

BHARAT SCHOOL OF BANKING –ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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precept N. / /practical rule guiding conduct.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself" is a worthwhile precept.

precinct N. / /district or division of a city.

Ed McBain's detective novels set in the 87th precinct provide an exciting picture of police work.

precipice N. / /cliff; dangerous position.

Suddenly Indiana Jones found himself dangling from the edge of a precipice.

precipitate ADJ. / /rash; premature; hasty; sudden.

Though I was angry enough to resign on the spot, I had enough sense to keep myself from quitting a job in such a precipitate fashion.

precipitate V. /throw headlong; hasten.

The removal of American political support appears to have precipitated the downfall of the Marcos regime.

precipitous ADJ. /steep; overhasty

. This hill is difficult to climb because it is so precipitous; one slip, and our descent will be precipitous as well.

précis N. /concise summing up of main points.

Before making her presentation at the conference, Ellen wrote up a neat précis of the major elements she would cover.

precise ADJ. / /exact

. If you don't give me precise directions and a map, I'll never find your place.

preclude V. /make impossible; eliminate.

The fact that the band was already booked to play in Hollywood on New Year's Eve precluded their accepting the New Year's Eve gig in London they were offered.

precocious ADJ. / /advanced in development.

Listening to the grown-up way the child discussed serious topics, we couldn't help remarking how precocious she was. precocity, N.

precursor N. / /forerunner.

Though Gray and Burns share many traits with the Romantic poets who

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followed them, most critics consider them precursors of the Romantic Movement, not true Romantics.

predator N. / /**creature that seizes and devours another animal;**

person who robs or exploits others. Not

just cats, but a wide variety of *predators-owls*, hawks, weasels, foxcatch mice for dinner. A

carnivore is by definition predatory, for he preys on weaker creatures.

predecessor N. / /**former occupant of a post.**

I hope I can live up to the fine example set by my late predecessor in this office.

predetermine V. / /**predestine; settle or decide beforehand;** influence markedly.

Romeo and

Juliet believed that Fate had *predetermined* their meeting. Bea gathered estimates from caterers,

florists, and stationers so that she could predetermine the costs of holding a catered buffet. Philip's

love of athletics *predetermined* his choice of a career in sports marketing.

Predicament tricky or dangerous situation; dilemma.

Tied to the railroad tracks by the

villain, Pauline strained against her bonds. How would she escape from this terrible *predicament*?

predilection N. / /**partiality; preference.**

Although I have written all sorts of poetry over the years, I have a definite *predilection* for occasional verse.

predispose V. / /**give an inclination toward; make susceptible to**

. Oleg's love of dressing up his

big sister's Barbie doll may have *predisposed* him to become a fashion designer. Genetic influences

apparently predispose people to certain forms of cancer.

preeminent ADJ. / /**outstanding; superior.**

The king traveled to Boston because he wanted the

preeminent surgeon in the field to perform the operation.

preempt V. / /**head off; forestall by acting first; appropriate for oneself; supplant.**

Hoping to *preempt* any attempts by the opposition to make educational reform a hot political issue,

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the candidate set out her own plan to revitalize the public schools. preemptive, **ADJ.**

preen V. // **make oneself tidy in appearance; feel self-satisfaction.**

As

Kitty *preened* before the mirror, carefully smoothing her shining hair, she couldn't help *preening* over how pretty she looked.

prehensile ADJ. // **capable of grasping or holding.**

Monkeys use not only their arms and legs but also their prehensile tails in traveling through the trees.

prelate N. // **church dignitary.**

The archbishop of Moscow and other high-ranking prelates visited the Russian Orthodox seminary.

prelude N. // **introduction; forerunner.**

I am afraid that this border raid is the prelude to more serious attacks.

premeditate V // **plan in advance.**

She had premeditated the murder for months, reading about common poisons and buying weed killer that contained arsenic.

premise N. // **assumption; postulate**

. Based on the premise that there's no fool like an old fool, P. T. Barnum hired a ninety-year-old clown for his circus.

premonition N. // **forewarning.** We ignored these premonitions of disaster because they appeared to be based on childish fears.

preposterous ADJ. // **absurd; ridiculous.**

When he tried to downplay his youthful experiments with marijuana by saying he hadn't inhaled, we all thought, "What a preposterous excuse!"

prerogative N. // **privilege; unquestionable right.**

The president cannot levy taxes; that is the prerogative of the legislative branch of government.

presage V. // **foretell.**

The vultures flying overhead presaged the discovery of the corpse in the desert.

prescience N // **ability to foretell the future.**

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Given the current wave of Japan-bashing, it does not take prescience for me to foresee problems in our future trade relations with Japan.

presentiment N. / /feeling something will happen; anticipatory fear; premonition. Saying goodbye at the airport, Jack had a sudden *presentiment* that this was the last time he would see Jill.

prestige N /impression produced by achievements or reputation. Many students want to go to Harvard College not for the education offered but for the prestige of Harvard's name.

presumptuous ADJ. / /overconfident; impertinently bold; taking liberties . Matilda thought it was somewhat presumptuous of the young man to have addressed her without first having been introduced. Perhaps manners were freer here in the New World.

pretentious ADJ. / /ostentatious; pompous; making unjustified claims; overly ambitious. None of the other prize winners are wearing their medals; isn't it a bit pretentious of you to wear yours?

preternatural ADJ. / /beyond what is normal in nature. Malcolm's mother's total ability to tell when he was lying struck him as almost preternatural.

pretext N. excuse. He looked for a good pretext to get out of paying a visit to his aunt.

prevail V. / /induce; triumph over. He tried to prevail on her to type his essay for him.

prevalent ADJ. /widespread; generally accepted. A radical committed to social change, Reed had no patience with the conservative views prevalent in the America of his day.

prevaricate V. /lie. Some people believe that to prevaricate in a good cause is justifiable and regard such a statement as a "white lie."

prey N /target of a hunt; victim. In *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*, Euell Gibbons has as his prey not wild beasts but wild plants. also**V.**

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prim ADJ. /very precise and formal; exceedingly proper.

Many people commented on the contrast between the prim attire of the young lady and the inappropriate clothing worn by her escort.

primordial ADJ. /existing at the beginning (of time); rudimentary.

The Neanderthal Man is one of our primordial ancestors.

primp V. //groom oneself with care; adorn oneself

. The groom stood by idly while his nervous bride-to-be primped one last time before the mirror.

pristine ADJ. //characteristic of earlier times;

primitive; unspoiled. This area has been preserved in all its pristine wildness.

privation N. //hardship; want.

In his youth, he knew hunger and privation.

probe V. //explore with tools.

The surgeon *probed* the wound for foreign matter before suturing it. also **N.**

problematic ADJ. //doubtful

; unsettled; questionable; perplexing.

Given the way building costs have exceeded estimates for the job, whether the arena will ever be completed is problematic.

proclivity N /inclination; natural tendency

. Watching the two-year-old voluntarily put away his toys, I was amazed by his proclivityfor neatness.

procrastinate V. //postpone; delay or put off.

Looking at four years of receipts and checks he still had to sort through, Bob was truly sorry he had *procrastinated* for so long and not finished filing his taxes long ago.

prod V. //poke; stir up; urge.

If you prod him hard enough, he'll eventually clean his room.

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prodigal ADJ. / **wasteful; reckless with money.**

Don't be so prodigal spending my money; when you've earned some money yourself, you can waste it as much as you want! also **N.**

prodigious ADJ. / **marvelous; enormous**

. Watching the champion weight lifter heave the weighty barbell to shoulder height and then boost it overhead, we marveled at his prodigious strength.

prodigy N. / **marvel; highly gifted child.**

Menuhin was a prodigy, performing wonders on his violin when he was barely eight years old.

profane V. / **violate; desecrate; treat unworthily.**

The members of the mysterious Far Eastern cult sought to kill the British explorer because he had *profaned* the sanctity of their holy goblet by using it as an ashtray. also **ADJ.**

profligate ADJ. / **dissipated; wasteful;**

wildly immoral. Although surrounded by wild and profligate companions, she nevertheless managed to retain some sense of decency.

profound ADJ. / **deep;**

not superficial; complete. Freud's remarkable insights into human behavior caused his fellow scientists to honor him as a *profound* thinker. profundity, **N.**

profusion N. / **overabundance;**

lavish expenditure; excess. Freddy was so overwhelmed by the profusion of choices on the menu that he knocked over his wine glass and soaked his host. He made profuse apologies to his host, the waiter, the bus boy, the people at the next table, and the attendant handing out paper towels.

progenitor N. / **ancestor.**

The Roth family, whose progenitors emigrated from Germany early in the nineteenth century, settled in Peru, Illinois.

progeny N. / **children; offspring.**

He was proud of his progeny in general, but regarded George as the most promising of all his children.

prognosis N / **forecasted course of a disease;**

prediction. If the doctor's prognosis is correct, the

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patient will be in a coma for at least twenty-four hours.

projectile N. /missile.

Man has always hurled projectiles at his enemy whether in the form of stones or of highly explosive shells.

proletarian N. /member of the working class;

blue collar person. "Workers of the world, unite!

You have nothing to lose but your chains" is addressed to proletarians, not preppies. So is Blue Collar

Holler. proletariat, **N.**

proliferation N. / /rapid growth;

spread; multiplication. Times of economic hardship inevitably encourage the proliferation of countless get-rich-quick schemes. proliferate, **V.**

prolific ADJ. /abundantly fruitful.

My editors must assume I'm a prolific writer: they expect me to revise six books this year!

prolixity N. /tedious wordiness; verbosity

. A writer who suffers from prolixity tells his readers everything they never wanted to know about his subject (or were too bored to ask).

prolix, **ADJ.**

prologue N. /introduction (to a poem or play).

In the prologue to *Romeo and Juliet*,

Shakespeare introduces the audience to the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets.

prolong V. / /make longer; draw out; lengthen.

In their determination to discover ways to prolong human life, doctors fail to take into account that longer lives are not always happier ones.

prominent ADJ /conspicuous; notable; sticking out.

Have you ever noticed that Prince

Charles's *prominent* ears make him look like the big-eared character in *Mad* comics?

promiscuous ADJ. /mixed indiscriminately;

haphazard; irregular, particularly

sexually. In the opera *La Boheme*, we get a picture of the promiscuous life led by the young artists of

Paris.

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promontory N. / /headland.

They erected a lighthouse on the promontory to warn approaching ships of their nearness to the shore.

promote V. help to flourish; advance in rank;

publicize. Founder of the Children's Defense Fund, Marian Wright Edelman ceaselessly promotes the welfare of young people everywhere. 0

prompt V. / cause; provoke;

provide a cue for an actor. Whatever prompted you to ask for such a big piece of cake when you're on a diet?

promulgate V. / /proclaim a doctrine or law;

make known by official publication. When Moses came down from the mountain top all set to promulgate God's commandments, he freaked out on discovering his followers worshipping a golden calf.

prone ADJ. /inclined to; prostrate.

She was prone to sudden fits of anger during which she would lie *prone* on the floor, screaming and kicking her heels.

propagate V. /multiply; spread.

Since bacteria propagate more quickly in unsanitary environments, it is important to keep hospital rooms clean.

propellants N. / /substances that propel or drive forward.

The development of our missile program has forced our scientists to seek more powerful *propellants*.

propensity N. /natural inclination

. Convinced of his own talent, Sol has an unfortunate *propensity* to belittle the talents of others.

prophetic ADJ /foretelling the future.

I have no magical *prophetic* powers; when I predict what will happen, I base my predictions on common sense. prophesy, **V.**

propinquity N. / /nearness; kinship.

Their relationship could not be explained as being based on mere *propinquity*; they were more than relatives, they were true friends.

propitiate V. / /appease.

The natives offered sacrifices to propitiate the gods.