall. — *David Almond, Skellig*

decide

Suppose you ought to do a recce around the schools and colleges, see what they have to offer before you decide. — *Alison Allen-Gray, Unique*

At this point, I decided it might be best to retire to my room. — *Meg Cabot, The Princess Diaries*

decorous

Something creamy lay among the ferny weeds. A stone. No. A shell. Suddenly Piggy was a-bubble with decorous excitement. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

decoy

Either this was a decoy and the real tiara was hidden elsewhere, or this was a test, and he had been lured here to take that test. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl: The Seventh Dwarf*

deep

Three deep parallel grooves of skin appeared upon George's rather low sloping forehead. — *Road Dahl, Vengeance Is Mine Inc.*

deeply

Dark and deeply mysterious, the Deepwoods is a harsh and perilous place for those who call it home. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Beyond the Deep Woods*

definitely

A giant Egyptian sarcophagus popped open in the deepest of the shadows, revealing two figures who were most definitely not mummies. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl: The Seventh Dwarf*

deprive

Being deprived of sight, Frodo found his hearing and other senses sharpened. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring*

deserted

The bush slept: motionless: silent: apparently deserted. Drugged to immobility by the heat of the midday sun. — *James Vance Marshall, Walkabout*

design

Dr Fian chanted the next line of his litany, his wand tracing a design again as he chanted. — *Mollie Hunter, The Thirteenth Member*

despite

Despite many threats, Granny Weatherwax had never turned anyone into a frog. — *Terry Pratchett, Witches Abroad*

determined

Christopher scuffed one shoe against the other. He was determined not to surrender. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

detest

Peter Watson was always the enemy. Ernie and Raymond detested him because he was nearly everything that they were not. — *Road Dahl, The Swan*

develop

One really useful skill you can develop is 'getting the feel' of when an answer is right. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

device

He signed the postcard with his private device: an elongated cat, supposed to be a tom. It signified Tom Long. — *Philippa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden*

devour

After they had devoured the nuts and drunk the lemonade they discussed who would write what for the Gazette. — *Michelle Magorian, Goodnight Mister Tom*

different

'Now,' I said, 'we have two different people both loathing Lionel Pantaloon's guts this morning.' — *Road Dahl, Vengeance Is Mine Inc.*

difficult

The Duchessa regained her composure with some difficulty and began a story so improbable that Arianna found it difficult to take in. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza: City of Masks*

dinky

There were dinky little bottles of shampoo and bath foam so we had the bath brimming with bubbles. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Lola Rose*

disappear

The helicopter disappeared in a huge fireball, then plunged down. — *Anthony Horowitz, Point Blanc*

discharge

The Martians are able to discharge enormous clouds of a black and poisonous vapour by means of rockets. — *H. G. Wells, The War of the Worlds*

disconcert

It was disconcerting, having no idea of the time. He could have slept for a few hours or all night. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpia*

distinctly

Hugh Pylum-Haight was becoming distinctly twitchy, waiting upstairs in the complete silence of the great hall. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Wicked*

do

'And what, precisely, were you doing in the garden?' he asked. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

doom

Madame Zeroni warned that if he failed to do this, he and his descendants would be doomed for all of eternity. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

down⁰

Adolph Knipe ... sat down in front of the typewriter that was on the table. — *Roald Dahl, The Great Automatic Grammatizator*

downstairs

You'd better get dressed and come downstairs and never mind your imaginings. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables*

doze

Frodo dozed, though the pain of his wound was slowly growing. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring*

drag

The morning dragged, the way it does when you feel let down or disappointed. — *Darren Shan, Cirque du Freak*

drape

Next day, there was a grand funeral. Nai Nai's coffin was draped with white sheets and placed on a hearse pulled by four men. — *Adeline Yen Mah, Chinese Cinderella*

draw

Salimba retreated, drawing the door closed behind him. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

The discordant tones of the voices and instruments drew nearer. — *Jules Verne, Around the World in Eighty Days*

drift

Clouds shaped mightily like whales and dragons drifted over the land by day. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrld Sisters*

drive

The song that has been driving me pleausrably potty recently is 'I'm Like a Bird' by Nelly Furtado. — *Nick Hornby, 31 Songs*

drop

Miranda was so startled she almost dropped the eggs in her hand. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

The temperature dropped quickly after dark. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

From their feet the land dropped away into a shallow vale, then rose again to sombre moors inland. — *Rosemary Sutcliff, Beowulf: Dragonslayer*

during

It had snowed a little during the night, and the grass crunched frostily under my feet. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

duty

My mother wasn't content just to say that I was not an idiot, she set out to prove it, not because of any rigid sense of duty, but out of love. — *Christy Brown, My Left Foot*

eager

Lee was talking to a group of astronomers eager to learn what news he could bring them. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

early

The organization was formed in the early eighties, during the so-called Cold War. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

earthly

What lay before him looked at first strangely like an earthly landscape — a landscape of grey downward ridges rising and falling like waves of the sea. — *C. S. Lewis, Out of the Silent Planet*

eavesdrop

Mrs Hooper, he noticed, was leaning dangerously far over the fence, still eavesdropping in hopes of hearing more. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

edge

Reverend Cornwell's voice took on the edge of command. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

edge

Very slowly, Thomas edged his feet along the stone floor. As he did so he could feel dankness with his bare feet. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

erie

Still the eerie silence. It seemed to go on and on and on, and as it continued, it grew deeper and more frightening. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

effect

Nguyen was by now thoroughly spooked. Artemis generally had that effect on people. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

effort

Albard fixed his mind on the hilt of the sword, and with great effort, he caused it to stir beneath the debris. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

either

You've got to make up your mind now ... Either he's your father and you pay him that respect, or else you're not to come here. — *Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman*

ejaculate

'Did ever anyone hear the like!' ejaculated Marilla, who had listened in dumb amazement. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables*

elbow

Faster and faster Twig ran, barging through the crowds, elbowing dawdlers out of his way. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

elder

The next day a group of elders from all the nine villages of Umuofia came to Okonkwo's house early in the morning. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

eldritch

As the cauldron bubbled an eldritch voice shrieked: 'When shall we three meet again?' — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

elegant

A hundred miles ahead, the sunrise shone on Circle Park, the elegant loop of lawns and flower-beds that encircled Tier One. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

elementary

Witches never bothered with elementary road safety. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

elevator

You don't raise a guy to a responsible job who whistles in the elevator! — *Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman*

elf

The hall of Elrond's house was filled with folk: Elves for the most part, though there were a few guests of other sorts. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring*

eliminate

Every satellite dish in London was noted, photographed, authenticated and then eliminated from the search. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

elixir

The Stone will transform any metal into pure gold. It also produces the Elixir of Life, which will make the drinker immortal. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

embalm

There is something in individual technique ... if I saw a pair that had been embalmed by different hands I should know at once. — *Evelyn Waugh, The Loved One*

embellish

Winston, in addition to his regular work, spent long periods ... altering and embellishing news items which were to be quoted in speeches. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

emerge

The heavy bronze doors of the Institute swung open and the paramedics emerged with a stretcher. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

emit

Ralph pursed his lips and squirted air into the shell, which emitted a low, farting noise. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

empty

It was amazing how rapidly schools emptied after the final bell, as if someone pulled the plug under a giant whirlpool. — *Carl Hiaasen, Hoot*

encircle

At the side of the road was a little hill, encircled by a ring of silver birch trees. Everyone in Hungry called it the fairy ring, because of the perfect circle of trees. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

encounter

Victoria was convinced that if there were a ruder young man in all the world, she had yet to encounter him. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

end

The end of the summer holidays came too quickly for Harry's liking. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

endless

Outside the tent there was still the endless drip-drip of wet leaves on the canvas, but the storm was over. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

enemy

There, comrades, is the answer to all our problems. It is summed up in a single word — Man. Man is the only real enemy we have. — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

engulf

The heavy cloud bank in the southwest had engulfed the sun and a coolness came into the air. — *Mary O'Hara, My Friend Flicka*

enquire

'How are you taking to the piratical life?' he enquired, looking up from his mortar and pestle.

— *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

enrol

I am enrolled as member 116,747 of the Royal and Ancient Polar Bear Society and issued with card, stickers, hat, badge, certificate and a carrier bag to hold them all in. — *Michael Palin, Pole to Pole*

ensconce

As a cold clear night came over the mountains we were cosily ensconced in our snow hole beneath the face. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

ensure

I had a little surprise ... that would ensure that my birthday party was talked about and remembered for ages to come. — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

entitled

Mrs Grace Merriweather had composed an original pageant entitled 'Maycomb County: Ad Astra Per Aspera', and I was to be a ham. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

entourage

Really attractive people, like Lana and Josh, don't ever go anywhere alone. They always have this sort of entourage that follows them around.

— *Meg Cabot, The Princess Diaries*

entrance

A bell rang, and the big room fell quiet for the entrance of the Examiners. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

envelop

Darkness now enveloped him like a shroud. He twisted his head round and gazed into the blackness of the forest. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

envy

We envied the princesses and the younger princes particularly. They were allowed to stay in Windsor most of the year. — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

equal

When Thrall was a young man, a girl who was his equal in every way came to his hut. — *Kevin Crossley-Holland, Viking!*

equal

According to Pythagoras' theorem, if the sum of the squares of the two shorter sides equals the square of the hypotenuse then the triangle is right-angled. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

equalize

With one minute remaining in the game, Arsenal equalized, unexpectedly and bizarrely, a diving header from a rebound off the goalkeeper's knee. — *Nick Hornby, Fever Pitch*

equipment

Getting themselves aboard the zeppelin was hazardous for the spies, not least because of the equipment they had to carry. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

erase

Mrs Casper turned her shoes over in her hands, licking her fingers and trying to erase the scuff marks on the heels. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

escort

We were met at the landing place by a file of musketeers and escorted to the fort. — *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

essential

A radio will be essential for keeping up to date with what's going on outside. — *David Almond, The Fire-Eaters*

etiquette

It was the grossest breach of etiquette imaginable to touch another person's dæmon. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

even

There are very few people, and even fewer amateur zoologists, who stumble upon a sizeable mammal previously unknown to science. — *Gavin Maxwell, Ring of Bright Water*

ever

No animal must ever live in a house, or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade. — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

exacting

Yam, the king of crops, was a very exacting king. For three or four moons it demanded hard work and constant attention from cockcrow till the chickens went back to roost. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

examine

I took my mitts and inner gloves off, and examined my fingers. Two blackened fingers on each hand, and one bluish thumb. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

except

By mid-afternoon, we'd sold the whole barrow-load except for a couple of cabbages and a few leeks. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

excitement

I recollect that in the excitement of the moment we did a kind of dance around the room in our pyjamas. — *Ronald Dahl, Vengeance Is Mine Inc.*

exclaim

'This must be Jo'burg!' exclaimed Naledi, as the lorry raced along a great wide road towards tall shapes. — *Beverley Naidoo, Journey to Jo'burg*

excuse

Inspector, I think Miss Birling ought to be excused any more of this questioning. She's nothing more to tell you. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

execute

The driver ... executed a clumsy and violent U-turn on the narrow street, lunging up over the kerbs. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

exhale

'Dear, dear,' said Professor McGonagall sardonically, as one of the dragons soared around her classroom, emitting loud bangs and exhaling flame. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

exist

Inside the house lived a malevolent phantom. People said he existed, but Jem and I had never seen him. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

expel

The Ministry of Magic said I'd be expelled from Hogwarts if there was any more magic there! — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

explode

Goyle's potion exploded, showering the whole class. People shrieked as splashes of the Swelling Solution hit them. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

exploit

The killing of the Fire Dragon was an exploit that called for the best of their cunning. — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

expose

I could not go abroad in snow—it would settle on me and expose me. Rain, too, would make me a watery outline, a glistening surface of a man—a bubble. — *H. G. Wells, The Invisible Man*

I can remember the first time my son Danny was exposed to music. — *Nick Hornby, 31 Songs*

express

Marilla sniffed, to express her contempt for Matthew's opinions concerning anything feminine, and walked off to the dairy with the pails. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables*

expression

Winston ... had set his features into the expression of quiet optimism which it was advisable to wear. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

extra

Now the clock had struck thirteen, affirming that—for this once at least—there was an extra, thirteenth hour. — *Philippa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden*

eye

The other three children murmured solemn greetings but continued to eye Victoria with suspicion. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

fabulous

The Brazilian's ship contained fabulous riches. Bales of gossamer silks and shining satins hid still greater wealth. — *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

face

Mr Bohlen glanced up at the long, melancholy face of the younger man. 'Aren't you proud, Knipe? Aren't you pleased?' — *Ronald Dahl, The Great Automatic Grammatizator*

face

They faced each other across the table, their fingers spread on the cloth, like two pianists ready to begin. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

faceless

The reception was cold and faceless, white marble and mirrors, with a single potted plant tucked into the corner as an afterthought. — *Anthony Horowitz, Point Blanc*

fall

There was no wind, and the snow fell silently in large heavy flakes. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

When Sattamax was ready to speak, the rest of the crowd fell silent. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

fall

From their hiding place Thomas and Kate listened to the fall of the hoofs going into the distance.

— G. P. Taylor, *Shadowmancer*

falter

The man tried to meet Abhorsen's gaze, but faltered and looked away at his fellows. — Garth Nix, *Sabriel*

fame

Beowulf was only a young man, but already he had won fame on account of his goodness and daring. — Robert Nye, *Beowulf*

familiar

The striking of the grandfather clock became a familiar sound to Tom, especially in the silence of those nights when everyone else was asleep.

— Philippa Pearce, *Tom's Midnight Garden*

famous

The island of Gont, a single mountain that lifts its peak a mile above the storm-racked Northeast Sea, is a land famous for wizards. — Ursula Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*

fanciful

The organization was called Scorpia. It was a fanciful name, they all knew it, invented by someone who had probably read too much James Bond. — Anthony Horowitz, *Scorpia*

fancy

I fancied I saw some black object flopping about ... but it became motionless as I looked at it, and judged that my eye had been deceived. — H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*

Ha! I fancy that I hear his step now upon the stairs. — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor*

fancy

Sitting by the fire in the housekeeper's room, I approached that island in my fancy from every possible direction. — Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*

fang

And then, as her face contorted into a horrible shape, she bared her fangs, burying them swiftly into his neck. — Buffy the Vampire-Slayer: *The Harvest*

far

The Oracle was called Agbala, and people came from far and near to consult it. — Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

fare

He was supplied with bread of a finer, whiter quality than the usual prison fare, and even regaled each Sunday with a small quantity of wine. — Alexandre Dumas, *The Count of Monte Cristo*

farther

I could not but note that the farther north I traveled, the fewer were the great dinosaurs, though they still persisted in lesser numbers.

— Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Land that Time Forgot*

fascinate

The Radley Place fascinated Dill. In spite of our warnings and explanations it drew him as the moon draws water. — Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

fashionable

Puffed sleeves are so fashionable now. It would give me such a thrill, Marilla, just to wear a dress with puffed sleeves. — L. M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*

fast

The old man made the sheet fast and jammed the tiller. — Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*

fault

It was nobody's fault that the rain came down in torrents the next morning, making a picnic a fantastic impossibility. — Saki, *The Brogue*

favourable

We'll have favourable winds, a quick passage, and not the least difficulty in finding the spot.

— Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*

favourite

Morning coffee was Hermux's favourite time of the day. It was when he did his best thinking.

— Michael Hoeye, *Time Stops for No Mouse*

fearful

Some mystery, some positive danger, overhung our father. He was very fearful of going out alone.

— Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Sign of Four*

Clayton came to his feet with a start. His blood ran cold. Never in all his life had so fearful a sound smote upon his ears. — Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes*

feat

The trek back home to Jigalong in the north-west of Western Australia ... was also one of the most incredible feats imaginable, undertaken by three Aboriginal girls in the 1930s. — Doris Pilkington, *Rabbit Proof Fence*

feeble

Stanley made a feeble attempt to punch Zigzag, then he felt a flurry of fists against his head and neck. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

felicity

I tell you, my lambkins, ... you shall not much longer have the felicity of conspiring together. — *Alexandre Dumas, The Black Tulip*

felon

But it was not seemly for young English ladies, Mrs White informed her, to show such avid interest in convicted felons. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

ferocious

Twig trembled under the ferocious gaze of the creature in front of him. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

ferret

Nobody seemed to be paying me much attention—too busy chatting loudly and ferreting around in their own bags for books and pens and pencils. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

festoon

Smoke was rising here and there among the creepers that festooned the dead or dying trees. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

fetching

Rose looks particularly fetching by firelight because she is a pinkish gold, very light and feathery. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

fetid

It was a difficult birth, a long hard struggle in the fetid half-darkness of that little tent. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

few

I'm surprised, talking to Anne afterwards, to find how few people have ever been to the South Pole. — *Michael Palin, Pole to Pole*

field

As soon as the moon rose above the horizon, he immediately caught her in the field of the telescope. — *Jules Verne, From the Earth to the Moon*

fierce

That summer the sun was a mighty furnace, with a blast so fierce it loosened the edges of things. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

fiery

Her mother was a European elf with a fiery temper. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

figure

Clover was a stout motherly mare approaching middle life, who had never quite got her figure back after her fourth foal. — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

The doorway was blocked by a figure hooded and draped in oilskins. — *Alan Garner, The Owl Service*

file

As they filed out of the classroom, Harry saw Professor Umbridge approach the teacher's desk. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

find

I came down to breakfast next morning ... to find Sir Walter decoding a telegram in the midst of muffins and marmalade. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

fine

Willy Loman never made a lot of money. His name was never in the paper. He's not the finest character that ever lived. — *Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman*

finger

Tom looked across the clutter of tables and saw the other pirates glaring at him, fingering their knives. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

firm

Mr Dursley was the director of a firm called Grunnings, which made drills. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

fish

I fished inside my jacket for my fags and lighter, only to swear loudly when I found a pocket full of tobacco flakes. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

flag

There were cold stone flags under Tom's feet, and in his nostrils a smell of old dust that it had been nobody's business to disperse. — *Philippa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden*

flambeau

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. — *Edgar Allan Poe, The Cask of Amontillado*

flank

The creature grunted, and with one swipe of a claw gouged a wound in the flank of Twoflower's horse. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

flank

Polydectes sat on a raised platform flanked by his bodyguards. He lounged on his throne, only his eyes shifting. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

flaxen

Doctor Kemp was a tall and slender young man, with flaxen hair and a moustache almost white. — *H. G. Wells, The Invisible Man*

flex

Jud slipped his suit jacket on and flexed his shoulders, smiling at himself in profile through the mirror. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

flick

Hastily, Mr Cartright flicked through the pages of Dr Feltham's vast Science Fair memorandum. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

flicker

Simon's head-torch kept flickering from a loose or damaged connection. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

flimsy

Alison and Roger were playing with three flimsy cut out paper models of birds. — *Alan Garner, The Owl Service*

fling

Then, suddenly, Christopher scowled horribly and flung his bathing things in a wet lump on the floor. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

flurry

The hospital in Bain was relatively new, built six years before when a flurry of hospital reform came sweeping up from the South. — *Garth Nix, Liraël*

focus

All eyes were focussed on the stranger. This tall, young man was neither black nor white, they observed. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

foist

I love my family dearly, but they were rather foisted on me. — *Nick Hornby, Fever Pitch*

follow

The children couldn't follow everything the Madam was saying in English, but her voice sounded annoyed. — *Beverly Naidoo, Journey to Jo'burg*

forbear

We forbore to light a fire or to make any unnecessary sound. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Lost World*

foreboding

Harry's sense of foreboding increased; he was sure nothing Snape had to say was going to do him any good. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

former

Thaddeus Valentine was Tom's hero: a former scavenger who had risen to become London's most famous archaeologist. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

formless

He gave a great start of fright. A colossal and formless something was rushing across the field of his vision. — *Jack London, White Fang*

formula

No one has ever worked out a simple formula for telling you whether a very big number is a prime number or what the next one will be. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

forth

Rosa availed herself of this favourable moment to come forth from her hiding place. — *Alexandre Dumas, The Black Tulip*

fortune

Was Phileas Fogg rich? Undoubtedly. But those who knew him best could not imagine how he had made his fortune. — *Jules Verne, Around the World in Eighty Days*

fossick

Then, amongst the roots, he fossicked for resin. — *James Vance Marshall, Walkabout*

fraction

We can only know about a fraction of the things that go on in the universe. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

frail

Gilly looked very frail, struggling to lift the full bucket from the well, but Adam resisted the thought of helping her. — *Mollie Hunter, The Thirteenth Member*

frame

The curtains were drawn back and he could see the portly frame of Mr Speedwell standing with his back to the pane. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

frame

Jude threw open the front door but was halted in his tracks by the presence of two police officers, framed by the darkness outside. — *Malarie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

My head was swimming so wildly that I could not frame a coherent answer. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

frantic

The men had a frantic distracted look, and kept colliding with each other on the narrow platform. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

fraught

Every journey between your world and ours is fraught with hazards and is not to be undertaken lightly. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza: City of Masks*

freak

We had this lecturer though, he was a real Blake freak. He was on about it every day. Everythin' he said, honest, everything was related to Blake. — *Willy Russell, Educating Rita*

freak

I was so freaked out by what Mr Gianini said, I couldn't even say anything. I just sat there and felt myself turning all red. — *Meg Cabot, The Princess Diaries*

frequent

There was no law, not even an unwritten law, against frequenting the Chestnut Tree Café, yet the place was somehow ill-omened. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

fret

Now, chin up, don't fret. You're not the first girl in the world to be in this pickle and unfortunately you won't be the last. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

full

Imshi took Lirael to the Robing Room, a huge room full of all the equipment, weapons and miscellaneous items the librarians needed. — *Garth Nix, Lirael*

fumble

A hand thrust beyond the broken glass, fumbling with the lock and sliding the window up. — *Buffy the Vampire-Slayer: The Harvest*

furious

I'm telling you, there's nothing that makes the rich so furious as being mocked and insulted in the newspapers. — *Roald Dahl, Vengeance Is Mine Inc.*

furnish

A few sticks of driftwood furnished them with a fire that thawed down through the ice and left them to eat supper in the dark. — *Jack London, The Call of the Wild*

furtive

He looked round him with a furtive and stealthy air, as one who dreads pursuit. Then he vanished over the hill. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Hound of the Baskervilles*

gadget

There are all sorts of gadgets I'd like to give young Alex. I'm always working on new ideas. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

gaggle

Behind them the dock was crowded with sightseers and aviators, and even a little gaggle of airship-spotters. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

gangling

Norbert is ... thin and gangly, his arms and legs like white string loosely knotted at the elbows and knees. — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

gap

The heart of flame leapt nimbly across the gap between the trees and then went swinging and flaring along the whole row of them. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

gash

Stanley brought his fingers up the side of his neck. He felt his wet blood and a pretty big gash just below his ear. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

gesture

A lorry slowed down and its young driver stared out of the window. He ignored Gil but gestured to Sapphire that she could have a lift. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

giant

The three handsome giants looked down at him with wooden menace. Their skins were the colour of walnut husks, and under it muscles bulged like sacks of melons. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

gibberish

The massed voices of the witches wailed in response, and although the words were so much gibberish to Adam, the sound of them sent prickles of horror down his spine. — *Mollie Hunter, The Thirteenth Member*

gift

Hrothgar gave Beowulf gifts, and the gifts were these: a banner of gold, a helmet that would not break, a sword as sharp as a flame. — Robert Nye, *Beowulf*

give

Harry struggled against the ropes binding him, but they didn't give. — J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

gleam

A fire gleamed among the dripping furze bushes like the madness in a weasel's eye. — Terry Pratchett, *Wyrd Sisters*

glimpse

Willie peered gingerly outside to see if he could catch a glimpse of the strange boy from the Post Office. — Michelle Magorian, *Goodnight Mister Tom*

glisten

Always darkish in colour, Simon was burned by the sun to a deep tan that glistened with sweat. — William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*

glitter

In the harbour one or two rowing boats lay still at anchor, and beyond the breakwater the starlight glittered on a calm sea. — Philip Pullman, *The Subtle Knife*

gloom

Stone led us down the garden, tugged the door open and shone his little torch into the gloom. — David Almond, *Skellig*

glower

Daniel glowered rather unpleasantly at all of his children. — Anne Fine, *Madame Doubtfire*

goblin

The goblin was about a head shorter than Harry. He had a swarthy, clever face, a pointed beard and, Harry noticed, very long fingers and feet. — J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

goodbye

At seven-thirty we too closed the door behind us; Moortje, my cat, was the only living creature I said goodbye to. — Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*

gouge

On the left-hand wall is a rubble hole where a fireplace has been gouged out and the floor is strewn with paper, envelopes and smashed brick. — Nicky Singer, *Feather Boy*

grab

I ran upstairs and I grabbed my school bag and I put some food for Toby in it. — Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

grasp

The knife dropped from the ghost's tenuous grasp and clattered to the floor. — Terry Pratchett, *Wyrd Sisters*

greet

At the grand dinner, the children's entrance was greeted by a standing ovation. — William Nicholson, *The Wind Singer*

grip

Kate felt the palms of her hand begin to sweat as sudden panic gripped her tightly. — G. P. Taylor, *Shadowmancer*

grobe

Hester groped for something she could use as a weapon and came up with a gnarled old length of wood. — Philip Reeve, *Mortal Engines*

gross

It was the grossest breach of etiquette imaginable to touch another person's *dæmon*. — Philip Pullman, *Northern Lights*

ground

'You young idiot!' he bawled. 'Pull a trick like that again and I'll ground you for a month.' — Alan Gibbons, *Shadow of the Minotaur*

grumble

'Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents,' grumbled Jo, lying on the rug. — Louisa M. Alcott, *Little Women*

guffaw

Some of the Geats guffawed, delighted by their leader's quick wit. The Danes laughed too. — Robert Nye, *Beowulf*

gulp

A big carp rose to the surface of the pool, gulped air, and then sank mysteriously into the dark water again, leaving widening rings on the water. — John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*

halfway

My dad made this weird French noise he makes sometimes. It's halfway between a snort and a sigh. — Meg Cabot, *The Princess Diaries*

halt

Jude threw open the front door but was halted in his tracks by the presence of two police officers, framed by the darkness outside. — *Malarie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

hand

George stacked the scattered cards and began to lay out his solitaire hand. — *John Steinbeck, Of Mice and Men*

hand

Simon handed me a steaming mug as I sat on my rucksack and gazed at the whole range laid out before us. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

handle

Inspector, I've told you before, I don't like your tone nor the way you're handling this inquiry. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

hang

I hung my head. I could see now that I wasn't going to win this argument. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

happen

What actually happens when you die is that your brain stops working and your body rots. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

hardly

'Sorry couldn't come', scribbled on the back of your essay and thrust through the letterbox? Rita, that's hardly an apology. — *Willy Russell, Educating Rita*

hare

Before any of the others could stop him, he slammed the front door shut, ran to the gate and vaulted over, then hared off down the track towards the forest. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

haul

Hester reached the airship first, hauling herself aboard through its shattered flank. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

haunt

'I do not know this country,' said Beowulf. 'Perhaps you can tell me of other monsters who are known to haunt the fen?' — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

haven

Every citizen of Aramanth knew how fortunate they were, to live in this rare haven of peace, plenty, and equal opportunity for all. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

hazardous

Getting themselves aboard the zeppelin was hazardous for the spies, not least because of the equipment they had to carry. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

head

Less than a day later we were heading straight into an iceberg field. — *Ellen MacArthur, Taking on the World*

healthy

I kept well back from the edge after that, leaving a healthy margin of fifty feet. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

heart

At the heart of Midwich is a triangular Green ornamented by five fine elms and a white-railed pond. — *John Wyndham, The Midwich Cuckoos*

heel

The ship heeled and turned and we heard again the steady hiss against the side as the vessel cut through the water. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

heinous

OK, OK, I'm late home, but it's not that heinous a crime, is it? — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

help

Rincewind couldn't help noticing that the hand holding the wand was shaking. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

herald

The only time the wind blew was to herald the sudden torrential cloudburst which daily replenished the water lying in the paddy fields. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

heritage

I would cheerfully have swapped England's entire heritage—Stonehenge, Stratford, Wordsworth, Buckingham Palace, the lot—for the ability to watch quiz shows in the morning. — *Nick Hornby, 31 Songs*

hero

There was something very odd about Dad of all people creating games about heroes. Anybody less like a hero would be hard to imagine. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

hide

Raphah hid in the damp cellar of the Vicarage, among some stored apples that had been stacked in wooden trays and covered in sackcloth. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

hinterland

We searched the beach and its hinterland for timber. — *David Almond, The Fire-Eaters*

hiss

The yellow smoke hissed from the dragon's nostrils: that was his laughter. — *Ursula Le Guin, A Wizard of Earthsea*

hit

I had my birthday party on Sunday afternoon. The Rin Tin Tin film was a big hit with my classmates. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

hitch

We really knew so very little about hitching lifts ... but we went on waving and cars went on passing, until at length one did stop. — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

hoard

People said there were hoards of gold and jewels in those rooms above the warehouses, and rich carpets and chandeliers and oil paintings in gold frames. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

hoax

Somebody put that fellow up to coming here and hoaxing us. There are people in this town who dislike me enough to do that. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

hoot

The idea of our family ever coming by six pounds a week made us all hoot with laughter. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

hopeless

I was hopeless. I couldn't tackle. I missed the ball by a mile when I jumped up to head it. — *David Almond, Skellig*

horrendous

The howling is horrendous, a terrible baying noise, blocking out all other sounds, filling us up, tipping us towards madness. — *Theresa Breslin, Whispers in the Graveyard*

horror

It was from the darkest of these pools that the creature with green eyes had come. It was chief of all the horrors of the fen. — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

hostile

If Captain Carstairs noticed Rebecca's hostile glance in Victoria's direction, he did not indicate it. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

house

On the other side of the canal was an ancient church which, according to Mum's guidebook, housed the bones of a dragon killed by the spit of a saint. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza: City of Masks*

hubbub

'Family Council is now in session,' declared the Elder Paw above the hubbub in the front room. — *S.F. Said, Varjak Paw*

huddle

I wanted to huddle into a ball on the old leather sofa. No, I wanted to hide behind it like a really little kid. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Lola Rose*

hum

There was a single metallic click and then the hum of machinery as a wheel turned somewhere overhead. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpius*

hurl

Christopher peeled the rumpled sleeve from his arm, and hurled the coat down on the floor. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

hurtle

Mother came hurtling down the steps, her expression dour and fierce as always. — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

ichor

Steam hissed from holes in the Stalker's chest and black ichor dripped from him and bubbled from the corners of his mouth. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

icy

Rodolfo greeted Rinaldo di Chimici with icy politeness but inwardly he was seething at the audacity of this aristocratic spy. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza: City of Masks*

identical

The close where Will and his mother lived was a loop of road in a modern estate, with a dozen identical houses of which theirs was the shabbiest. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

imagine

Those who have never seen a living Martian can scarcely imagine the strange horror of its appearance. — *H. G. Wells, The War of the Worlds*

imitate

Every bit of woodwork was a drab ginger colour, painted to imitate the graining of wood. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

implode

implode

Behind them, the fire raged. Booms and crashes filled the air as the East India Tyre Factory imploded. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

impression

Professor Dumbledore, though very old, always gave an impression of great energy. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

impulse

My first impulse had been to write a letter to the Prime Minister, but a little reflection convinced me that that would be useless. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

incessant

The only notion Lyra had of the search for her was the incessant drone of the gas engines of airships criss-crossing the skies. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

inch

The jeep inched forward at a painfully slow rate, made all the more excruciating by the anticipation building in Artemis's chest. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

indignant

Alex was woken by an indignant Nadia Vole knocking at his door. He had overslept. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

innocent

Stanley was not a bad kid. He was innocent of the crime for which he was convicted. He'd just been in the wrong place at the wrong time. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

inside

I opened up my special food box. Inside was the Milky Bar and two liquorice laces and three clementines and a pink wafer biscuit and my red food colouring. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

Rincewind knew what was inside trees: wood, sap, possibly squirrels. Not a palace. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

insolent

Simon stuck out his tongue and, after a small, insolent pause, began licking the grains of spilled sugar from his wrists. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

inspect

Billy picked the pellet up and inspected it in his palm. It was the size of a blackbird's egg, charcoal coloured, and shining faintly as though lacquered. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

intense

The cold grew so intense that Thomas could hardly breathe as he felt the moisture in his throat turning to ice. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

intersperse

It was a valley ... with high slopes on either side and, again, dense patches of woodland interspersed with rocky clearings. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

intone

'A sailing man is lucky to have had such a dry death,' Great-Uncle Bo intoned in his croaking, bullfrog voice. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

inviting

The back of the Radley house was less inviting than the front: a ramshackle porch ran the width of the house; there were two doors and two dark windows between the doors. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

iota

Whoever told you this is a completely vicious liar. There is not one iota of truth in any of it. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

jab

I jabbed the lad nearest to me with my elbow. 'Hey, mate?' — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

jabber

'You were making groans. You were jabbering.' 'Jabbering? Me? ... I don't jabber, man. Nobody ever told me that before.' — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

jaded

I was not jaded, nor was I exactly bored. But the zest had gone out of things. — *Jack London, The Mutiny of the Elsinore*

jagged

Ralph shaded his eyes and followed the jagged outline of the crags up towards the mountain. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

jangle

The bag of gold, silver and bronze jangling cheerfully in Harry's pocket was clamouring to be spent. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

jeer

'Well, sir,' said I, with a jeering tone, 'have you nothing more to say to me?' — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Kidnapped*

jerk

At the end of the first act we went out with all the other jerks for a cigarette. What a deal that was. — *J. D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye*

jiffy

In a jiffy I had slipped over the side and curled up in ... the nearest boat, and almost at the same moment she shoved off. — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island*

jig

Aunt Susan's hand was oddly small now. It shook a little; the cup jiggled in the saucer. — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

jigsaw

Carrie's thoughts were like bits of jigsaw, whirling round in her head. Separate pieces but all fitting in, one to another. — *Nina Bowden, Carrie's War*

jocular

Someone made a jocular remark which I did not catch, but which raised a general laugh. — *Jack London, The Sea-Wolf*

join

The Nautilus is composed of two hulls, one inside, the other outside, joined by T-shaped irons. — *Jules Verne, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

The lookouts came scrambling down the slopes to join the rest of the marchers. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

joke

'It cannot be! Tell me that you are mistaken, or that you are but joking.' — *Edgar Rice Burroughs, At the Earth's Core*

jolly

Smithers was so fat and jolly that it was hard to believe he was part of MI6 at all. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpius*

jolt

Soon the cobbles ended and the thick wheels jolted over the rutted track which was the road south. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

jolt

Lyra realized with a jolt of sickness what was happening: the man was being attacked by Spectres. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

journey

Every journey between your world and ours is fraught with hazards and is not to be undertaken lightly. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza: City of Masks*

jovial

Colonel Barclay ... was a dashing, jovial old soldier in his usual mood. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Crooked Man'*

jubilant

I remember how jubilant Markham was at securing a new photograph of the planet for the illustrated paper he edited in those days. — *H. G. Wells, The War of the Worlds*

judge

Outside the day had darkened. I judged it to be late afternoon, although tall buildings crowded out the sky. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

judgement

'This is a judgement on me for something, I suppose,' said the Reverend Septimus, wearily, 'but I really cannot at the moment remember what.' — *Edith Nesbit, The Phoenix and the Carpet*

jumble

The town was a jumble, with no streets, no squares, and no open spaces except where a building had fallen. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

jump

Beadle jumped back in fear, lost his footing and fell from the stone to the shingle beach. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

jumpy

Why do large numbers make you so jumpy? I can assure you that most large numbers are perfectly harmless. — *Hans Magnus Enzensberger, The Number Devil*

junior

The junior member of the trio gave a sigh, and ladled some boiling water out of the cauldron into the teapot. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

jury

A jury never looks at a defendant it has convicted, and when this jury came in, not one of them looked at Tom Robinson. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

just

What we call our gargoyle is really just a carved stone head high above the kitchen fireplace. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

I've just set a bomb to blow this place to smithereens in ... ninety-two seconds. So I don't think we have time for a chat. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpius*

keen^o

Young men with keen eyes and ready swords loped ahead of the straggling column, watching for danger. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

keep

We moved off quietly sideways, in the direction the water was coming from, clutching our unlit candles and trying to keep out of sight. — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

kernel

'In every fairy-tale there is a kernel of truth,' said Old Parson. — *Elizabeth Goudge, The Little White Horse*

kgotla

Word had been sent round through the chief's messengers that this unexpected kgotla would take place in the church. — *Beverly Naidoo, Chain of Fire*

kill

Alex killed a couple of hours in the evening playing his Nintendo 64—and then felt vaguely guilty when Jack caught him at it. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

kind^o

The young dragon ... was not large of his kind, maybe the length of a forty-oared ship. — *Ursula Le Guin, A Wizard of Earthsea*

kink

Nadine is so lucky. Her long liquorice-black hair falls straight past her shoulders, no kinks at all. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

kip

The police down here have got used to seeing kids kipping in doorways, and mostly they leave you alone. — *Robert Swindells, Stone Cold*

kite

Haoyou made triangular kites and square ones, oblongs and pennons [= pennants] with swallow tails. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

knot

Minerva groomed my hair for hours, combing out knots and tangles, and I did the same for her. — *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

know

Did you know that any number doubled is even? — *Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*

As soon as I mentioned the name Daisy Renton, it was obvious you'd know her. You gave yourself away at once. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

Every citizen of Aramanth knew how fortunate they were, to live in this rare haven of peace, plenty, and equal opportunity for all. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

knowledge

Titus was about to deny all knowledge of the missing handbag when Mrs Fforbes-Campbell stalked into the dining room. — *Debi Glori, Pure Dead Wicked*

labyrinth

Twig continued on his way through the labyrinth of tiny winding alleyways. — *Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

lachrymose

Miss Wilson was a poor sickly thing, lachrymose and low-spirited, not worth the trouble of vanquishing, in short. — *Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre*

lack

His earlier pictures all lacked something. They had plenty of technical skill, but the magic wasn't there. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

lackadaisical

Sir Walter was staring, for he had never seen his rather lackadaisical young friend look like that before. — *G. K. Chesterton, The Man Who Knew Too Much*

laconic

Like most men of action, he is laconic in speech, and sinks readily into his own thoughts. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Lost World*

laden

The hot night was laden with the scent of flowers and with the salt smell of the sea. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

ladylike

'No, thank you,' said Sylvia, in as ladylike a tone as she could muster. 'I never touch chocolate.' — *Joan Aiken, The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*

lagoon

Within the irregular arc of coral the lagoon was still as a mountain lake—blue of all shades and shadowy green and purple. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

lament

'The mean thing about your getting married is that I won't be able to be your bridesmaid,' lamented Diana. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of the Island*

lanky

Charlie was built like the twins, shorter and stockier than Percy and Ron, who were both long and lanky. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

larder

In Aunt Gwen's larder there were two cold pork chops, half a trifle, some bananas and some buns and cakes. — *Philippa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden*

largesse

'Scores,' the Director repeated and flung out his arms, as though he were distributing largesse. — *Aldous Huxley, Brave New World*

lark

But did you do it for a lark or what? — *Edith Nesbit, The Railway Children*

last

The last person to be burned as a witch in Scotland was in Dornoch, in the Highlands, in 1722. — *Theresa Breslin, Whispers in the Graveyard*

last

Mr Evans's rages were noisy while they lasted but they didn't last long. — *Nina Bawden, Carrie's War*

late

The duke was the son of the late King of Ruritania. — *Anthony Hope, The Prisoner of Zenda*

lately

Poor Rose has been so miserable lately that a smile from her is like late afternoon sunshine after a long, wet day. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

laudable

We are doing a laudable thing ..., and yet we should be hung by order of the king if we were caught. — *Victor Hugo, The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

lavish

There the French officers received them with open arms, and lavished upon them all the resources of their hospitality. — *Jules Verne, Five Weeks in a Balloon*

lax

Lane's views on marriage seem somewhat lax. Really, if the lower orders don't set us a good example, what on earth is the use of them? — *Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest*

lay

The girl was carrying a bundle wrapped in faded cotton, which she laid at Mrs Coulter's feet. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

layer

The four of us were wrapped in so many layers of clothes it looked as if we were going off to spend the night in a refrigerator. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

lead

Soon Crane was at the entrance to the hidden tunnel that led from the cliff to the Vicarage. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

lead

My legs felt leaden trudging through the deep snow towards the end of the plateau. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

lean

Madame Doubtfire was leaning on the bannister of the upstairs landing, scratching a hairy leg and smoking a cheroot. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

learn

Alex had started learning karate when he was six years old. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

A kindly farmer took me in, and from him I learned that I was in the Kingdom of Korva, on Anlap. — *Edgar Rice Burroughs, Carson of Venus*

lee

I crawled on my belly in the lee of a stone dyke till I reached the fringe of trees which surrounded the house. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

leg

We decided to stage the journey back over two legs; the first to Cape Horn, with a crew of four; then I would sail home to Europe alone. — *Ellen MacArthur, Taking on the World*

leviathan

The ship lay like a stranded leviathan. Men were swarming over her, scraping away at the weed and barnacles that collect below the water line and slow a ship down. — *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

liberal

'I believe, sir, that you have instructed Monsieur Estragon to put liberal quantities of vinegar in the salad-dressing.' — *Roald Dahl, The Butler*

lie[📖]

The two horses had just lain down when a brood of ducklings, which had lost their mother, filed into the barn, cheeping feebly. — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

lifeless

For a moment the place was lifeless, and then two men emerged from the path and came into the opening by the green pool. — *John Steinbeck, Of Mice and Men*

lift

The sand flowed out, and the balloon lifted gently to clear the tower by six feet or so. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

light

Night came on, and a full moon rose high over the trees in the sky, lighting the land till it lay bathed in ghostly day. — *Jack London, The Call of the Wild*

light

Harry's eyes ... lit first upon Professor Dumbledore, sitting in his high-backed golden chair at the centre of the long staff table. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

like[📖]

Juliet snored like a drunken sailor. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

likely

Grundo and I realised we were likely to get locked inside the garden. We nearly panicked. — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

liking

Harry, Ron and Hermione had always known that Hagrid had an unfortunate liking for large and monstrous creatures. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

linger

Robbie lingered outside for a moment in the fresh air as it washed off the hillside, bringing the scent of pines and the sea. — *Nicola Morgan, Freshmarket*

litter

People dumped their rubbish here now. Black bags littered the area—cardboard boxes lay askew on the ground. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

little

There was very little traffic now: a car every minute or so, no more than that. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

loath

Edmund was loath to start on his voyage without again seeing the king, but no one knew where Alfred now was. — *G. A. Henty, The Dragon and the Raven*

loathe

She'd loathed her guitar lessons as a child, had used every excuse in the book to avoid practising. — *Keith Gray, Warehouse*

loathsome

For a while we gazed at the loathsome and still glittering creature, then pushed on fearful lest we should stumble upon more of its kind. — *H. Rider Haggard, The Ivory Child*

locate

'I had quite a bit of trouble locating you,' the man said to me. 'What are you doing here?' — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

lock

The pain of losing her mother was locked away in Lirael's heart, but not so deep it could not be uncovered. — *Garth Nix, Lirael*

loll

Lofur's red tongue lolled down dripping over his open throat. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

lollop

The small rabbit came closer to his companions, lolloping on long, hind legs. — *Richard Adams, Watership Down*

long[📖]

Harpreet was the sort of best friend I'd always longed for. We sat next to each other in class and helped each other with all our work. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Lola Rose*

look

Tom looked across the clutter of tables and saw the other pirates glaring at him, fingering their knives. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

Gilly looked very frail, struggling to lift the full bucket from the well, but Adam resisted the thought of helping her. — *Mollie Hunter, The Thirteenth Member*

look

For a moment, a dreamy, faraway look came into Mr Bohlen's eyes, and he smiled. — *Roald Dahl, The Great Automatic Grammatizator*

loom[📖]

Finally the coast loomed ahead of her. The old country. Éiríú, the land where time began. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

lope

Young men with keen eyes and ready swords loped ahead of the straggling column, watching for danger. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

lose

Eva Smith lost her job with Birling and Company because the strike failed and they were determined not to have another one. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

loung

Sirius was lounging in his chair at his ease, tilting it back on two legs. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

louring

The next morning dawned grey and louring. Snow was falling fast out of the heavy sky, the flakes hurrying down like dirty feathers from a leaking mattress. — *Joan Aiken, The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*

lousy

Except for one lousy F in a class that will be of no use to me whatsoever in my future life, I'm doing pretty well. — *Meg Cabot, The Princess Diaries*

love

His mother assured Roy that he would love Florida. Everybody in America wants to move there, she'd said, it's so sunny and gorgeous. — *Carl Hiaasen, Hoot*

low[📖]

And if you've never been caught begging by someone who knew you before, you can't possibly know how low it makes you feel. — *Robert Swindells, Stone Cold*

lower

Demurral lowered himself down the rope ladder at the side of the waterfall and then on to the shingle beach. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

lucky

Mr Boggis ... began to get the feeling that this was going to be one of his lucky days. — *Roald Dahl, Parson's Pleasure*

lucrative

When Dad gave up his job at Compu-soft and accepted the lucrative offer from Magna-com, he'd fulfilled a lifelong dream. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

lumber

Alex watched as a heavy-shouldered boy with dark hair and serious acne lumbered over to the car, paused by the window and then continued on his way. — *Anthony Horowitz, Point Blanc*

luminous

Suddenly there was a flash of light, and a quantity of luminous greenish smoke came out of the pit in three distinct puffs, which drove up, one after the other, straight into the still air. — *H. G. Wells, The War of the Worlds*

lunge

Suddenly Lorek lunged at Will and cuffed him hard with his left paw: so hard that Will fell half-stunned into the snow and tumbled over and over. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

lurch[📖]

The giant kite lurched into a gust of wind and soared upwards, drawing a gasp of relief from the crowd. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

lurk

Filch, who had been lurking unnoticed in a far corner of the Hall, now approached Dumbledore, carrying a great wooden chest, encrusted with jewels. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

luscious

Her thick and luscious hair, piled high on her head, was held in place by one small and strategically placed diamanté clip. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

lush

The girls from the edge of the desert were fascinated by the lush green pastures and bracken that grew thick and high beside the road. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

lustre

The Nautilus had put on full speed. All the quiet lustre of the ice-walls was at once changed into flashes of lightning. — *Jules Verne, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

luxury

Sara's comfortable sitting room seemed a bower of luxury to the scullery maid, though it was, in fact, merely a nice, bright little room. — *Frances Hodgson Burnett, A Little Princess*

make

Drawing makes you look at the world more closely. It helps you to see what you're looking at more clearly. — *David Almond, Skellig*

That day they made forty miles, the trail being packed; but the next day, and for many days to follow, they broke their own trail, worked harder, and made poorer time. — *Jack London, The Call of the Wild*

I think I would make a very good astronaut. To be a good astronaut you have to be intelligent and I'm intelligent. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

makeshift

Makeshift stalls sold vegetables and dried meat, kitchen implements, blankets and harness, books of prophecies and maps. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

malevolent

Inside the house lived a malevolent phantom. People said he existed, but Jem and I had never seen him. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

manage

There was no electric light upstairs and they had to manage with the candle Carrie was holding. — *Nina Bawden, Carrie's War*

mantle

Across the road behind a rampart of ancient elms lay Brookfield, russet under its autumn mantle of creeper. — *James Hilton, Goodbye, Mr. Chips*

mantra

It is a magical chant, a secret mantra, and the words are blurred together, deliberately fast, so that no human can take them away. — *Julie Hearn, The Merrybegot*

marina

The sides of the marina were lined with people, many of them waving little Kingfisher flags. — *Ellen MacArthur, Taking on the World*

mass

I lit my candle-end and stuck it on the melted mass in the candlestick. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

massive

Your body received massive injuries; it takes time to come to any acceptance of the new situation. — *Brian Clark, Whose Life is it Anyway?*

masticate

Magrat gave an imploring look to Nanny Ogg, who was masticating an apple and studying the stage with the glare of a research scientist. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

materialize

It snowed steadily through the night but the feared storm did not materialise. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

matted

This girl's hair was matted, her face smudged with dirt. She was wearing a red shirt and trousers much too big for her. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

mealie

First they passed the field where the mealie stalks, looking grey and parched, had managed to push their way through hard clods of earth. — *Beverley Naidoo, Chain of Fire*

mean⁰

I ran all the way to the castle and dashed up the kitchen stairs meaning to lock myself in my room. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

meander

The river in this countryside meandered in huge glistening curves, taking twenty miles to cover five. — *Terry Pratchett, Witches Abroad*

measure

Harry suddenly realised that the tape measure, which was measuring between his nostrils, was doing this on its own. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

medium

Soon the relations would traipse in again from town and countryside to hear what the medium had to say about Pei's 'troubled spirit'. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

mellow

Something like a reluctant smile, rather rusty from long disuse, mellowed Marilla's grim expression. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables*

member

Breakfast was, on the whole, a leisurely and silent meal, for no member of the family was very talkative at that hour. — *Gerald Durrell, My Family and Other Animals*

memory

Preoccupied by the thought of going into hiding, I stuck the craziest things in the satchel, but I'm not sorry. Memories mean more to me than dresses. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

menace

Rabbits avoid close woodland, where the ground is shady, damp and grassless and they feel menaced by the undergrowth. — *Richard Adams, Watership Down*

mention

Hermux wasn't hungry. But the mention of biscuits got his attention. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

merely

My companion still said nothing, merely smiled beneath her veil and put one gloved finger to her lips. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

meridian

The Nautilus was steadily pursuing its southerly course, following the fiftieth meridian with considerable speed. — *Jules Verne, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

messy

Tom's parents were going through a messy divorce, and they had packed him off to get him out of the way. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpius*

mighty

On a dais at the far end of the room, a mighty throne reared up high. It was made of granite for strength and massiveness. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

mime

'Let me think.' Mrs Hath proceeded, rather ostentatiously, to mime the act of thinking, lips pursed, finger stroking brow. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

mince

Mollie, the foolish, pretty white mare who drew Mr Jones's trap, came mincing daintily in, chewing at a lump of sugar. — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

mind

He has puzzled the greatest medical minds and sent many of them gibbering to their own hospitals. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

mindful

I leaped up the stairs two at a time, mindful of the wet footprints, wary of slipping. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

mingle

It had been raining, and thick mud mingled with the horse-dung in the streets. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

minor

Do you think a minor problem like my life falling to pieces is going to mess up my piano playing? — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

mixed

The people in the theatre were a mixed bunch. Some were dressed stylishly, others in tracksuits. — *Darren Shan, Cirque du Freak*

moan

When he came down from his bath, Dad started moaning that there was no bread and there were no eggs. — *David Almond, Skellig*

mob

Broadway was mobbed and messy. It was Sunday, and only about twelve o'clock, but it was mobbed anyway. Everybody was on their way to the movies. — *J. D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye*

momentary

There was a momentary stillness. Then chairs began to creak and shoes to scrape upon the carpet. — *H. G. Wells, The Time Machine*

monotonous

The sky became quite grey and, along with it, the whole countryside seemed to lose its colour and assume the same monotonous tone. — *Norton Juster, The Phantom Tollbooth*

moon

I mooned in front of the mirror, experimenting with ways of doing my hair. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Lola Rose*

morsel

At long last, when the last morsels of pumpkin tart had melted from the golden platters, Dumbledore gave the word that it was time for them all to go to bed. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

motion

Beatrice parked the bicycle and motioned for Roy to follow her through the hole in the fence. — *Carl Hiaasen, Hoot*

mount

The teachers mounted the stage and sat on hard chairs facing us. Many of them had their black gowns on. — *David Almond, The Fire-Eaters*

mourn

Nadine spends the next five minutes mourning her broken nail. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

mouth

I mouthed the words, 'Say nothing,' then cautiously peered around the corner, to see what Mr Crepsley was up to. — *Darren Shan, Tunnels of Blood*

murk

We will need something to light this murk if we are to see what we are doing. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

murmur

A murmur rose up from the people round the fire. Such a thing had never happened before. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

myriad

Yes! the open sea, with but a few scattered pieces of ice and moving icebergs, a long stretch of sea; a world of birds in the air, and myriads of fishes under those waters. — *Jules Verne, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

nag⁰

I begged and pleaded and nagged, and eventually my mother gave in and allowed me to travel to away games. — *Nick Hornby, Fever Pitch*

naked

Piggy rose dripping from the water and stood naked, cleaning his glasses with a sock. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

name

I go ... Trailing white plumes of freedom, garlanded With my good name. — *Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac*

namely

Every ordinary number, be it fourteen or fourteen billion, may be followed by one and only one number, namely, that number plus one. — *Hans Magnus Enzensberger, The Number Devil*

narrow

'You have had a narrow escape,' he said. 'There is a sword-thrust just below your collar-bone.' — *G. A. Henty, A March on London*

narrow

Victoria narrowed her eyes at the odious Captain Carstairs. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

Today, the way narrowed. The broad road we took out of Salem has diminished to a track. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

nasty

Harry saw the edge of Snape's sallow face turn a nasty brick colour, the vein in his temple pulsing more rapidly. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

natty

'Hey, are you shivering? You shouldn't be cold in that natty furry jacket.' — *Jacqueline Wilson, Lola Rose*

natural

Next door was always twitching her curtains. She was a natural spy. She'd love to gang up with the enemy. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

nature

Elsewhere immense research into the nature, habits, and constitution of the triffids went on. — *John Wyndham, The Day of the Triffids*

naught

Geordie snarled, 'Ye know what the Prince is. He's a trickster, a liar & he cares for naught save the crown.' — *Frances Mary Hendry, My Story: The '45 Rising*

nautilus

The library was shaped like a nautilus shell, a continuous tunnel that wound down into the mountain in an ever-tightening spiral. — *Garth Nix, Lirael*

nay

'Well, then, to save my son, I will sacrifice my life, nay, even my fortune.' — *Alexandre Dumas, The Count of Monte Cristo*

near

We were nearing the second crossroads, where deep gullies lined both sides of the road and the dense forest crept to the very edges of high, jagged, clay-walled banks. — *Mildred D. Taylor, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

nearby

Unferth, the son of Ecglaf, was standing nearby. — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

nebulous

The day of Loretta's arrival, a nebulous plan began shaping itself in Mrs. Hemingway's brain. — *Jack London, A Wicked Woman*

necessary

Is it absolutely necessary that you should be in New York on the 11th, before nine o'clock in the evening? — *Jules Verne, Around the World in Eighty Days*

need

'There's nothing broken,' he said. 'You don't need to fuss over me.' — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

need

There was no need to starve, so she ate the stew and mashed potatoes with relish. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

ne'er

'So be it,' the count said solemnly. 'My blessing on you both should I ne'er see you again.' — *G. A. Henty, The Lion of the North*

nefarious

And all would have been well, had not Curly Jim conceived a nefarious scheme ..., first to get Marcus O'Brien drunk, and next, to buy his mine from him. — *Jack London, The Passing of Marcus O'Brien*

negotiate

The beasts tiptoed in single file, negotiating the gorse-lined path that led from the loch shore to the meadow. — *Debi Glori, Pure Dead Wicked*

neighbourhood

The neighbourhood of the inn looked pretty lonely at that time of day, for the boat had just gone north with passengers. — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Kidnapped*

neither

Neither of the boys had read the book of Sir John de Mandeville, so they did not know that a griffin was eight times larger than a lion. — *T. H. White, The Once and Future King*

nerve-racking

It was a nerve-racking drive, from Shorings Bank to West 52nd Street, because the gorilla was not in complete control of the lorry. — *Georgia Byng, Molly Moon's Incredible Book of Hypnotism*

nether

There was a quality of intelligence in his forehead and eyes, and a certain tremulousness in his nether lip that decided me. — *H. G. Wells, 'The Diamond Maker'*

nettle

Jess looked and listened, feeling somewhat nettled that no one had asked about Grandpa. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

never

Witches never bothered with elementary road safety. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

newfangled

'Well, Mr. Prendergast, I am against these newfangled steamboats—I suppose every true sailor is.' — *G. A. Henty, The Treasure of the Incas*

niggardly

It had not been our way to build great fires; we were, indeed, by the captain's orders, somewhat niggardly of firewood. — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island*

nigh

'With these and the brothers of the abbey, in all, as I reckon, nigh four hundred men, he will to-morrow march to join Algar.' — *G. A. Henty, The Dragon and the Raven*

no

Liz Finch, our student teacher, is bland, harmless and has no known habits. — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

noble

I found very noble specimens of the magnificent silver fir, the tallest about two hundred and forty feet high. — *John Muir, My First Summer in the Sierra*

nock

They ran back on silent feet, arrows already nocked to their bowstrings, and stopped suddenly. — *Phillip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

nominal

As a matter of fact, I was going to suggest that we'd lower your rent, make it just a nominal sum, I mean until you get fixed up. — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

nonchalant

Hermux ... checked himself hurriedly in the mirror. He tried to look breezy and nonchalant. But he only succeeded in looking disoriented. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

none

None can say what the gods have in store for us, it may be victory or it may be destruction. — *H. Rider Haggard, Montezuma's Daughter*

nor

The cat did not speak aloud, nor did Bowman answer him aloud. But they understood each other well. — *William Nicholson, Firesong*

normal

The cat didn't move. It just gave him a stern look. Was this normal cat behaviour, Mr Dursley wondered. — J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

nose

The dragon turned its immense head and in a completely animal gesture nosed and sniffed at the man's body. — Ursula Le Guin, *Tehanu*

The tractor nosed back and forth over the ground, leaving a smooth black wave of soil behind it. — Roald Dahl, *'The Mildenhall Treasure'*

note

Every satellite dish in London was noted, photographed, authenticated and then eliminated from the search. — Anthony Horowitz, *Scorpio*

notice

Someone was blowing a whistle and waving their arms, but no one was taking much notice. — Philip Pullman, *Northern Lights*

notice

Thomas noticed that Rueben had five fingers and a thumb on his right hand. — G. P. Taylor, *Shadowmancer*

notion

'The Welsh have strange notions,' said my father. 'But not as strange as the people who live in Greece and Italy.' — Kevin Crossley-Holland, *The Seeing Stone*

notwithstanding

During that time, notwithstanding the researches they had made, no human being had been discovered. — Jules Verne, *The Mysterious Island*

nourish

Greymuzzle returned to the duck pond with only seaweed and shellfish to nourish herself and her cub. — Henry Williamson, *Tarka the Otter*

novelty

The mountain had lost its excitement, its novelty, and I wanted to get off it as soon as possible. — Joe Simpson, *Touching the Void*

now

My biggest concern right now was that the librarian, Mrs Wright, could recognize me. — Keith Gray, *Malarkey*

Well, Inspector, I don't see that it's any concern of yours how I choose to run my business. Is it now? — J. B. Priestley, *An Inspector Calls*

now

The man in yellow overalls seemed to stand a little taller, now that his 'boss' was with him. — Beverley Naidoo, *Chain of Fire*

now

I'm twenty-six. I should have had a baby by now; everyone expects it. — Willy Russell, *Educating Rita*

nub

Belch scratched the nub of flesh on his crown where the implant had been inserted. — Eoin Colfer, *The Wish List*

nudge

'Look.' Ben nudged Sorrel. 'See that castle over there?' — Cornelia Funke, *Dragon Rider*

number

The orphans were four in number; the two eldest were boys, and the youngest were girls. — Captain Maryat, *The Children of the New Forest*

Anyway, we danced about four numbers, and then I turned off the radio. — J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

numberless

It was a whole menagerie of rare and curious beasts in a wondrous hot-house, where numberless birds with plumage of a thousand hues gleamed and fluttered in the sunshine. — Jules Verne, *Five Weeks in a Balloon*

nurse

Rincewind the wizard ... was sitting in the darkest corner nursing a mug of very small beer. — Terry Pratchett, *The Colour of Magic*

oasis

Druimfiacloch is a tiny oasis in a wilderness of mountain and peat-bog, and it is a full four miles from the nearest roadside dwelling. — Gavin Maxwell, *Ring of Bright Water*

obdurate

I was loath to lose so much time; but the fellow was obdurate, and so I accompanied them. — Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Land That Time Forgot*

obeseance

Not the least obeseance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he; But, with the mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door. — Edgar Allan Poe, *The Raven*

objective

Our next objective was to be the unclimbed South Ridge of Cerro Yantauri, only a short walk across the river bed from our tents. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

objective

'But you told me not to have a view. You told me to be objective, to consult recognized authorities.' — *Willy Russell, Educating Rita*

oblige

Very few of the books required in the various courses are printed for the blind, and I am obliged to have them spelled into my hand. — *Helen Keller, The Story of My Life*

obliterate

The new snow, which had obliterated both their footprints and those of the wolves, made a crisp carpet beneath their feet. — *Joan Aiken, The Wolves of Wallowhby Chase*

oblivious

I scowled at Mother but she was oblivious—as always. To her, my dirty looks were like water off a duck's feathers. — *Malarie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

obscure

Betty Bloemendaal ... lives on an obscure street in West Amsterdam, and none of us knows where it is. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

obscure

Lirael squinted, her sight obscured by goggles and the snow that covered nearly all her face. — *Garth Nix, Lirael*

observe

'But,' observed Herbert, 'there's nothing to prove that this bottle has been floating long in the sea.' — *Jules Verne, The Mysterious Island*

obtrude

Not a leaf stirred; not a sound obtruded upon great Nature's meditation. — *Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

obtuse

Holmes rose and tossed the end of his cigarette into the grate. 'I have been very obtuse, Watson,' said he. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist*

obtuse angle

If a corner is murderously sharp then it's an acute angle, and if it's not sharp enough, it's an obtuse angle. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

obvious

It was a very obvious hiding-place, so obvious that it offered a bare chance of safety ... because the hunters might well have searched it already. — *Rosemary Sutcliffe, The Eagle of the Ninth*

ocarina

Hey, if Dr Scott could drill some holes in my head, you could blow in my ear and play me like an ocarina. — *Brian Clark, Whose Life is it Anyway?*

occasion

Never having had occasion to use the door, Tom had no idea how it might be secured at night. — *Philippa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden*

occasional

In Thul there was only an occasional bus driving down the main road of the village to the highway, and very rarely a single, dusty car. — *Anita Desai, The Village by the Sea*

occupant

The only occupants of the carriage were an old shepherd and his dog. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

occupy

The Royal & General occupied a tall, antique-looking building with a Union Jack fluttering from a pole about fifteen floors up. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

occur

The great age of polar exploration occurred in the decades before the First World War. — *Paul Dowswell, True Polar Adventures*

odd

I loved those old houses and the way the streets were so narrow, with the odd tree or shrub planted into the pavement. — *Bali Rai, (Un)arranged Marriage*

'So what do you say? Eight hundred odd for this room or three thousand down for the whole upper storey.' — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

odious

Victoria narrowed her eyes at the odious Captain Carstairs. Really; but he was exceedingly full of himself! — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

odour

There was a little fog or smoke-wreath in the air, with an odour of burning weeds. — *J. Meade Falkner, Moonfleet*

of

Tom hadn't told the pirate mayor of his adventures aboard Airhaven. — Philip Reeve, *Mortal Engines*

off

The balloon was higher than us by about thirty metres, and drifting off our starboard bow. — Kenneth Oppel, *Airborn*

offence

The girls could not take off their panama hats because this was not far from the school gates and hatlessness was an offence. — Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

offer

Okonkwo brought out his snuff-bottle and offered it to Ogbuefi Ezenwa, who sat next to him. — Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

office

The three female servants held the offices of cook, attendant upon Miss Villiers, and housemaid. — Captain Marryat, *The Children of the New Forest*

offset

Offsetting all the difficulties and wasted hours was the fact that the weather held. — Mary O'Hara, *My Friend Flicka*

oft

As the manner of journeying over the moor has been described oft enough already, I will say no more. — R. D. Blackmore, *Lorna Doone*

ogle

Sir William was ogling me at kirk, but I ignored him. — Frances Mary Hendry, *My Story: The '45 Rising*

old

Hwel didn't consider himself old. His father had still been digging three tons of ore a day at the age of two hundred. — Terry Pratchett, *Wyrd Sisters*

'I've sat through as many boring old child health clinics and grisly play groups in church halls as she has, I assure you.' — Anne Fine, *Madame Doubtfire*

olden

In the olden days people had several different methods of recording numbers. — Kjartan Poskitt, *Murderous Maths*

ominous

The ominous sound of a human voice came to Tarka, and a houndlike taint which raised the hair of his neck. — Henry Williamson, *Tarka the Otter*

on

'Yes,' said Tom bluntly, on opening the front door. 'What d'you want?' — Michelle Magorian, *Goodnight Mister Tom*

only

Because I was a half-vampire I aged at only a fifth the rate of humans. — Darren Shan, *Tunnels of Blood*

A unicorn is a magic animal, and only a maiden can catch it. — T. H. White, *The Once and Future King*

ooze

Deep, ragged burns covered most of his body. They were chalky white and oozed clear liquid. — Christopher Paolini, *Eragon*

All three men oozed wealth. — Nicola Morgan, *Fleshmarket*

open

Lowrie McCall ... was spasming weakly on the lino, blood pumping from his open wound. — Eoin Colfer, *The Wish List*

operate

In the next ten years computers will operate thousands of times faster than they do now! — Michael Cox, *The Incredible Internet*

opinion

I am not asking for a guarantee on oath. I am simply asking for your professional opinion. Do you believe I will ever walk again? — Brian Clark, *Whose Life is it Anyway?*

oppressive

The silence of the forest was more oppressive than the heat, and at this hour of the day there was not even the whine of insects. — William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*

orbit

The Moon orbits around Earth once every 28 days but not quite in a perfect circle. — Kjartan Poskitt, *The Gobsmacking Galaxy*

ordeal

The passengers' first ordeal was a winter storm that pounded the iron ship for ten days and nights. — Henry Brook, *True Sea Stories*

order

As the sun climbed over the horizon ... Raka gave the order for the battle horns to be sounded. — William Nicholson, *The Wind Singer*

ordinary

It was an ordinary-looking dagger, with a double-sided blade of dull metal about eight inches long. — Philip Pullman, *The Subtle Knife*

ostler

The ostler entered the hall, slow, shuffling, hissing gently, a perpetual habit of his whether grooming a horse or not. — Mervyn Peake, *Gormenghast*

other

Christmas Day began like any other day: baths, breakfast, three lessons, then lunch. — Anthony Horowitz, *Groosham Grange*

oughtn't

I said to Sophie: 'What now? Oughtn't we to try to get as far away as we can before it's light?' — John Wyndham, *The Chrysalids*

ounce

With the absolute last ounce of strength in his legs, Stefan struggled to his knees. — Eoin Colfer, *The Supernaturalist*

outbreak

Then, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 transformed the science of aeronautics. — Paul Dowswell, *True Polar Adventures*

outlandish

Hari ... saw Mrs de Silva standing there, dressed in an outlandish costume unlike anything worn by the women in Thul. — Anita Desai, *The Village by the Sea*

outlaw

'They don't allow freak shows any more,' I told him. 'Wolf-men and snake-boys were outlawed years ago. Mr Dalton said so.' — Darren Shan, *Cirque du Freak*

outline

The moon was almost complete, its outline well defined, except for the blur on the waxing curve. — Barry Hines, *A Kestrel for a Knave*

outlook

Major's speech had given to the more intelligent animals on the farm a completely new outlook on life. — George Orwell, *Animal Farm*

outright

Once in my life I would like to own something outright before it's broken! — Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

outright

In his enthusiasm, Dr Feltham failed to catch Mr Cartright's tone of outright scorn. — Anne Fine, *Flour Babies*

outstanding

We can have cheese rolls for lunch, Link old son. They do an outstanding cheese roll here. — Robert Swindells, *Stone Cold*

outwit

Robert ... laughed to think he had outwitted the number devil. — Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *The Number Devil*

over

Mr Flay had been sitting for over an hour at the entrance to his cave. — Mervyn Peake, *Gormenghast*

Over the following couple of weeks I slowly got to know all the members of my family. — Bali Rai, *(Un)arranged Marriage*

over

Lessons for the day were over, and they were sitting before the schoolroom fire, enjoying the time they liked best. — Frances Hodgson Burnett, *A Little Princess*

overactive

Lilly says I have an overactive imagination and a pathological need to invent drama in my life. — Meg Cabot, *The Princess Diaries*

overcome

Sorrel overcame her seasickness by eating the delicious leaves she had picked in the valley where the djinn lived. — Cornelia Funke, *Dragon Rider*

overhang

The cliffs overhung fragrant little dells where mushrooms and larkspur and strawberry plants pushed up through the loam and pine needles. — Mary O'Hara, *My Friend Flicka*

overhead

The glare of the exploding plane, right overhead, did queer things to Chas's eyes. — Robert Westall, *The Machine Gunners*

overshadow

The whole garden was overshadowed by a large magnolia tree, the glossy dark green leaves of which cast a deep shadow. — Gerald Durrell, *My Family and Other Animals*

overthrow

The dragon was dead, and the goblins overthrown, and their hearts looked forward after winter to a spring of joy. — J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

overwork

My driver was my owner, and it was his interest to treat me well and not overwork me. — Anna Sewall, *Black Beauty*

pace

Down by the Galata Bridge, close by the old spice markets, the pace of Istanbul life is at its most frenetic. — Michael Palin, *Pole to Pole*

pace

I paced furiously around the hotel room, hands clenched into fists, cursing angrily. — Darren Shan, *Tunnels of Blood*

pad^o

Towflower padded over to the corner, poking gingerly at the stones in case there was a secret panel. — Terry Pratchett, *The Colour of Magic*

palisade

At the top of the cliff, the path passed through a high rampart, now partly tumbled down, topped by the remains of a stout palisade. — Celia Rees, *Pirates!*

pallid

The woman nodded, the thin line of pallid skin around the mask giving no hint of expression, as if the face behind it were as frozen as the metal. — Garth Nix, *Liraël*

pandemonium

Up on the command deck, Raka prowled the observation window, in the midst of a pandemonium of shouting voices. — William Nicholson, *The Wind Singer*

pap

Naledi sat down to eat a little cold pap. Her last proper meal had been the night before and she was hungry. — Beverley Naidoo, *Chain of Fire*

parallel

Three deep parallel grooves of skin appeared upon George's rather low sloping forehead. — Roald Dahl, *Vengeance Is Mine Inc*

paranoid

Foaly was a paranoid centaur, convinced that human intelligence agencies were monitoring his transport and surveillance network. — Eoin Colfer, *Artemis Fowl*

paroxysm

The baby was reduced to paroxysms of mirth. It squirmed energetically in its backpack. — Anne Fine, *Flour Babies*

part

Before long, I saw a couple of policemen parade past down there, parting the crowd like butter. — Diana Wynne Jones, *The Merlin Conspiracy*

particular

'If Mrs Bartholomew's particular about her clock, why doesn't she have it upstairs with her?' Tom asked. — Philippa Pearce, *Tom's Midnight Garden*

partly

I am writing this journal partly to practise my newly acquired speed-writing and partly to teach myself how to write a novel. — Dodie Smith, *I Capture the Castle*

pass

In the bus on the way to school next morning we passed 4 red cars in a row which meant that it was a Good Day. — Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

Alex glanced at his watch. About three minutes had passed since Crawley had left the office, and he had said he would be back in five. — Anthony Horowitz, *Stormbreaker*

passable

Her clothes weren't exactly school ruling, but were passable as Brook colours—enough to keep most of the teachers from complaining anyway. — Keith Gray, *Malarkey*

pat

'Did you bring the sandwiches?' I interrupted, patting the bulging pockets of Mum's anorak. 'I'm really hungry.' — Anne Fine, *Goggle-Eyes*

patchwork

Looking up, Alex saw a fantastic patchwork of crumbling plaster, wooden shutters, ornate railings, window boxes and terraces with Italian women leaning out to chat with their neighbours. — Anthony Horowitz, *Scorpio*

pathological

All her life, Mrs Foster had had an almost pathological fear of missing a train, a plane, a boat, or even a theatre curtain. — Roald Dahl, *The Way up to Heaven*

pause

Granny Weatherwax paused with a second scone halfway to her mouth. — Terry Pratchett, *Wyrd Sisters*

paw

Still the beast stood in the archway, pawing at the floor. It was bigger than a man. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

pay

The shovel sank a few inches into the packed earth. He smiled. For once in his life it paid to be overweight. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

peaky

'You're looking peaky, dear,' said Mrs Rider. 'Tired. Working you hard at school, are they?' — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

peck

Ailsa giggled at the chicken that pecked around her feet. — *David Almond, The Fire-Eaters*

peculiar

It was on the corner of the street that he noticed the first sign of something peculiar — a cat reading a map. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

peculiarity

Our father had a few peculiarities: one was, he never ate desserts; another was that he liked to walk. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

peddle

We walked on past the smoked haddock stall and the woman who sold sweets and a haggard-looking man who was peddling ink and paper. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

peep

In the corner of the sofa there was a cushion, and in the velvet which covered it there was a hole, and out of the hole peeped a tiny head with a pair of frightened eyes in it. — *Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden*

peer^o

Across the road a plump, middle-aged woman with greying auburn hair was peering out of a window. — *Michelle Magorian, Goodnight Mister Tom*

pensive

The worthy baron seemed pensive; more than pensive: melancholy. He sat on his bed, half-naked, his legs dangling. — *Alexandre Dumas, The Man in the Iron Mask*

perch

I perched on the deck in the evening mist practising sea shanties on my tin whistle. — *Ellen MacArthur, Taking on the World*

perfect

After covering ten yards I had managed to perfect my hobbling technique. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

perfunctory

I arrived at George's villa out of breath, bursting with suppressed excitement, gave a perfunctory knock at the door and dashed in. — *Gerald Durrell, My Family and Other Animals*

permission

Doctor, I didn't give you permission to stick that needle in me. Why did you do it? — *Brian Clark, Whose Life is it Anyway?*

persistent

The drums were still beating, persistent and unchanging. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

phase

I have always liked the process of commuting; every phase of the little journey is a pleasure to me. — *Roald Dahl, Gallipol Foyley*

phenomenon

Another curious scientific phenomenon is the fact that the fingernails grow after death, as does the beard. — *Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

pinion

My grandmother ... was held, arms pinioned behind her, and pushed to the foot of the ladder which leant against the gallows tree. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

pirouette

I jump. A huge pirouette in the air ... to land, with a degree of grace, at Catherine's feet. — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

place

They had coffee from condensed-milk cans at an early morning place that served fishermen. — *Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea*

plague

Will was passionately curious about his father, and he used to plague his mother with questions, most of which she couldn't answer. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

plain

It was plain that there was not a great deal of strength in Mistress Mary's arms and legs when she first began to skip. — *Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden*

plan

I decided that my best plan would be to wait for a really sunny day and then use my glasses to focus the sunlight on a piece of my clothing and start a fire. — Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

plausible

Very simple was my explanation, and plausible enough—as most wrong theories are! — H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*

plead

As soon as they were back home in London and had unpacked, Lucien pleaded tiredness and the need for an early night. — Mary Hoffman, *Stravaganza: City of Masks*

plonk

Lydia ... plonked herself down in front of the television, and scowled at the blank screen. — Anne Fine, *Madame Doubtfire*

plunder

The ship was thoroughly plundered. Every single useful thing was taken off her. — Celia Rees, *Pirates!*

plunge

The helicopter disappeared in a huge fireball, then plunged down. It was still burning when it hit the ground. — Anthony Horowitz, *Point Blanc*

podgy

You're not fat, sweetheart. You're just going through a little podgy stage. — Jacqueline Wilson, *Clean Break*

pogrom

After the pogroms in 1938 my two uncles (my mother's brothers) fled Germany, finding safe refuge in North America. — Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*

point

It was at this point that two dozen forgotten roasting chestnuts exploded in a fusillade of what sounded remarkably like machine-gun fire. — Debi Gliori, *Pure Dead Magic*

What was the point in stealing a wallet if you didn't take the cash? — Keith Gray, *Malarkey*

poise

His mother was standing in her underslip [= petticoat], a lipstick poised at her mouth, watching the doorway through the mirror. — Barry Hines, *A Kestrel for a Knave*

poltergeist

Peewes was the school poltergeist, a grinning, airborne menace who lived to cause havoc and distress. — J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

pompous

I gotta show some of those pompous, self-important executives over there that Hap Loman can make the grade. — Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

ponder

That night, Molly shivered as she lay on the ground pondering on the day's events. — Doris Pilkington, *Rabbit Proof Fence*

poor

Everyone knew that poor Hanno Hath hadn't been promoted for three years now. — William Nicholson, *The Wind Singer*

pop

We popped into a couple of record stores, not really staying for longer than a few minutes in each. — Bali Rai, *(Un)arranged Marriage*

Mum popped her head round the door. 'Are you two ready for something to eat?' — Alan Gibbons, *Shadow of the Minotaur*

portent

It was a winter of portents. Comets sparkled against the chilled skies at night. Clouds shaped mightily like whales and dragons drifted over the land by day. — Terry Pratchett, *Wyrd Sisters*

posh

Mum stopped outside this immensely posh French cake and coffee shop. 'Let's live dangerously,' she said, and went inside. — Jacqueline Wilson, *Lola Rose*

pour

Bright sunlight was still pouring through the open hatch. — Cornelia Funke, *Dragon Rider*

power

The pressure elevators were powered by gaseous columns vented from the earth's core. — Eoin Colfer, *Artemis Fowl*

practise

Hathorne asks Tituba if she had ever practised witchcraft in her own country. — Chris Priestley, *Witch Hunt*

presently

Presently I came to a bridge, below which a clear, slow stream flowed between snowy beds of water buttercups. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

press

Many knights press round the great slab of marble, eager to be the first to try to draw the sword from the stone. — *Kevin Crossley-Holland, The Seeing Stone*

presumptuous

'You remember how I said I was going to adopt you, so you could live with me always, until you grew up into a man? I have been too presumptuous. It's not destined to be that way.' — *Rachel Anderson, Warlands*

priceless

The gift I got that afternoon was priceless, like world peace or an end to Third World poverty, something that couldn't be bought for a million pounds. — *Nick Hornby, Fever Pitch*

pricey

The boy's fleece jacket, two sizes too big and pricey by the look of it, was soaked and hanging shapelessly on him. — *Keith Gray, Warehouse*

prickle

I could feel the sweat prickle my forehead under the bandages. I knew now that something fearful and horrible was happening. — *John Wyndham, The Day of the Triffids*

pride

The governor prides himself on being a good judge of port. I don't pretend to know much about it. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

problem

The number devil started doing the problem in his head, but his face turned bright red again and swelled up like a balloon. — *Hans Magnus Enzensberger, The Number Devil*

procedure

I glanced down at my own shoes powdered red and, raising my right foot, rubbed it against the back of my left leg, then reversed the procedure. — *Mildred D. Taylor, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

progress

From the window of the tram it looked like a street festival was in progress. — *Michael Hoeye, Time Stops for No Mouse*

prominent

The Director ... had a long chin and big rather prominent teeth, just covered, when he was not talking, by his full, floridly curved lips. — *Aldous Huxley, Brave New World*

promise

The School on Roke is where boys who show promise in sorcery are sent from all the Inner Lands of Earthsea to learn the highest arts of magic. — *Ursula Le Guin, The Farthest Shore*

pronounce

They stayed with Mr Wilderness for three days, until he pronounced Sylvia better and fit to travel. — *Joan Aiken, The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*

property

The Grange was the most expensive property in Upper Dinton, a beautiful old house, set apart from the rest of the village. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

puce

I told Uncle Andrew about the whispers in kirk & he turned puce & snapped the stem of his pipe in anger! — *Frances Mary Hendry, My Story: The '45 Rising*

pucker

The aunts looked at each other, and then at Clare, their faces puckered with incomprehension. — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

pulsate

Through the warm air fireflies drifted, pulsating briefly like pink pearls against the dark undergrowth. — *Gerald Durrell, A Zoo in My Luggage*

punch^o

'Oh, yes!' I ran across the grass, punching the air with my fist. 'What a goal!' — *Narinder Dhami, Bend It Like Beckham*

punter

Here I am sitting in this doorway which is now my bedroom, hoping some kind punter will give me a bit of small change so I can eat. — *Robert Swindells, Stone Cold*

puny

I shouted, but the sound echoed in the blackness, mocking my puny effort. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

purchase

Tock emerged from the loch, his scales dripping and his claws scrabbling for purchase on the seaweedy pebbles. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Wicked*

purlain

I search the airing cupboard for something dark and plain and end up purloining a dark grey V-necked school sweater belonging to my little brother. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

quail 

A man in pyjamas on a raw morning does not feel at his bravest, and Dickson quailed under the expectation of assault. — *John Buchan, Huntingtower*

quarter

Where am I? Tell the truth—I can bear it. In what quarter of the globe Have I descended like a meteorite? — *Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac*

queer

Well, when I picked up the top plate, I came over all queer. A sort of tingling in my hands, and everything went muzzy. — *Alan Garner, The Owl Service*

quicken

Ransom quickened his pace. So did the dragon. He stopped; so did it. — *C. S. Lewis, Perelandra*

quiver 

Hugh's mortal body was quivering like a leaf. Cold shivers rayed over his skin, under his hair, made his teeth click. — *Neil Gunn, Morning Tide*

rack

Our bodies were covered with scratches and bruises, and our heads racked with pain. — *H. G. Wells, The First Men in the Moon*

rage

Mary went and sat on the hearth-rug, pale with rage. She did not cry, but ground her teeth. — *Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden*

rally

Odin knew he must rally his own strength and summon the gods to council. — *Kevin Crossley-Holland, Viking!*

ram

The next thing Alex knew, the heel of Wolf's palm had rammed into his chest, pushing him back with astonishing force. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

rambling

We live in a charming, rambling house ... on the outskirts of Stoneleigh. — *Pamela Oldfield, My Story: Victorian Workhouse*

rampage

The Castle soldiers rampaged out after the Highlanders had left—searching for arms, they claim, but really just smashing & plundering. — *Frances Mary Hendry, My Story: The '45 Rising*

rampart

On the highest rampart of the fortress was a tower of adamant. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

range

The giant whales had migrated four months earlier from their Antarctic feeding range to mate, calve, and rear their young in two large, calm bays. — *Witi Ihimaera, The Whale Rider*

range

Piggy took off his shoes and socks, ranged them carefully on the ledge, and tested the water with one toe. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

The wolves were now more open in their pursuit, ... ranging along on either side, their red tongues lolling out. — *Jack London, White Fang*

rank 

A groan ran through the ranks of the dragons. — *Cornelia Funke, Dragon Rider*

rank 

What are you, anyway? A beginner! A rank amateur! And you want to teach me my trade? — *Hans Magnus Enzensberger, The Number Devil*

rankle

Dan's insult continued to rankle in her soul. — *L. M. Montgomery, Rainbow Valley*

ransack

For half an hour they ransacked the mill. I could hear them kicking over the barrels and pulling up the rotten planking. — *John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps*

rap

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping, As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door. — *Edgar Allan Poe, The Raven*

rapt

The dress rehearsal took place before a rapt audience of the ladies from the kitchens, the caretaker and his wife, and anyone else with nothing better to do. — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

rare^①

On rare occasions Nono was given a few oranges or vegetables when the farm produced more than was needed. — *Beverley Naidoo, Chain of Fire*

rarity

The birth of a child had become a comparative rarity, and only one marriage in ten yielded any offspring. — *J. G. Ballard, The Drowned World*

rash^①

By the time Hallowe'en arrived, Harry was regretting his rash promise to go to the Deathday Party. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

rate

Because I was a half-vampire I aged at only a fifth the rate of humans. — *Darren Shan, Tunnels of Blood*

rate

The witches sat in careful silence. This was not going to rate among the hundred most exciting coven meetings of all time. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

rather

'Dr Torrance is an eminent psychiatrist, rather than a schoolmaster,' Bernard explained. — *John Wyndham, The Midwich Cuckoos*

ration

After that Tom was rationed to ten minutes reading in bed; and he had to promise not to switch the bedroom light on again after it had been switched off. — *Philippa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden*

rational

Can't you understand that Mr Harrison is suffering from depression? He is incapable of making a rational decision about his life and death. — *Brian Clark, Whose Life is it Anyway?*

In a fit of enthusiastic madness I created a rational creature and was bound towards him to assure, as far as was in my power, his happiness and well-being. — *Mary Shelley, Frankenstein*

rattle

The mule cart rattled noisily over the jigsaw of stones and summer-dried mud of the roadway. — *Mollie Hunter, The Thirteenth Member*

raucous

The children ... were cavorting to raucous music with a thunderous pulsating beat. — *Michael Morpurgo, The Dancing Bear*

ravage

On the following day the army landed and ravaged the surrounding country and returned to the ships with much booty. — *G. A. Henty, The Dragon and the Raven*

ravenous

Buck was ravenous. The pound and a half of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. — *Jack London, The Call of the Wild*

reach

Airship technology had reached levels that even the Ancients had never dreamed of. — *Phillip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

reaches

At its lower reaches, the Twilight Woods give way to the Mire. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Beyond the Deep Woods*

reality

I have plenty of dreams, but the reality is that we'll have to stay here until the war is over. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

really

What we call our gargoyle is really just a carved stone head high above the kitchen fireplace. — *Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle*

realm

By that time the dwarves had gone on again, a long, long, way on into the dark tunnels of the goblins' realm. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Hobbit*

rear^②

The hill whose sides we were now assaulting reared up in an almost perfect cone. — *Gerald Durrell, A Zoo in My Luggage*

They reared the ladder against the wall in the yard, and Roger climbed up while Gwyn stood on the bottom rung. — *Alan Garner, The Owl Service*

rearrange

By ten o'clock, Miss Crocker has rearranged our seating and written our names on her seating chart. — *Mildred D. Taylor, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

reasonable

If you are looking around the sky with a reasonable telescope, most stars and planets look rather similar. — *Kjartan Poskitt, The Gobsmaeking Galaxy*

rebuke

Dr Feltham couldn't help rebuking his colleague for his unprofessional way of speaking. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

recede

As I watched, the planet seemed to grow larger and smaller and to advance and recede, but that was simply that my eye was tired. — *H. G. Wells, The War of the Worlds*

recite

Miss Brodie was reciting poetry to the class at a quarter to four, to raise their minds before they went home. — *Muriel Spark, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

reckon

Do you reckon we should have used a thicker rope? This one nearly broke last time he used it. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

recount

Ayrton then in a few words recounted what had happened, or, at least, as much as he knew. — *Jules Verne, The Mysterious Island*

recuperate

After my birth mother was sent to recuperate for some weeks and I was kept in the hospital while she was away. — *Christy Brown, My Left Foot*

redound

Now this affair made a noise at the time, and redounded so much to my credit that I was deeply grieved at it, because deserving none. — *R. D. Blackmore, Lorna Doone*

reek

The mixture of smells seemed stronger at night — a yeasty reek of flour and the fragrances of tea and spices. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

refer

My father has sometimes been referred to as the prime minister of Thembuland. — *Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom*

regain

Sabriel regained consciousness slowly, her brain fumbling for connections to her senses. — *Garth Nix, Sabriel*

regal

'I've been imagining ... the wedding and everything—Diana dressed in snowy garments, with a veil, and looking as beautiful and regal as a queen. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables*

regale

Simon came over to the cooking rock and regaled us with a vivid dream. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

regard

Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

regard

Figures of reptiles and beasts were painted without regard to any uniform scheme here and there upon the walls. — *Edgar Rice Burroughs, Out of Time's Abyss*

region

Bree was the chief village of the Bree-land, a small inhabited region, like an island in the empty lands round about. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring*

register

Every airship has to register its flight plan before departing. — *Kenneth Oppel, Airborn*

regular

The kid was ... someone who girls laughed at and who got bullied on a regular basis. — *Keith Gray, Warehouse*

The walls of the tunnel by the entrance were smooth and regular, built from huge blocks of stone. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

relapse

The next day the doctors were back; Tom had relapsed. — *Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

relax

After a while Willie's shoulders relaxed and the gripping sensation in his stomach subsided a little. — *Michelle Magorian, Goodnight Mister Tom*

rely

Anybody who doesn't rely on calculators all the time always looks cool. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

remains

Behind the church the crumbling remains of an abbey dominated the skyline. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

remarkable

One morning in April of that year, I read in the newspaper about a remarkable find of Roman silver. — *Roald Dahl, The Mildenhall Treasure*

remember

'I remember lemons,' said Winston. 'They were quite common in the 'fifties. They were so sour that it set your teeth on edge even to smell them.' — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

remind

The lake was so full of holes and mounds that it reminded Stanley of pictures he'd seen of the moon. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

reminiscent

On the drive, the tyres of the car had imprinted two patterned bands, reminiscent of markings on a snake's back. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

remnant

Round his neck was knotted the remnant of what had once been a silk bandanna. — *John Buchan, Huntingtower*

remonstrate

'I am mortal,' Scrooge remonstrated, 'and liable to fall.' — *Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol*

remove

Professore Flense-Filleteo removed his surgeon's gloves with an audible snap. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Magic*

render

This was a dreadful time, rendered the more dreadful by the gloom of the weather and the country. — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Kidnapped*

renew

'The only difficulty,' continued Captain Nemo, 'is that of remaining several days without renewing our provision of air.' — *Jules Verne, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

renown

That night the Lord of O was a guest of the school, himself a sorcerer of renown. — *Ursula Le Guin, A Wizard of Earthsea*

replenish

Harry ... went to the apothecary to replenish his store of Potions' ingredients. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

replete

It was a house ... replete with every modern convenience. — *Edith Nesbit, The Wouldbegoods*

replica

Little Elsa fitted her name, for she was a replica of her mother at the same age. — *Joy Adamson, Born Free*

report

Here he was interrupted by a loud report, and a cannon ball came tearing through the trees and pitched in the sand not a hundred yards from where we two were talking. — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island*

repose

On the table reposed a nut cake which she had baked that morning. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Avonlea*

repugnant

The longer he thought about it, the more repugnant became the thought of taking human life needlessly. — *Edgar Rice Burroughs, The Return of Tarzan*

request

'The Glass Master made the mask at the request of the Duchessa,' said Arianna, munching on a radish. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza City of Masks*

resemblance

You know, believe it or not, you've got a funny kind of resemblance to a bloke I once knew in Shoreditch. — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

resent

Sir Ector regarded the forest as his forest, and resented the intrusion of the royal hounds — as if his own would not do just as well! — *T. H. White, The Once and Future King*

residence

Under the eaves of the villa itself the swallows had taken up residence. — *Gerald Durrell, My Family and Other Animals*

resistance

I had built up a considerable resistance to triffid poison since my first sting in the garden. — *John Wyndham, The Day of the Triffids*

resound

At that moment, the air suddenly resounded with a deafening CRACK! — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

respect

We children were supposed to show our respect and bow whenever we ran past Japanese soldiers. — *Adeline Yen Mah, Chinese Cinderella*

I did everything Phillis said, disobeying her in only one respect. I would not get rid of the rubies. — *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

respective

After school the next day Alem and Robert went to their respective homes to eat and change their clothes. — Benjamin Zephaniah, *Refugee Boy*

resplendent

Rebecca, resplendent in another gown she'd borrowed from Victoria, looked more beautiful than ever. — Meg Cabot, *Victoria and the Rogue*

responsible

'You don't raise a guy to a responsible job who whistles in the elevator!' — Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

rest

Mina's mother rested a wooden board on her knees. She smiled and put a pomegranate on the board. — David Almond, *Skellig*

restore

Artemis Fowl had devised a plan to restore his family's fortune. — Eoin Colfer, *Artemis Fowl*

result

In the 16th century, a long voyage at sea usually resulted in the deaths of at least half the men. — Henry Brook, *True Sea Stories*

retaliate

The white settlers used muskets, swords and guns against the Nyungar people, who retaliated with spears. — Doris Pilkington, *Rabbit Proof Fence*

retard

The wind, obstinately remaining in the north-west, blew a gale, and retarded the steamer. — Jules Verne, *Around the World in Eighty Days*

retinue

The Prince, with a splendid retinue of officers and men, marched into Exeter. — Charles Dickens, *A Child's History of England*

retire

At this point, I decided it might be best to retire to my room. — Meg Cabot, *The Princess Diaries*

retort

'I will do as I like,' retorted the queen sulkily. — George MacDonald, *The Princess and the Goblin*

retreat

The creature scrambled to its feet and retreated into the thick undergrowth where the horses couldn't follow. — Stuart Hill, *The Cry of the Icebear*

return

The return of Mr Bilbo Baggins created quite a disturbance, both under the Hill and over the Hill, and across the Water. — J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

revive

As they ate, the children's spirits revived, and they began to be curious about where exactly they were. — William Nicholson, *The Wind Singer*

rhythm

As the journey progressed, Ousland established a rhythm: one and a half hours walking, then a rest for food and water. — Paul Dowswell, *True Polar Adventures*

rickety

Mother's convinced that Father is taking us to live in a rickety cottage far from the village. — Sue Reid, *My Story: Mill Girl*

ricochet

In this metal box the bullet would ricochet round like a demented bee, till it found somebody's flesh. — Robert Westall, *The Machine Gunners*

riddle

Much of Antarctica's icy surface is riddled with crevasses. — Paul Dowswell, *True Polar Adventures*

right

Lyra checked the alethiometer: keep going it said; this is the right direction. — Philip Pullman, *The Subtle Knife*

Everyone agreed that the day was just right for the picnic at Hanging Rock—a shimmering morning warm and still. — Joan Lindsay, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*

rightful

'This boy you see before you is Arthur Pendragon, and he is the rightful High King of Britain.' — Michael Morpurgo, *Arthur, High King of Britain*

rightly

Hrothgar was not able to remember rightly what happened then, nor exactly how he managed to escape with his life. — Robert Nye, *Beowulf*

rigmarole

Your rigmarole would have detained a saint / Entering Paradise—decidedly / You must not fail to write that book some day! — Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*

rile

I love horses, and it riles me to see them badly used. — Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*

ring

The parson's words had the ring of truth in them to me, and I never doubted that he was right. — *J. Meade Falkner, Moonfleet*

riot

A Jacobite mob rioted in the Lawnmarket early on, shouting, 'Surrender! Open the gates! The True King home again!' & threw cobbles at windows. — *Frances Mary Hendry, My Story: The '45 Rising*

ripple

Nick felt every muscle in his shoulders and neck suddenly relax, as a ripple of relief passed through on its way to his toes. — *Garth Nix, The Creature in the Case*

rival

Your father and I have been friendly rivals in business for some time now. — *J. B. Priestley, An Inspector Calls*

riven

The sycamore was riven and burnt by lightning, yet sap still gave it a few leaves for summer. — *Henry Williamson, Tarka the Otter*

roil

Dreams roiled in Eragon's mind, breeding and living by their own laws. — *Christopher Paolini, Eragon*

roll

Four years rolled by and I was now five, and still as helpless as a new-born baby. — *Christy Brown, My Left Foot*

romp

Belle, our dog, my other companion, was old and lazy, and liked to sleep by the open fire rather than to romp with me. — *Helen Keller, The Story of My Life*

root

Ivy stood rooted to the spot, too terrified, surprised, shocked, to move at all. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

root²

Mrs McLachlan ... rooted in a battered handbag and produced a crumpled newspaper advert and a pair of reading glasses. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Magic*

rotten

Most of the wood was so rotten that when they pulled it broke up into a shower of fragments and woodlice and decay. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

rotund

He was a large man, very rotund of belly and helpless looking. — *Jack London, The Valley of the Moon*

rough

I merely suggest that the position of the sun, if it is out, would give you a rough idea of the time. — *Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*

round

Fractions are numbers that are not nice round numbers. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

round

Uranus takes 84 Earth years to travel right round the sun once. — *Kjartan Poskitt, The Gobsnacking Galaxy*

Red Jack lived somewhere round here, people said, in a place called Black Raven Alley. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

round

Two figures were rounding a corner and were approaching through the gloom. — *Nicola Morgan, Fleshmarket*

routine

Human beings are great adaptors, and by lunchtime life in the environs of Arthur's house had settled into a steady routine. — *Douglas Adams, The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

rowdy

This is not a church meeting, this is a public meeting; no sitting in stiff obedience today. This is an altogether more rowdy affair. — *Chris Priestley, Witch Hunt*

rubbish

Rubbishing our children's tastes is one of the few pleasures remaining to us as we become old. — *Nick Hornby, 31 Songs*

rumble

I was just wiping the sauce off my mouth after lunch when I heard cartwheels rumbling in the lane outside. — *David Almond, The Fire-Eaters*

ruminant

Here he had not been long, ruminating on his new love, when Juliet appeared above at a window. — *Charles & Mary Lamb, Tales From Shakespeare*

rummage

Harry rummaged once more in his trunk, extracted his money bag and shoved some silver into Stan's hand. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

rumour

These were dangerous days. There were rumours of bandit gangs that preyed on travellers.

— William Nicholson, *Firesong*

rumple

In the distance I could see an area where the rocks had been pushed up and rumpled, like bedclothes, by some ancient volcanic upheaval.

— Gerald Durrell, *A Zoo in My Luggage*

rumpus

Now there's quite a rumpus at the hall-door, and then a fully-armed knight rides into the court, holding up a woman's dress.

— Kevin Crossley-Holland, *The Seeing Stone*

run

Mumpo started to cry. When he cried, his nose ran, and it was even harder to be sympathetic to him, because his upper-lip was shiny with nose-dribble.

— William Nicholson, *The Wind Singer*

'You're wasted running that hospital,' Gerald Faulkner told Mum.... 'You ought to be running British Telecom. Or Great Britain! Or the World!'

— Anne Fine, *Goggle-Eyes*

rush

The shark came in in a rush and the old man hit him as he shut his jaws.

— Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*

russet

The trees were laden with russet and were glowing gold in the autumn sun.

— Sue Reid, *My Story: Mill Girl*

rustle

There was a rustle, as if the wind had moved in the last few leaves of the nine-hundred-year-old oak.

— T. H. White, *The Once and Future King*

saddle

They climbed steadily to the mountain saddle, and came dropping down on the seaward side.

— Rosemary Sutcliff, *The Eagle of the Ninth*

sag

The timbers holding the roof were rotten and the roof was sagging in.

— David Almond, *Skellig*

A stout man, with a red sweater that sagged generously at the neck, came out and signed the book for the driver.

— Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*

salutation

Miss Slighcarp advanced and made her salutations to her employers.

— Joan Aiken, *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*

salute

The loud boom that had startled the Nyungar people was a salute from an eighteen-pounder cannon by the soldiers as they raised the British flag.

— Doris Pilkington, *Rabbit Proof Fence*

sandwich

Now Sapphire, who had been trapped indoors all day, found herself sandwiched on the sofa between two tipsy and determined women.

— Julie Bertagna, *The Opposite of Chocolate*

save

I could see nothing of the moonlight save that here and there the high branches made a tangled filigree against the starry sky.

— Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Lost World*

scamp

I suppose Giles has been a scamp. But I don't think he's been wicked. Just not very bright that's all.

— Alan Bennett, *Talking Heads*

scan

From my vantage-ground I could scan the whole moor right away to the railway line and to the south of it where green fields took the place of heather.

— John Buchan, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*

scathing

Geordie's scathing about Prince Charles: 'Fine & fancy, all frills & lace, & did ye see the powder on his face? More like a lady than a man!'

— Frances Mary Hendry, *My Story: The '45 Rising*

scavenger

They were hateful sharks, bad-smelling, scavengers as well as killers, and when they were hungry they would bite at an oar or the rudder of a boat.

— Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*

scent

Steam and scents from the hot-dog stalls and popcorn-makers drifted across us.

— David Almond, *The Fire-Eaters*

scoff

He was full of speculation that night about the condition of Mars, and scoffed at the vulgar idea of its having inhabitants who were signalling us.

— H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*

scorn

'Ha,' Jacob Carstairs said with a certain amount of scorn. 'We'll see about that.'

— Meg Cabot, *Victoria and the Rogue*

scramble

Lyra and the others scrambled over the curved roof of one of the tunnels, and found themselves in a strange moonscape of regular hummocks and hollows. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

scrape

I heard the faint scrape of the back door opening downstairs. Will was going out into the garden. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Midnight*

scratch

All around Harry quills were scratching on parchment like scurrying, burrowing rats. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

scrawny

I went back the way we'd come, past the cab rank where the scrawny horses dozed on their feet between the shafts. — *Alison Prince, Oranges and Murder*

scrutinize

D'Artagnan halted at the threshold and scrutinized his wistful friend. — *Alexandre Dumas, The Man in the Iron Mask*

scud

A mild breeze shook the leaves and a few dark clouds scudded across the sky. — *Michelle Magorian, Goodnight Mister Tom*

secret

The great secret of algebra is that a letter always means the same number all the way through. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

section

Unfortunately, Hunstanton Library did not have a large section on Witchcraft. — *Anthony Horowitz, Groosham Grange*

seedy

The first place I come to is Vinney's. ...It's a seedy fish-and-chip shop with a cracked lino floor and chipped formica on the one table inside. — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

seethe

Jamie saw a mysterious boy with darting, distrustful eyes who looked frail on the outside, but was seething on the inside. — *Rachel Anderson, Warlands*

sense

I didn't know what I'd do if the vampire wasn't here, but somehow I sensed he would be. — *Darren Shan, Cirque du Freak*

sentence

'My life is a perfect graveyard of buried hopes.' That's a sentence I read in a book once, and I say it over to comfort myself whenever I'm disappointed in anything. — *L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables*

serve

When we reached the house we climbed the long, sloping lawn to the porch and went into Mama and Papa's room, which also served as the living area. — *Mildred D. Taylor, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

set

Annie was a big woman with little black eyes set like currants in a round bun of a face. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

settle⁰

And at last the locusts did descend. They settled on every tree and on every blade of grass; they settled on the roofs and covered the bare ground. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

shabby

The village was a shabby place: a huddle of wooden buildings, with paddocks containing reindeer, and dogs that barked as he approached. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

shade

Ralph shaded his eyes and followed the jagged outline of the crags up towards the mountain. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

shaft

There was a small clearing, and a shaft of sunlight, and opposite him, between two trees, a deer. — *Susan Hill, I'm the King of the Castle*

shallow

The river was shallow here, barely up to her knees, and the bed, though stony and uneven, was easy underfoot and not too slippery. — *Tim Bowler, River Boy*

shatter

From upstairs, an earsplitting scream shattered the subterranean calm of the dungeon. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Magic*

sheer⁰

On the far side of the terrace, the mountain fell away in a sheer precipice. — *Garth Nix, Liraal*

shoulder

Holly shouldered her way into the throng. 'Coming through,' she grunted. 'Police business.' — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

shun

Magrat shunned the traditional pointed hat, as worn by the other witches. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrld Sisters*

sigh

Nadine raises her eyebrows at Magda, and they both sigh, irritated at me for giving away our age. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

sign

If there is a hurricane you always see the signs of it in the sky for days ahead, if you are at sea. — *Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea*

sign

Grigory signed to them both to sit down at the table and put bread and salt in front of them, and a bowl of apples. — *Gillian Cross, Calling a Dead Man*

silent

The world was so silent that Ben could hear Sorrel munching a mushroom behind him. — *Cornelia Funke, Dragon Rider*

silhouette

The old warehouse ... was silhouetted against the lights from the town, and reminded Katie of something out of a horror movie. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

simmer

Soups and stews simmered in huge cauldrons and terracotta bowls were filled with potatoes roasted in olive oil and sprinkled with sea salt and spikes of rosemary. — *Mary Hoffman, Stravaganza City of Masks*

simple-minded

The more simple-minded number devils use computers. They keep them running for months at a stretch. — *Hans Magnus Enzensberger, The Number Devil*

single

Billions of emails are sent, and millions of people around the world log on to the Internet every single day! — *Michael Cox, The Incredible Internet*

sinister

There was something weird and sinister about the place. Despite all the loveliness and the luxury, there was a whiff of danger that hung and drifted in the air like poisonous gas. — *Roald Dahl, The Boy Who Talked with Animals*

sink

Miranda was deeply, deeply shaken. She sank towards the floor, like a doll without stuffing. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

sip

'Went to the zoo did you, dear?' Auntie Rose said and sipped her tea, her little finger cocked in the air. — *Michael Morpurgo, Tom's Sausage Lion*

situated

The Nautical School was situated in the old lock-keeper's cottage next to the lock pit. — *Ellen MacArthur, Taking on the World*

slave

I counted seven women slaving over the large tubs where the clothes are washed, their reddened faces shiny with sweat. — *Pamela Oldfield, My Story: Victorian Workhouse*

slew

The truck revolved a half-turn, slewing off the highway in a cascade of sparks. — *Eoin Colfer, The Supernaturalist*

slimy

Deep down here by the dark water lived old Gollum, a small slimy creature. — *J.R.R. Tolkien, The Hobbit*

slink

Varjak slunk towards the wall, willing himself to disappear. I'm a shadow, he told himself. No one can see me. I'm invisible. — *S.F. Said, Varjak Paw*

slip

Slipping into the house, Naledi took the letter quietly from the tin without Nono or Mmangwane noticing. — *Beverley Naidoo, Journey to Jo'burg*

slither

The lane was all potholes and the wheels kept slipping and we rocked and slithered on the cold damp coal. — *David Almond, The Fire-Eaters*

slop

I turned off the stove and gingerly slopped the water into three large mugs. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

slosh

Mum banged down the dinner pan. Pasta sloshed over the sides and onto the table. — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

sludge

The frog showed darkly in the dim surface mirror which reflected the grey sludge of the pond's bed. — *Henry Williamson, Tarka the Otter*

smattering

I don't have French but what I do have is a smattering of Spanish, the legacy of several non-package holidays on the Costa del Sol. — *Alan Bennett, Talking Heads*

smell

The police car smelt of hot plastic and aftershave and take-away chips. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

smithereens

Eight cauldrons fell off a shelf; they crashed onto the hall floor and smashed into smithereens. — *Kevin Crossley-Holland, Viking!*

smooth

Officer Delinko picked himself up off the ground and smoothed the front of his uniform. — *Carl Hiaasen, Hoot*

smuggle

Pattern had smuggled one or two books and Bonnie's paintbox from the attic out to the cart with the food and clothes. — *Joan Aiken, The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*

snake

Kezzie had gazed back at the carriages snaking behind the engines across the vast gorge at Stoney Creek Bridge. — *Theresa Breslin, Kezzie*

snob

The bartender ... was a big snob. He didn't talk to you at all hardly unless you were a big shot or a celebrity or something. — *J. D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye*

snuggle

Back at the dormitory the girls were trying to snuggle down in their cold, uninviting beds. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

so-called

The so-called Picnic Grounds at the base of the Hanging Rock were entered through a sagging wooden gate, now closed. — *Joan Lindsay, Picnic at Hanging Rock*

sojourn

This is the story of a five-year sojourn that I and my family made on the Greek island of Corfu. — *Gerald Durrell, My Family and Other Animals*

solemn

I picked up the faded picture and saw a solemn young man and woman, both dressed in old-fashioned Chinese robes. — *Adeline Yen Mah, Chinese Cinderella*

somewhat

Stanley felt somewhat dazed as the guard unlocked his handcuffs and led him off the bus. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

sort

The girl worked things out quietly, sensibly — she wasn't the sort to get into a panic. — *James Vance Marshall, Walkabout*

source

The fire was the only source of light in the room; it was casting long, spidery shadows upon the walls. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

spar^e

Daily I sparred with sword and spear against Father, against Kay, against anyone who would teach me more. — *Michael Morpurgo, Arthur, High King of Britain*

specially

How do you drink with such a nose? You ought to have a cup made specially. — *Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac*

spill

Light spilled into the shaft as smoke wafted out of it. — *Garth Nix, The Creature in the Case*

spirit

Humphrey had not that spirit of chivalry possessed by Edward. He was a younger son, and had to earn, in a way, his own fortune. — *Captain Marryat, The Children of the New Forest*

split

People decided to split the day into two halves called 'before meridian' and 'after meridian', but irritatingly for us they did it in Latin. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

spontaneous

That last evening, there was a spontaneous party outside the café, brought on, I think, by relief that the film was finished. — *Michael Morpurgo, The Dancing Bear*

spoon

I spooned pasta and mince into my mouth, smiling as I chewed. — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

spot

I strolled away from the vans and tents and found a secluded spot around the side of the old mill. — *Darren Shan, Tunnels of Blood*

sprawl

I jumped full at the man, overturning the stool and sending him sprawling. — *John Wyndham, The Chrysalids*

sprint

The lad in black was only a step ahead of Robbie, ... sprinting across the patchy lawn to the next fence, head down all the way. — *Keith Gray, Warehouse*

spurt

I suddenly found tears spurting down my face. I put my head in my hands, scared they'd call me a baby. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Clean Break*

squall

The wind had been very changeable, with squalls of rain during the day, but now it came on sharp, driving sleet. — *Anna Sewell, Black Beauty*

squarely

Phileas Fogg was seated squarely in his armchair, his feet close together like those of a grenadier on parade, his hands resting on his knees, his body straight, his head erect. — *Jules Verne, Around the World in Eighty Days*

squiggle

The signature was an illegible squiggle that appeared to be in Arabic script. — *Hans Magnus Enzensberger, The Number Devil*

stagger

Seeing the visitors staggering towards the house with their bags, Hari went to help. — *Anita Desai, The Village by the Sea*

stain

Autumn came and they picked bilberries on the mountain: tiny, purple fruit that stained their teeth and their clothes. — *Nina Bowden, Carrie's War*

stalk[Ⓢ]

But the beast was in there too, and it was close behind. Phoenix could hear it shifting through the darkness, stalking him. — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

stalwart

The crowd scattered as if by magic as two stalwart figures, armed with truncheons, came at a smart pace along the street. — *Kathleen Fidler, The Desperate Journey*

standstill

The traffic in west London had come to a standstill. It would take days to clear up the damage. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

staunch

The Putnam family are staunch Puritans and are engaged in a bitter power struggle with other local landowners. — *Chris Priestley, Witch Hunt*

steal

Two men stole from the margins, as white as ghosts. Truly they seemed like some kind of apparition. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

sticky

The air in the room was hot and sticky and agitation could be heard in people's voices. — *Beverly Naidoo, Chain of Fire*

stifle

Dickon laughed so that he was obliged to stifle the sound by putting his arm over his mouth. — *Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden*

stir

Out in the black fen something stirred. It was cruel and slimy and its eyes shone green. — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

stolid

The sergeant was standing in the middle of the floor with the stolid air of one who is awaiting a word of command. — *Terry Pratchett, Wyrd Sisters*

stoop

The door to the cottage was so small that a grown man would have to stoop to gain entry. — *G. P. Taylor, Shadowmancer*

storm

Withel stormed across the floor, his face a mask of rage. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

streak

Oh, yeah, my father lived many years in Alaska. He was an adventurous man. We've got quite a little streak of self-reliance in our family. — *Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman*

strenuous

The long days and strenuous work stripped Eragon's body of excess fat. — *Christopher Paolini, Eragon*

strident

A duck quacked loudly, and when its strident alarm was finished, the air held only the slight sounds of snowflakes sinking on the roof of the shed. — *Henry Williamson, Tarka the Otter*

strike

The first two cruisers struck each other head on, their great blades interlocking, mangling each other. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

stroke

As I was crossing the street I had a stroke of inspiration about who might have killed Wellington. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

strut

French policemen strutted about looking important and barking out orders in their own language. — *Adeline Yen Mah, Chinese Cinderella*

stuff

Our living-room and all the other rooms were so full of stuff that I can't find the words to describe it. — *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl*

stumble

There are very few people, and even fewer amateur zoologists, who stumble upon a sizeable mammal previously unknown to science. — *Gavin Maxwell, Ring of Bright Water*

stupefy

During the first weeks of her grief Sara felt as if she were too stupefied to talk. — *Frances Hodgson Burnett, A Little Princess*

such

No other adult I know would have used such a long and complicated word when talking to me. — *Theresa Breslin, Whispers in the Graveyard*

suffuse

The sky was pale in the south-east, and the air was suffused with a grey mist. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

suggestion

Mrs Stitch turned her face of clay, in which only the eyes gave a suggestion of welcome, towards her visitor. — *Evelyn Waugh, Scoop*

sullen

The old man's flat face and dark eyes showed nothing, but his voice was sullen with displeasure. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Return of the King*

sunken

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin; You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in. — *T. S. Eliot, Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*

supplement

The wealthier families in our village supplemented their diets with tea, coffee and sugar. — *Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom*

suppose

These stairs led up to the roof so students weren't supposed to use them. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

surprise

Once we surprised a crocodile sunning itself on a rock. — *Joy Adamson, Born Free*

surreptitious

Framed in the staffroom window, Mr Cartright was blowing the smoke of his last surreptitious cigarette. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

suspect

Roger slept badly and suspects he has a sprained wrist following yesterday's excursion. — *Michael Palin, Pole to Pole*

suspicious

She is a suspicious person, my mother. She is especially suspicious of two things — strange men and boiled eggs. — *Roald Dahl, The Umbrella Man*

swanky

In case you don't live in New York, the Wicker Bar is in this sort of swanky hotel, the Seton Hotel. — *J. D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye*

swarm

The room was swarming with people now and Father grasped my hand and told me to hold on tight. — *Sue Reid, My Story: Mill Girl*

swish

Ivy and her cohorts ignored her in the corridors at school, swishing past her as if she didn't exist. — *Catherine MacPhail, Run Zan Run*

taboo

Will had no idea of the taboo in Lyra's world preventing one person from touching another's *dæmon*. — Philip Pullman, *The Subtle Knife*

tacky^Q

The pub ... was really tacky inside: tatty seats, card tables and a pool table in the corner. — *Bali Rai, (Un)arranged Marriage*

take

It will take a long time to repair the damage of apartheid. — *Beverly Naidoo, Journey to Jo'burg*

I take it that the injection is one of a series of measures to keep me alive. — *Brian Clark, Whose Life is it Anyway?*

A lad who Marcus took to be the Chieftain's brother ducked out from the firelit doorway and came running to meet them. — *Rosemary Sutcliffe, The Eagle of the Ninth*

tale

Though mine is but a simple, personal tale of my childhood, please do not underestimate the power of such stories. — *Adeline Yen Mah, Chinese Cinderella*

talisman

She swung the chain over him, out of his reach. 'Is this your talisman, wizard? Is it precious to you?' — *Ursula Le Guin, The Tombs of Atuan*

talk

There was talk of an evening curfew, but most of that came from those who had no teenagers to be grounded within their walls. — *Julie Bertagna, The Opposite of Chocolate*

tame

Then I attack my hair with a bristle brush, trying to tame it into submission. It's as if my entire body is trying to get out of control. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

tan

Always darkish in colour, Simon was burned by the sun to a deep tan that glistened with sweat. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

tang

The house was redolent with the scent of herbs and the sharp tang of garlic and onions. — *Gerald Durrell, My Family and Other Animals*

tangle

It was seldom worth tangling with wizards, they so rarely had any treasure worth speaking of. — *Terry Pratchett, The Colour of Magic*

tap

Hearing Miranda's heels tapping up the garden path the next evening, Madame Doubtfire paused in her watering. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

target

A week and a half from the Pole and the good news is that we are almost exactly on our target of thirty degrees East. — *Michael Palin, Pole to Pole*

target

'So tell me,' Dad continued, 'as a fourteen-year-old, you're a member of our target audience. Will it sell?' — *Alan Gibbons, Shadow of the Minotaur*

tarry^Q

Here now for seven days they tarried, for the time was at hand for another parting which they were loth to make. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Return of the King*

taste

Tarka licked a frog and liked the taste of it; ... but he did not eat it. — *Henry Williamson, Tarka the Otter*

taste

But I quitted France five years ago, and, wishing to taste the sweets of domestic life, took service as a valet here in England. — *Jules Verne, Around the World in Eighty Days*

tasty

The new year must begin with tasty, fresh yams and not the shrivelled and fibrous crop of the previous year. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

tattered

Hari could see the tattered fronds of the dusty palm trees over his head and even one or two of the brightest stars. — *Anita Desai, The Village by the Sea*

taut

At the centre of Undertown is a great iron ring, to which a long and heavy chain—now taut, now slack—extends up into the sky. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Beyond the Deep Woods*

tea

It's a funny time, three o'clock, too late for lunch but a bit early for tea. — *Alan Bennett, Talking Heads*

tearful

Signora Strega-Borgia bid the children a tearful farewell and set off to complete her degree in advanced witchcraft. — *Debi Glori, Pure Dead Magic*

tease

Stanley ... didn't have any friends at home. He was overweight and the kids at his middle school often teased him about his size. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

teem 

The seas around us teem with fish and the captain has ordered boats ashore to find fresh water.

— *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

teeter

Zaphod felt he was teetering on the edge of madness and wondered if he shouldn't just jump over and have done with it. — *Douglas Adams, The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*

tell

It was obvious to everyone from the moment they sat down that Zach was bursting to tell them something. — *Michelle Magorian, Goodnight Mister Tom*

'Where am I? Tell the truth—I can bear it. In what quarter of the globe have I descended like a meteorite?' — *Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac*

temper

For Rebecca, Victoria had discovered ..., had a volatile temper, and was somewhat prone to dramatics. — *Meg Cabot, Victoria and the Rogue*

temper

Artemis ... still retained a childlike belief in magic, tempered by an adult determination to exploit it. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

temperament

Humphrey was of a much more subdued and philosophical temperament, not perhaps so well calculated to lead as to advise. — *Captain Maryat, The Children of the New Forest*

tempo

The player changes tempo, the notes of the flute leaping and gliding, leaping and gliding like invisible fish. — *Julie Hearn, The Merrybegot*

tend 

Bigger asteroids tend to be round but smaller ones can be all sorts of funny shapes. — *Kjartan Poskitt, The Gobsmaeking Galaxy*

tend 

Lorna was in her favourite place, the little garden which she tended with such care and diligence. — *R. D. Blackmore, Lorna Doone*

tense

The hawk tensed and stood up straight, and stared past the monastery into the distance. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

terrify

In ancient times people used to be terrified by solar eclipses. — *Kjartan Poskitt, The Gobsmaeking Galaxy*

test

Cosmo tested the ground like a swimmer testing Arctic waters. — *Eoin Colfer, The Supernaturalist*

thee

'God save thee, ancient Mariner! From the fiends, that plague thee thus!' — *Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

thence

I took the path along the down ... and thence most certainly saw a light moving to and fro about the church. — *J. Meade Falkner, Moonfleet*

thickset

Haoyou flung himself at the man — a brute as thickset and sturdy as a bollard, with a round, neck-less, bollard head. — *Geraldine McCaughrean, The Kite Rider*

thine

'How do they call thee in thine own country, stranger?' — *H. Rider Haggard, She*

think

Some people think the Milky Way is a long line of stars, but it isn't. — *Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

thither

I resolved to travel thither by land, following the edge of the shore. — *Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe*

thorough

We take it in turns, once a fortnight, my brother and me, to give the place a thorough going over. — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

thou

'Fear not to speak the truth, my child; thou hast nought to fear from Wulfric de Talbot.' — *Edith Nesbit, Five Children and It*

thread

Have you ever tried to thread a needle? Fact: no matter how wide the eye of the needle is, the cotton is always wider. — *Nicky Singer, Feather Boy*

threaten

It was a cold late-November night. There hadn't been any snow yet, but it was threatening. — *Darren Shan, Tunnels of Blood*

threshold

Arthur was a young man, just on the threshold of life. — T. H. White, *The Once and Future King*

throb

I hesitated for some time, and then... with a heart that throbbed violently, I scrambled to the top of the mound in which I had been buried so long.

— H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*

throes

With the ship creaking and groaning behind him, like a huge, beleaguered animal in its death throes, Shackleton called his men together.

— Paul Dowswell, *True Polar Adventures*

thump

The friar thumped the pulpit with both his fists. 'God wills it!' he shouted. — Kevin Crossley-Holland, *The Seeing Stone*

thunder

'Get up, and clear out!' thundered Dan, in a rage.

— Louisa May Alcott, *Little Men*

thy

'Abhorred monster! Fiend that thou art! The tortures of hell are too mild a vengeance for thy crimes.' — Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

tidings

In no region had the messengers discovered any signs or tidings of the Riders or other servants of the Enemy. — J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

till

It was dawn by three in the morning, and twilight lingered till nine at night. — Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*

timbre

I was about to shout 'Go away!' when the quite unmistakable timbre of Mrs Lupey's voice came effortlessly through the thick wooden panels of the door. — Anne Fine, *Goggle-Eyes*

timid

As she was not at all a timid child and always did what she wanted to do, Mary went to the green door and turned the handle. — Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

timorous

He appeared anxious, timorous, ashamed, and his eyes were constantly fixed on the ground. — Jules Verne, *The Mysterious Island*

tinge

The noise of the waterfall and the smell of the sea filled Beadle with a sense of excitement tinged with trepidation. — G. P. Taylor, *Shadowmancer*

tiptoe

I tiptoed closer to the drawing room. Who was Dad talking to? I could only hear their voices.

— Malorie Blackman, *Noughts and Crosses*

to

Just then, the door on the kitchen stairs swung to, so that we were in darkness except for the pale square at the window. — Dodie Smith, *I Capture the Castle*

toddle

I tidied the room, did one or two jobs, and then toddled along to the library. — Alan Bennett, *Talking Heads*

toil

The village carpenter had fixed up a bench upon which panting grown-ups could sit and rest themselves after they had toiled up the hill.

— Elizabeth Goudge, *The Little White Horse*

token

Before a Cat will condescend To treat you as a trusted friend, Some little token of esteem is needed, like a dish of cream. — T. S. Eliot, *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*

tone

'You both look done in,' said Horyse, speaking in the kindly, slow tone he used on shell-shocked soldiers. — Garth Nix, *Sabriel*

tool

The Internet is the fastest-growing communication and information tool ever invented in the history of the world. — Michael Cox, *The Incredible Internet*

topic

The main topic of conversation at breakfast was the admission of Alem to the school. — Benjamin Zephaniah, *Refugee Boy*

topmost

On the topmost branch of a gum tree that overhung the gully, there alighted a bird. — James Vance Marshall, *Walkabout*

torrent

Rain fell as it had never fallen before. For days and nights together it poured down in violent torrents, and washed away the yam heaps. — Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

tote

Quarter past eleven I got up and toted my stuff across to the station. — *Robert Swindells, Stone Cold*

touchy

Harry remembered how touchy Myrtle had always been about being dead, but none of the other ghosts he knew made such a fuss about it.

— *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

tout

Traders in mysteries touted their books, showing pictures of the days of fear and wonder to come.

— *William Nicholson, Firesong*

tower

The man was a human tree in height, towering high above Papa's six feet two inches. — *Mildred D. Taylor, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

trace

Syme had fallen silent for a moment, and with the handle of his spoon was tracing patterns in the puddle of stew. — *George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four*

tract⁰

I had crossed a marshy tract full of willows, bulrushes, and odd, outlandish, swampy trees.

— *Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island*

trade

The next morning, Roy traded seats on the school bus to be closer to the front door. — *Carl Hiaasen, Hoot*

traditional

Numbers, dates, in fact mathematics of any kind, have little or no relevance in our traditional Aboriginal society. — *Doris Pilkington, Rabbit Proof Fence*

tragedy

You're familiar with the tragedies of antiquity, are you? The great homicidal classics? — *Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*

trail

Natalie ... trailed her feet along the floor so stubbornly, she left tracks even on the hardy shop carpet. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

tramp

I'd tramped the narrow little streets of Soho and the boulevards of South Kensington from early morning. — *Robert Swindells, Stone Cold*

tranquil

It was a tranquil summer dawn, the day the travellers departed, and the air was still. — *William Nicholson, The Wind Singer*

transport

'PEEVES!' Filch roared, flinging down his quill in a transport of rage. 'I'll have you this time, I'll have you!' — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

traverse

On the ninth day after leaving Yokohama, Phileas Fogg had traversed exactly one half of the terrestrial globe. — *Jules Verne, Around the World in Eighty Days*

tread

The voice of the Invisible Man was heard for the first time, yelling out sharply, as the policeman trod on his foot. — *H. G. Wells, The Invisible Man*

treat

Nadine isn't quite as crazy, although last year she went out with this total creep called Liam who treated her like dirt. — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

trek

Days passed quickly as they continued to trek along the Spine, searching for the mountain pass. — *Christopher Paolini, Eragon*

tribe

The Thembu tribe reaches back for twenty generations to King Zwide. — *Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom*

tricky

Amid-air rescue would surely be tricky. But it was Skyways Law to help another vessel in distress. — *Kenneth Oppel, Airborn*

trill

The air was still and clean, and the trilling of larks carried far over the fields of hay, which stretched away on both sides of the path. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

trinket

Unferth played with a silver trinket. He kept pouring the little chain through his fingers, its links making a tinkling sound. — *Robert Nye, Beowulf*

troop

A troop of newly arrived students, very young, pink and callow, followed nervously, rather abjectly, at the Director's heels. — *Aldous Huxley, Brave New World*

trot

The two boys trotted down the beach and, turning at the water's edge, looked back at the pink mountain. — *William Golding, Lord of the Flies*

troubled

It was a troubled sleep with dreams of wolves and black rings and mirrors with no reflections. — *Anthony Horowitz, Groosham Grange*

truce

When the gods made a truce, and settled terms for a lasting peace, every single god and goddess spat into a great jar. — *Kevin Crossley-Holland, Viking!*

trying

The first week of my life as a cab horse was very trying. — *Anna Sewell, Black Beauty*

tuft

The aunts were sitting on either side of the fire, in the leather armchairs that leaked tufts of some strange stuffing on to the carpet. — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

tumbledown

I came upon a small clearing and a tumbledown cabin. Nobody had been there for years and years. — *Jack London, The Night-Born*

turmoil

The whole sea was in turmoil, great black waves rearing out of it and storming towards the shore. — *Anita Desai, The Village by the Sea*

turpitude

As for the moral turpitude that man unveiled to me ... I cannot, even in memory, dwell on it without a start of horror. — *Robert Louis Stevenson, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

tutor

For three months after I had drawn the sword from the stone I stayed in London, and Merlin tutored me day and night in the arts of kingship. — *Michael Morpurgo, Arthur, High King of Britain*

twain

'My heart is sore,' he said at last; 'your words split my heart in twain.' — *H. Rider Haggard, King Solomon's Mines*

twinge

My ankle twinged every so often and I winced. It felt as though I'd sprained it slightly. — *Narinder Dhani, Bend It Like Beckham*

twirl

'This method,' said Gilbert, proudly twirling his whiskers, 'is my own invention.' — *Cornelia Funke, Dragon Rider*

twitch

A tiny green grasshopper with a long, melancholy face sat twitching his hind legs nervously. — *Gerald Durrell, My Family and Other Animals*

twitchy

Hugh Pylum-Haight was becoming distinctly twitchy, waiting upstairs in the complete silence of the great hall. — *Debi Gliori, Pure Dead Wicked*

typical

It was a typical Venetian palace, pink and white, its narrow windows built into a fantastic embroidery of pillars, arches and balustrades. — *Anthony Horowitz, Scorpio*

tyranny

Is it not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings? — *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

umpteenth

There are umpteenth other odd people who were famous mathematicians. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

unavailing

Edward now began to talk incoherently, and attempted to rise from the bed, but his efforts were unavailing—he was too weak. — *Captain Maryat, The Children of the New Forest*

uncanny

Luke stared at him. There was something uncanny about the way the old man seemed to see inside his head. — *Tim Bowler, Starseeker*

uncover

Nono's hand uncovered her face but remained pressed into the sagging furrows of her cheek. — *Beverly Naidoo, Chain of Fire*

understand

Mrs Coulter understood some of the language of these mountain people, but it would never do to let them know how much. — *Philip Pullman, The Amber Spyglass*

I understood you were an experienced first-class professional interior and exterior decorator. — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

undetected

For a while my body went undetected, so I lay there, listening to the sounds of the night.

— *Darren Shan, Cirque du Freak*

undulate

Ford pressed a large red button at the bottom of the screen and words began to undulate across it.

— *Douglas Adams, The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

unearthly

Many years back, there had come from the vault so horrible and unearthly a cry, that parson and people got up and fled from the church. — *J. Meade*

Falkner, Moonfleet

unexpected

In going downstairs the first time I found an unexpected difficulty because I could not see my feet; indeed I stumbled twice. — *H. G. Wells, The*

Invisible Man

unhinged

Really, if you thought about things too much, Mr Cartright decided, you could go quite unhinged, teaching 4C. — *Anne Fine, Flour Babies*

uniform

I descended into a uniform whiteness, snow and cloud merging into one. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the*

Void

universal

HTML is the universal language of the Web and is used by people who put text, sound and pictures on web pages. — *Michael Cox, The Incredible Internet*

unlike

Clare's great-grandmother, unlike her daughters, Aunt Anne and Aunt Susan, had been a lady of fashion. — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

unlucky

In this neighbourhood to meet a lawyer or a priest on the street is unlucky. We're only

thought of in connection with disasters. — *Arthur Miller, A View from the Bridge*

unnerve

It was an awesome thing to sleep in that ill-fated camp; and yet it was even more unnerving to do so in the jungle. — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Lost World*

unnoticed

They had slipped into the school unnoticed and whispered a trembling 'goodnight' in the corridor. — *Anthony Horowitz, Groosham Grange*

unsettle

Martha has had a visit from her sister, which always unsettles her. — *Celia Rees, Witch Child*

unwonted

There was an air of unwonted bustle in the house, as though someone had lately arrived or was expected to arrive at any moment. — *Rosemary Sutcliffe, The Eagle of the Ninth*

upright

Westside stretched before them like a box of upright dominoes, with only building graphics and neon signs to distinguish between skyscrapers. — *Eoin Colfer, The Supernaturalist*

uproar

Suddenly there was a great uproar from the baboons across the river and in came Elsa dripping wet. — *Joy Adamson, Born Free*

upstanding

I'll show you all the towns. America is full of beautiful towns and fine, upstanding people.

— *Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman*

urge

James pointed away down the road where the second gypsy was urging his horse along as fast as it would go. — *Kathleen Fidler, The Desperate Journey*

use

Every bit of the waste cotton is swept up and gets used and often the big machines are still moving as we clean. — *Sue Reid, My Story: Mill Girl*

usher

'Here we are!' Crawley smiled and ushered Alex out into a long corridor. — *Anthony Horowitz, Stormbreaker*

utter

The prisoner uttered a muffled cry, turning whiter than the sheet he was hiding under.

— *Alexandre Dumas, The Man in the Iron Mask*

utter

In the meanwhile, the dwarves sat in darkness, and utter silence fell about them. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Hobbit*

vacant

It was a big stuffed doll, a manikin with a vacant stupid human face. — *Philip Pullman, Northern Lights*

vanish

Snape stepped forward, waved his wand and the snake vanished in a small puff of black smoke. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

vast

Antarctica is a vast continent, twice the size of Australia. — Paul Dowswell, *True Polar Adventures*

veer

A kestrel flew out of the monastery wall and veered away across the fields behind the farm. — Barry Hines, *A Kestrel for a Knave*

veld

From an early age, I spent most of my free time in the veld playing and fighting with the other boys of the village. — Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*

vent

Here on the dump she could cry and scream and vent her anger. There was no one to hear her. — Catherine MacPhail, *Run Zan Run*

venture

'What's the matter?' asked Sorrel sarcastically, venturing so close to the edge of the chasm that her furry toes were over empty space. 'Don't you like mountains?' — Cornelia Funke, *Dragon Rider*

vet

Everyone who worked in Roscoe's private office had been hand-picked and thoroughly vetted. It was impossible to see him without an appointment. — Anthony Horowitz, *Point Blanc*

vicious

Nine days after Eragon's return, a vicious blizzard blew out of the mountains and settled over the valley. — Christopher Paolini, *Eragon*

vie

Touchstone looked at her, sadness and exhaustion vying for first place in his gaze. — Garth Nix, *Sabriel*

view

From our road we had a view of the whole of Steeple Honey as we descended the hill. — John Wyndham, *The Day of the Triffids*

vile

Supper was dry bread, and dried smoked fish, which tasted vile. — Ursula Le Guin, *The Tombs of Atuan*

vivacious

Theo looked very handsome in his black dress suit and Myra Levant very vivacious in red and black. — Pamela Oldfield, *My Story: Victorian Workhouse*

vocabulary

Do you know that Newspeak is the only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller every year? — George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-four*

void

The river here is broad and swollen, and roars as it hurls itself down into the swirling, misty void below. — Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, *Beyond the Deep Woods*

volunteer

Mrs Miller threw her puffy arm into the air and volunteered to run a canteen for any troops that might pass through. — Michelle Magorian, *Goodnight Mister Tom*

waft

On Hallowe'en morning they woke to the delicious smell of baking pumpkin wafting through the corridors. — J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

wager

'I'll wager that the black dress shows a corresponding mark to this.' — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventure of the Abbey Grange*

walk

There was a laurel-hedged walk which curved round the secret garden and ended at a gate which opened into a wood, in the park. — Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

walkabout

In the bush boy's tribe every male who reached the age of thirteen or fourteen had to perform a walkabout — a selective test which ... ensured that only the fittest survived to father children. — James Vance Marshall, *Walkabout*

wally

It's all right for you. You don't mind going around acting like a major wally. Nobody's going to laugh at you, are they? — Anne Fine, *Flour Babies*

wand

Dr Fian chanted the next line of his litany, his wand tracing a design again as he chanted. — Mollie Hunter, *The Thirteenth Member*

wane

At the churchyard wall my courage had waned somewhat: it seemed a shameless thing to come to rifle Blackbeard's treasure just in the very place and hour that Blackbeard loved. — J. Meade Falkner, *Moonfleet*

want

I must admit that for all their charm and beauty these five wild geese displayed, in some matters, a truly astonishing want of intellect, a plain stupidity, indeed. — Gavin Maxwell, *Ring of Bright Water*

warn

The rattlesnake didn't chase after him. It had rattled its tail to warn him to stay away. — *Louis Sachar, Holes*

warning

The Radley Place fascinated Dill. In spite of our warnings and explanations it drew him as the moon draws water. — *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

warren

Those who do make their way across the Mire find themselves in a warren of ramshackle hovels and run-down slums which straddles the oozing Edgewater River. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Beyond the Deep Woods*

wary

I leaped up the stairs two at a time, mindful of the wet footprints, wary of slipping. — *Keith Gray, Malarkey*

wave

'What did you say I should do with this?' asked Giles, waving a green chilli at me as I chopped vegetables. — *Alison Allen-Gray, Unique*

waylay

All went well that day, and no sight or sound had they of the enemy waiting to waylay them. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Return of the King*

wealthy

There was a wealthy man in Okonkwo's village who had three huge barns, nine wives and thirty children. — *Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart*

wee

Sometimes being wee and skinny is a bonus. I'm round behind him and into the kitchen before he knows it. — *Theresa Breslin, Whispers in the Graveyard*

weekly

The aunts, travelling in Italy in 1921, had written weekly to their parents. — *Penelope Lively, The House in Norham Gardens*

well

Alicia, of course, did everything well, whether it was maths, magic or horse-riding. — *Diana Wynne Jones, The Merlin Conspiracy*

well-to-do

This hobbit was a very well-to-do hobbit, and his name was Baggins. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Hobbit*

welter

The screen responded as quickly as thought itself, and out of the welter of lines and flashes a series of pictures formed with perfect clarity. — *Philip Pullman, The Subtle Knife*

wet

I picked up the brush between my toes, wetted it in my mouth, then rubbed it on one of the paint squares—the bright blue one which I liked best. — *Christy Brown, My Left Foot*

whack

I was in my fourth year of earning a decent whack from writing, and for the first time in my life I had savings. — *Nick Hornby, 31 Songs*

what

Of course they'd all seen what dwarf molars could do to a goblin head. Not a pretty sight. — *Eoin Colfer, Artemis Fowl*

wheel

Squawking, squeaking, screeching, the flock wheeled this way and that as if to the command of some unseen choreographer. — *Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, Stormchaser*

whereabouts

A reward had been offered for information about my whereabouts and that of the slaves who had abducted me. — *Celia Rees, Pirates!*

wherefore

'Wherefore should'st thou tarry here calling to thy love, seeing she comes not to thy call?' — *Oscar Wilde, The Fisherman and his Soul*

whereof

Then when the lake was drained dry, the people whereof I speak built a mighty city on its bed. — *H. Rider Haggard, She*

whereupon

You come here recommending yourself as an interior decorator, whereupon I take you on, and what happens? — *Harold Pinter, The Caretaker*

whiff

Now, in late September, the whiff of woody decay filled the air and the squelchy carpet of leaves gave off a heady malty smell. — *James Riordan, The Prisoner*

whip

A strong wind tore through the trees whipping the branches fiercely to one side while the rain swept across their faces. — *Michelle Magorian, Goodnight Mister Tom*

whirl

For the best part of six months, Webb was a celebrity around London and his life was a whirl of regimental dinners, award ceremonies and interviews. — *Henry Brook, True Sea Stories*

whistle

Arrows thick as the rain came whistling over the battlements, and fell clinking and glancing on the stones. — *J. R. R. Tolkien, The Two Towers*

whiten

Sir John stared at the boy speechlessly while his knuckles whitened. — *John Wyndham, The Midwich Cuckoos*

whither

This gentleman treated me with kindness, and desired I would let him know what place I came from last, and whither I was bound. — *Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels*

whizz

In the time that it takes you to read this sentence a million email messages will have whizzed around the world. — *Michael Cox, The Incredible Internet*

whoosh

A late-night taxi bringing home a fare whooshed by, throwing up spray. — *Keith Gray, Warehouse*

wide

'Can a vampire come back as a ghost?' I asked, eyes wide. — *Darren Shan, Cirque du Freak*

widen

From the North Sea a keen wind blew over the shallows of Loch Fleet, where the river mouth widened. — *Kathleen Fidler, The Desperate Journey*

willowy

The door was opened by Elaine, Horst's wife, a small, willowy woman with refined features and silky blond hair pinned into a bun. — *Christopher Paolini, Eragon*

wince

David ... tiptoed down the corridor, wincing every time he stepped on a creaking floorboard. — *Anthony Horowitz, Groosham Grange*

winch

Katherine watched from her bedroom window as the ground-crew winched the airship down and the excited Engineers clustered closer. — *Philip Reeve, Mortal Engines*

wind[Ⓢ]

The trail wound, taking us round outcrops of rock, slanting down the sides of gullies to cross small streams. — *John Wyndham, The Chrysalids*

wispy

The ants were still there; their wispy antennae weaving from side to side. — *James Vance Marshall, Walkabout*

without

The great beasts roared and fought without the walls, clawed and battered at the door. — *Edgar Rice Burroughs, Pellucidar*

wizened

A little, wizened woman, evidently a slave, bent over the raised hearth, stirring the evening stew in a bronze cauldron. — *Rosemary Sutcliffe, The Eagle of the Ninth*

wonder

Have you ever wondered what you'd do if you won the lottery? — *Jacqueline Wilson, Lola Rose*

wondrous

He was wondrous to look upon, the whale rider. The water streamed away from him and he opened his mouth to gasp in the cold air. — *Witi Ihimaera, The Whale Rider*

work

I don't really smell, do I? Has my deodorant stopped working? — *Jacqueline Wilson, Girls Out Late*

I worked the clay again, drew it into the shape of a snake, pushed it all together again and made the shape of a human head. — *David Almond, Skellig*

world

Nearly everyone in the wizarding world thought Sirius a dangerous murderer and a great Voldemort supporter. — *J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

worm

I felt a homely affection for the warm security of the tent, and reluctantly wormed out of my bag to face the prospect of lighting the stove. — *Joe Simpson, Touching the Void*

wrench

The lobster had lost so many claws that, after nine had been wrenched off, its brain refused to grow any more. — *Henry Williamson, Tarka the Otter*

wrong

The only clock that can't show the wrong time is a sundial. — *Kjartan Poskitt, Murderous Maths*

yawn

In the centre yawned the circular pit from whose jaws I had escaped. — *Edgar Allan Poe, "The Pit and the Pendulum"*

yet

'Honestly, Mrs Hadley,' said Meggie McGregor, wiping her eyes. 'That sense of humour of yours will be the death of me yet!' — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

yeti

'Look, if someone had told me we were coming here to hunt a yeti, I'd have been expecting great ape, I'd have been expecting something like orang-utan.' — *Philip Gross, The Lasting*

yield

The rest of the containers, when examined, yielded nothing more exciting than three common toads, a small green viper and four weaver-birds [= a type of finch] which I did not want. — *Gerald Durrell, A Zoo in My Luggage*

young

The four young were almost fully fledged, and they fitted the nest as snugly as a completed jig-saw. — *Barry Hines, A Kestrel for a Knave*

yummy

Those yummy dumplings were stuffed with pork, chives and spring onions and were absolutely delicious! — *Adeline Yen Mah, Chinese Cinderella*

zoom

It wasn't stars she was seeing at all — just the light of stars zooming like fury to get to the earth but taking forever because it was so far to go. — *Katherine Paterson, The Same Stuff as Stars*