

The Seven Symphonies Mini-Dictionary : Updated 04.02.05

covering all text except optional sections of the lectures

[Many thanks to Jyrki Stor-Pellinen for suggesting an additional 250 words]

Br = British; Am = American; eg = for example

abduct = carry (a person) away by force

aberrant = abnormal, deviant *also* >> aberration = deviation from what is normal or expected

abomination = person, thing or idea that causes feelings of hatred and disgust

abrasions = scratches, breaking of the skin

abrasive = rough surfaced, likely to cause irritation or anger

abrupt = sudden, unexpected *also* brusque [*see below*]

absolve = excuse, pardon

abstain from = avoid, give up (*especially* something pleasurable)

abusive = intended or intending to hurt or insult

abyss = deep (perhaps bottomless) pit or hole

accommodate somebody = help somebody, respond favourably to somebody's request

accomplice = person who helps in committing a crime

accost = approach, stop and speak to somebody who would probably prefer to be left alone

accountability = being held responsible (to the rest of society) for one's actions

acquiescent = agreeing without protest

acrimony = bitterness, resentment

across-the-board = in every case

acute = extreme

adamant = unshakeable, unchangeable in opinion or purpose

à deux = (*French*) two persons together

adorn = decorate *also* adornment = decoration

adulation = very great praise and/or respect

affront = insult, personal attack

aftermath = period of time after a major event (*especially* a disastrous event)

agenda >> follow a different agenda = have one's own special (unspoken) reasons for doing something

aggravate = irritate or anger

aggregate = collection of many separate items, composite

agony = extreme pain

agrarian = (*adjective*) in connection with farms and farming

airing >> get an airing = be shown in public *also* >> "airin' 'iz G-string" = displaying his G-string (thong pants) in public: *Phillip's play on words of Bach's "Air on a G-string"*

aisle = pathway between seating areas in a church, theatre, bus, etc.

akin to = resembling

allege = claim

alleviate = lighten the mood or reduce difficulties

allotment = small plot of land (often rented) used for growing vegetables and flowers

allotted = specified, correct (place)

allowances >> make allowances for = tolerate, show understanding about

alluring = temptingly attractive

allusion = reference or comparison (to something)

ambience = atmosphere of a place

ambiguous = unclear, can be understood in more than one way

amble = walk slowly (in a relaxed manner)

amnesia = loss of memory

ampoule = small glass container for liquid medication (*especially* for injections)

amputate = surgically remove the whole or part of an arm or leg
anally retentive: *Freudian terminology referring to an adult who has failed to grow out of the second (anal) psychosexual stage of childhood and shows characteristics of excessive tidiness, meanness & stubbornness*
anecdote = amusing story (from real life)
aneurysm = leaking of blood into the brain, a stroke
angle for = fish for, try to obtain (something) by indirectly talking about it
animated = lively *also* animation = liveliness
animosity = feelings of anger or hostility
anomalous = irregular, abnormal
apoplectic = showing symptoms of an aneurysm (*see above*)
appalling = shocking, horrifying
appease = reassure, submit to somebody's demands
appellation = *unusual synonym for "name"*
apportion = distribute, share out
appraise = assess, evaluate >> appraisal = assessment, evaluation
apprehensive = nervous, worried >> apprehension = fear, worry
apprise = inform, make aware
aptitude = ability
arable = (*adjective*) relating to farmland and cultivated fields
arc = curve
archly = with affected secrecy, suggestively
ardour = passion, intense enthusiasm
arduous = demanding hard work
arm >> it cost an arm and a leg = (*slang expression*) it was extremely expensive
arousal = sexual excitement
array = an ordered collection
articulated lorry = (*Br*) lorry or truck consisting of two connected sections
a.s.a.p. = "as soon as possible"
askew = not in a straight position, twisted
aspiring = hopeful, ambitious
assailant = attacker
assertion = claim, statement
assignation = meeting (*especially* a secret one between lovers)
assimilate = take in and understand, absorb
assuage = relieve, calm down, pacify
astound = amaze, astonish
atone for = accept punishment for
atrocious = disgusting act of violence and brutality
audible = can be heard
audition = practical test of one's performing skills (in music or theatre)
Aussie = (*slang*) Australian person
austere = stern, severe, soberly serious, without lightness or humour
authenticate = show the validity or genuineness of something
autonomy = the ability to make one's own decisions
avail >> to no avail = with no success or positive result
aversion to = intense dislike for
avert one's eyes = look away
avuncular = like an uncle, friendly, helpful
awesome = powerfully impressive (even frightening)
AWOL = (*military term*) Absent Without Leave = absent without official permission
axiom = principle

back >> "keep him off my back" = "stop him bothering me"
backchat = light-hearted (i.e. not serious) exchange of small insults and jokes
backdrop = background
backhander = bribe
backlash = a sudden negative feeling or reaction after an event
back up = support
bad-mouth = criticize somebody *especially* when that person is not present
baffled = confused, not understanding
ball >> play ball = cooperate
ballistic >> go ballistic = (*slang*) lose one's temper completely
banged up = (*Br slang*) put in prison (*NB: in Am* banged up = injured)
banish = send away *especially* from the home country (as official punishment)
banister = safety rail running beside stairs or on landings (floors) between staircases
bantering = arguing in a playful manner
Bard >> the Bard = *nickname for* William Shakespeare
bardic = (*adjective*) relating to ancient Celtic poetry or story-telling
barge in = enter or arrive uninvited and unwelcome
barrage = unbroken attack (*especially* from a line of heavy guns)
barrelled = rounded in the shape of a beer or wine barrel
barren = empty and lifeless
bashful = shy, modest
bash out = perform enthusiastically but not very precisely
bask (in) = enjoy feelings of warmth or pleasure (in)
battered = damaged, dented
battering ram = metal or wooden post used to break down a door or wall
beam = smile broadly
bearing = way of holding one's body or behaving (socially)
bearings >> get one's bearings = orient oneself geographically
beckon = ask somebody to come closer by a gesture of the hand
bedlam = state of (noisy) confusion, madness
bedsit >> *short for* bed-sitting room = one room apartment
beggar belief = go beyond the limits of believability
begrudging = reluctant, agreeing against one's own wishes
beguile = fascinate, charm, entertain
belated = (unnecessarily or too) late
belittle = make something appear to have less than its true value or importance
belligerent = aggressive, looking for a fight
bellow = shout
belly = stomach
bemoan = complain about, express grief or disappointment about something
bemused = lost in thought, slightly confused or surprised
benevolent = well-wishing
bereft = deprived, suffering a loss
beside oneself = in an extremely worried state, in a panic
bestiality = brutish and depraved (sexual) behaviour
bestow = give, make a gift of (something)
beverage = hot drink
bewildered = confused, puzzled, indecisive
Bible-bashing = (*slang*) overenthusiastic proclaiming of the Bible scriptures
bicker = argue about small, unimportant matters
bid = command, order

bidding = order(s), demand(s)
bidder >> old bidder = old woman *especially* a gossip, interfering one
bide one's time = wait until a better moment (to do something)
bier = platform upon which a dead body or coffin is placed
bizarre = very weird, unusually strange
blabbermouth = person who talks too much and tells secrets or private information
bladder = bag filled with liquid, *especially* part of the body storing urine
bland = without emphasis or obvious emotion
blank out = refuse to think about (something), try to wipe (something) from one's memory
bleak = desolate, uncheerful, without hope or excitement
bleary-eyed = sleepy and unable to open one's eyes properly
blight = spoil, destroy
Blighty = (*originally World War I soldier's slang*) England
blind >> not take a blind bit of notice = completely ignore *also* >> a blind = something that hides the truth
blinder = a 'blinding' (i.e. very painful) headache (*Br slang*)
blink = fast (mainly) reflex closing and reopening of the eyes
blissful = extremely pleasurable
blitz = sudden and violent attack [*from German word: Blitzkrieg*]
bloke = (*Br slang*) man, fellow, (male) guy
blood-curdling = horrifying, terrifying
blossom = flowers (*especially* on a tree or bush)
blurt out = say something suddenly and uncontrollably
blush = turn red in the face with embarrassment
bob = bounce up and down (like an object floating on water)
bogus = false, fake, untrue
bolster = support, reinforce
bolt = to run away (like a frightened animal)
bondage = sexual practice where one partner is physically tied or bound
bonds = ties, responsibilities
bookish = spending much of one's time reading
boulder = large rock
bouncer = security guard or doorman at a bar or night-club
bounteous = plentiful, given generously
bowel = lower intestine >> bowel-loosening = very frightening
bowled over = very impressed, amazed
bow out = give up, leave the stage, admit defeat
Brahms & Liszt = 'pissed', drunk (*Cockney rhyming slang*)
brass monkeys: *reference to an informal expression about the weather*: "It's cold enough to freeze the balls (testicles) off a brass monkey!"
brawl = (rough & confused) fighting; for example a pub or bar-room brawl
brazen it out = pretend innocence in spite of obvious guilt
breach = (*verb*) break, break through; (*noun*) failure to keep trust or comply with the law
breakneck >> at breakneck speed = dangerously fast
breeding >> lack of breeding = bad manners, impoliteness
breezy = casual, care-free, cheerful
bric-a-brac = (*originally French*) a varied collection of small objects
bridle = show sudden irritation or anger
brier = thorny bush
brimstone = the chemical element sulphur (S) >> fire and brimstone = two traditional components in the sufferings of Hell
brink = absolute edge
briskly = quickly and energetically

broach >> broach the subject = introduce an important subject in the middle of a conversation
broadsheet = large-format newspaper (eg *Daily Telegraph, Herald Tribune, Helsingin Sanomat*) [*compare "tabloid" below*]
brood = think long and hard on a serious or depressing subject
bruise = hurt without breaking the skin, usually leaving a bluish mark
brunt = main force or shock of a blow or attack
brush with = short but potentially unpleasant or dangerous meeting with
brusque = short & sharp, close to impolite (in behaviour or speech)
buddy = (*slang*) friend
buff-coloured = pale brown, fawn
buffet = repeatedly knock or strike (like wind buffeting a boat)
bug = (*slang*) bacteria, virus *also* fault or mistake in a computer programme *also* a small hidden microphone used for secret surveillance
bugger off = (*taboo swear words*) go away, leave
buggy = small, collapsible children's pram
bulge = swell, stick out
bulk = size
bulldroppings >> *Sirén's own version of "bullshit"* = nonsense, spoken or written rubbish
bully = hurt someone in one's power or weaker than oneself *also* a person who bullies others
bunker = underground, reinforced concrete shelter during a time of war >> bunker down = install oneself in a safe place and be ready to resist attack
buoyant = high spirited, in a cheerful mood
burden = weight, heavy responsibility
burgeoning = growing rapidly
burly = heavily built and strong
busybody = interfering person
butter >> butter wouldn't melt in her mouth = *expression describing a sweet & innocent-looking girl who may, in fact, be just the opposite*
buxom = (of women) plump and curvaceously attractive
buzz = (*slang*) excitement, thrill

cagey = secretive, holding back information
cajole = coax [*see below*]
camp = (*slang adjective*) exaggeratedly effeminate or gay in manner
cantilevered = projecting (sticking out) and turning about one end
capricious = unpredictable in thought and behaviour
career = [verb] to move quickly in an uncontrolled manner
carouse = (*old-fashioned word*) drink (alcohol) freely (and usually excessively) with a group of friends
carrion bird = bird that eats the rotting flesh of dead animals
cartilage = tough material found mainly at the joints between bones
carzey (*Br slang*) = toilet, WC, (*Am equivalent* = *bathroom or john*)
case out = study (a place) from a distance intending to (break in and) steal from it
cataclysmic = catastrophic, disastrous
catch somebody out = (*Br*) notice somebody's attempt to hide mistakes or dishonesty
catholic = wide ranging, all-inclusive
caution >> throw caution to the wind = take a risk
ceilidh = Irish or Scottish informal gathering with folk-music, dance & story-telling
Celtophile = lover of the Celts and/or Celtic culture
censorious = strongly critical (of somebody's behaviour)
cerebral palsy >> often referred to as CP
chafed = sore from repeated rubbing
chaperone = escort, accompany a young woman as 'moral watchdog'

char = (*Br slang*) tea
charade = absurdly false and pointless performance or situation
charitable = generous
charlatan = person who falsely claims to have knowledge or skills (*especially* medical)
charred = burnt, blackened by burning
chaste = pure, non-sexual, innocent
chat up = start a conversation with a stranger hoping it will lead to a future sexual relationship (*Am equivalent* = "hit on")
check >> in check = under control
cheeky = (*Br*) disrespectful, shameless
cherchez la femme: (*French*) literally "seek the woman"; meaning "there is a woman somewhere in the background of this situation or story". *Phillip follows this up with: la femme cherchée*= the woman who is sought
cherish = hold dear, have tender feelings for
cheroot = a cigar with both ends square-cut
Cheshire cat: *cat from Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland famous for its very wide smile*
chest >> get something off one's chest = tell somebody one's personal worries or guilty feelings
chest-cuirass = metal or leather armour protecting the chest
chide = criticise somebody's behaviour in a gentle, parental way
chink = small crack >> chink in one's armour = one's weak or vulnerable spot
chitchat = unimportant (perhaps even time-wasting) conversation
chore = boring everyday task
chuck = (*slang*) throw
chuckle = laugh softly
chummy = friendly
churlish = impolite, unfriendly
churn = stir in a violent, agitated manner
ciggy = cigarette (*Br slang*)
circumspect = cautious and discreet [*see 'discreet' below*]
circumscribe = draw around, move around
circumstantial evidence = indirect evidence suggesting but not fully proving guilt
cirrus (clouds) = high altitude delicately banded clouds
citadel = central part of a town surrounded by defensive walls, fortified town
clairvoyance = ability to see or understand without using the normal five senses
clamber = climb awkwardly with both hands and feet
clamour for = ask for or demand noisily
clamped = strongly fixed or attached
claustrophobia = fear of small enclosed spaces >> claustrophobic = causing feelings of claustrophobia
clemency = mercy
clenched = pressed tightly together
clinging = overdependent, demanding attention *also* cling to = hold on to (desperately)
cloak-and-dagger = secretive *especially* in connection with spying & espionage
clobber >> get clobbered = (*slang*) be defeated, experience bad fortune
clogs >> pop one's clogs = (*lighthearted slang*) die
closet Christian >> *Miranda's invention paralleling the idiom "closet gay"* = someone who keeps their homosexuality a secret
closure = reaching the end of an emotionally difficult process, acceptance of a painful loss
clutch = grip or hold tightly
cluttered = overfilled, crowded
coax = manipulate somebody with gentle persuasion
cobwebs = old dusty spiders' webs
cock an eyebrow = raise an eyebrow

cocky = irritatingly self-confident, arrogant
coitus = sexual intercourse
collar = (*slang*) arrest made by a police officer
colonnade = row of evenly spaced columns
colossal = enormous
comatose = deeply unconscious
comebacks = unpleasant consequences
commendable = deserving praise
commiserate = express sympathy
commission = work of art ordered in advance
common or garden = ordinary, normal, common
commune with = share or exchange thoughts and/or feelings with
compassion = sympathy for another's suffering
compel = force
compliant = ready to agree, not resisting
complicit = actively involved
composed = calm and relaxed
compunction = feeling reluctance or guilt
concede = admit validity or truth (of something)
conciliatory = done to rebuild trust or goodwill
concoct = invent, create (artificially) from many different ingredients
concur = agree
condescension = behaving towards someone as if they were less intelligent or important
condom = rubber sleeve worn by a man during sexual intercourse
confectionery = sweets, chocolate, etc
confessional = small cubicle in a church for sitting and confessing one's sins to a priest
confide in (or to) somebody = tell somebody (in trust) one's personal or private matters
conflagration = large and destructive fire
confluence point = place where things meet or flow together
confrontation = face-to-face meeting *especially* of a difficult or argumentative type
conjure up = create by magic
consensus = widely held opinion or agreement
consequence >> of consequence = of importance
consolation = comfort
consort with = (old-fashioned) keep company with, date, have dealings with
conspicuous = very noticeable
conspiratorial = as if sharing secret information or goals
consuming passion = fully (or obsessively) occupying enthusiasm
consummation = completion, fulfillment; legal confirmation of a marriage by the act of sexual intercourse
contempt = feelings of extreme dislike and lack of respect *for somebody* >> contemptuous = showing contempt
contender = competitor, suitable alternative
contentious = argumentative, quarrelsome
contrapuntal = adjective from 'counterpoint' [*see below*]
contrite = extremely sorry, very apologetic, ashamed, filled with guilt
converging = (of two objects) moving in two lines towards the same point
convey = communicate, show, transport
convoy = a group of vehicles travelling together
coop = chicken house >> flown the coop = escaped
cordon off = surround an area to prevent movement in or out of it
Corgi and Bess >> *Phillip's wordplay on the opera "Porgy & Bess": Bess is a nickname for Elizabeth, and Phillip refers to Elizabeth Windsor's (Queen Elizabeth II's) love of corgi dogs*

corroboration = supporting evidence
corruption = dishonesty, vice, immorality, wickedness
couched in = hidden in, expressed indirectly by
counterpoint = (in music) the art of combining one or more melodies simultaneously
covert = secret, hidden
covetous = greedy and envious
cower = move back and lower one's head defensively as a response to fear or attack
coy = playfully modest or shy
cracker = (*Br slang*) very attractive young woman
cramped = tight, with little room to move
crampons and ice picks = mountaineer's climbing equipment
crane one's neck = twist one's head round and upward to look at something high and to the side
crank = odd person *especially* one with unusual or strange opinions
crave = greatly desire *also* cravings = strong desires
crawl >> pub crawl = visiting a number of pubs in sequence in the same evening
creaky = making harsh high-pitched sounds, old and stiff
crease = line or wrinkle in the skin from age or when smiling or grimacing
credence = belief, believability
creepy = disturbing, frightening, ghostly
cretin = person considered to be very stupid
crime passionel = (*French*) crime of passion: *motivated by strong emotions like jealousy or hate*
cringe = take up a defensive (and cowardly) body position when attacked *also* react inwardly to feelings of shame or embarrassment
crippling = paralyzing, seriously weakening
critical mass = minimum amount of enriched uranium needed to start a nuclear reaction
critters = *cowboy language for "creatures"*
croak = rough-edged voice or sound *typically* describing that of a crow or frog
crony = longstanding friend or companion
crook = bend, curve
croon = sing in a soft, low voice
crouch = squat down on one's feet with knees bent and body leaning forward
crucial = of first importance, vital
crumbling = falling into small pieces
crumple = collapse, fold, bend or squeeze roughly
crux = most important or vital point
cryptic = not obvious in meaning, as if in secret code
cuirass >> *see* chest-cuirass
cul-de-sac = dead end
culinary = (*adjective*) in connection with cooking
culprit = guilty person
cumulative = gradually building up, increasing in size or intensity by a steady series of steps
cunning = cleverness at tricking or fooling others (*like the fox in traditional stories*)
cups >> in one's cups = (*old-fashioned, Shakespearean expression*) drunk
curdle >> blood-curdling = causing extreme fear
curlew = large waterside bird with long legs and long curved bill: *Numenius*
cursory = quick and with little interest or concentration
curtail = cut short, bring to an end
curtly = using very few words; rudely or abruptly
custody >> in custody = held by the police
cutie = a cute, attractive young woman
cut >> can't cut it = can't manage, not strong enough *also* >> cut out to be = destined to be, capable of being

dab = touch gently and repeatedly on the surface to apply or remove something
dais = small stage upon which a speaker or lecturer might stand
dally = act in an amorous or flirtatious way
damsel in distress = young woman in danger *especially* in romantic fairy stories
dandified = dressed with extreme (even exaggerated) concern for one's appearance
dangle = hang loose, hang freely
dark >> leave (somebody) in the dark = hold back information (from somebody)
dash = rush >> dashing = stylish & impressive
dastardly deed = [*old-fashioned expression*] dishonourable act
daunting = discouraging
debris = objects (of little value) remaining or no longer needed
décolletage = very low cut (of a dress or blouse)
deadpan = expressing little or nothing, poker-faced
deal >> a big deal = (*slang*) very important matter
deceptive = easy to misunderstand or mistake for something else
deciduous tree = tree which drops its leaves in the autumn
deem = judge, consider
defame = damage a person's reputation or good name
deference = respect for a superior >> deferential = showing respect for a superior
defiant = boldly resistant (*especially* against authority)
defile = make dirty or unholy
deft = skilful *especially* with the fingers or hands
defunct = no longer used or useful
degenerate = immoral, corrupt
dehydrated = dried out, lacking water content
deity = god
delegate = pass a task onto someone with a lower position (in a firm, organization, etc)
delirium = state of mental excitement and confusion (*as brought on, for example, by a high fever*)
demijohn = large bottle with short narrow neck and glass handles
demise = death
demure = modest, reserved, quiet
den = small cozy room used (for example) for relaxing in private or pursuing a hobby
dent = small area of a surface pushed in by force
depravity = moral corruption
deranged = mad, insane
derisive = making fun of, showing no respect for
de rigueur = (*French*) required by fashion
desecrator = person who damages something sacred or beautiful
deserts >> just deserts = appropriate punishment
desolation = extreme unhappiness, despair or empty & inhospitable scenery, wilderness
despicable = disgusting, contemptible
despondent = sad and without hope
desultory = restless, jumping from one thing to another, unmethodical, disconnected
detachment = feeling of distance (from something; or even from reality)
detain = delay somebody or keep somebody in custody (*see above*)
détente = relaxing of tension typically between two (unfriendly) countries
deter = discourage, persuade from doing something
devastated = overcome by shock and/or grief
devoid of = lacking
devour = eat up hungrily
dexterity = great skill *especially* with the fingers; *derived from Latin word for "right hand"*
diatribe = bitter and/or violent criticism

digital = relating to numerical calculation-based (i.e. computer-based) technology; *derived from word "digit" meaning "finger", as in 'counting with one's fingers'*

dilapidated = in bad condition

dilemma = difficult (almost impossible) situation

dilettante = enthusiastic but non-practising follower of the arts (*usually* without professional training)

dire = urgent, fearful, dangerous, potentially disastrous

disarray = untidiness, confusion

discernible = visible, recognizable

disconcerting = disturbing, weakening one's confidence

disconsolate = unhappy, miserable, very disappointed

discreet = careful to keep a secret, avoiding unnecessary social embarrassment

discrepancy = something which does not fit or match as expected

discrete = separate, single and distinct

disdain = feelings of superiority and dislike, contempt, scorn

disenchanted = disillusioning, disappointing one's initial feelings of interest or enthusiasm

disfigure = spoil or damage something's beauty

disgruntled = irritated and complaining

dishevelled = untidy

dish out = serving, handing out >> dish it out = (*slang*) punish

dishy = (*Br*) highly attractive, sexy

disjointed >> [*see 'nose' below*]

dismayed = unpleasantly surprised

dismiss = not take seriously, reject

disparaging = considering something to have little worth or value, scornful

dispel = send or drive (something) away

dispense with = leave out, not bother with

disperse = scatter, leave in many directions, disappear gradually

dispirited = discouraged, depressed

dissuade = persuade someone not to do something

distorted = twisted or bent out of shape

distract = direct someone's attention elsewhere

distraction >> drive somebody to distraction = make somebody desperate and/or frustrated

distraught = extremely upset and worried

distressing = extremely upsetting, emotionally painful

divergence = difference from an earlier case or situation

diversionary = intended to take attention away from something

do = (*Br*) party, social gathering

docile = quiet and lacking energy or initiative

don = put on (clothes)

dormant = sleeping, waiting to be reactivated

dote upon = be excessively fond of

double-bluff = attempt to trick somebody into believing something by indicating the opposite

doubting Thomas = sceptic [*referring to the apostle Thomas who demanded physical proof before believing in Christ's resurrection*]

drab = dull, lacking colour or excitement

draught = preliminary written sketch or version; amount of liquid taken in one swallow; beer stored in in and served from a barrel

drawl = speak slowly and lazily

drawn (face) = tired and ill looking *especially* as a result of worry, grief or sickness

draw out = extend, make longer >> drawn out = continuing longer than expected or originally planned

dread = fear mixed with horror

dregs = last remaining (*especially* unappetizing) drops of a drink

drench = soak, make completely wet
drift >> get my drift = understand what I'm implying or suggesting
drool = salivate like a dog at the sight of food
drown my [magic] book: *Phillip is quoting from Prospero's epilogue in Shakespeare's The Tempest*
drudgery = boring, repetitive tasks
druidic >> of the druidic persuasion: *Phillip refers to the Celtic druid religion (i.e. 'persuasion') as a way of suggesting that Miranda & Nick are Welsh*
dub = give a name or nickname
dubious = doubtful, unlikely
duck out = avoid one's duties or responsibilities (when inconvenient)
dumb = unable to speak
dumbfounded = struck dumb, surprised and confused
dumpy = short and rather fat
duplicity = dishonesty, deception
dusky = rather dark
dwell on something = think (or worry) very much about something
dwindle = gradually get less and less
dysfunction = (medical) abnormal or faulty working of part of the body

earnest = serious, intense
earshot >> out of earshot = too far away to be heard >> in/within earshot = close enough to be heard
ease = move carefully and deliberately *also* >> with ease = easily
eaves = underside edges of a pointed roof
ebb = flow away or out of, lessen in intensity
eccentric = individual in an unusual or peculiar way
ecological niche = stable status or position (in the natural world) occupied by a particular plant or animal species
edge >> set one's teeth on edge = make one feel very uncomfortable or irritated
edgy = restless, nervous
eerie = disturbingly mysterious or ghostly
effervescent = bubbling
eke out = make a limited amount of something last as long as possible
elements >> the elements = forces of the weather or climate
elephant >> white elephant = something of little use or value to its owner
elated = in a state of great happiness
elevate = raise, lift
elicit = draw out, bring to light
eloquence = ability to speak expressively and persuasively
elusive = difficult to find or catch
emancipate = set free
embark on = begin
embellish = ornament, add decorative detail
embody = show (an abstract idea) in physical form
embossed = [*here it means*] with text moulded to rise in relief above the natural surface of the paper
emerge = appear, come out
enact = live out
encamp = set up camp, establish a temporary home
encroach = spread beyond the normal (or normally accepted) limits
endearing = loveable
endeavour = try, attempt
endorsement = support, agreement with, statement (often by an expert or by somebody famous) praising something

endow = provide (as a gift)
engrossed in = totally focused on, absorbed in, or concentrating on (*something*)
enhance = further improve, make (computer images) clearer
enigmatic = mysterious, difficult to understand or explain
enliven = make more lively or interesting
en masse = in a large group
enormity = act of great evil
enraptured = delighted
ensuing = following, succeeding
entice = tempt, draw on by exciting hope or desire
entwined = wound or wrapped tightly together
envisage = imagine, create a mental picture of something
epitaph = words remembering a dead person, for example on a tomb stone; final judgement on a person's life
err = make a mistake, behave incorrectly >> errant = mistaken, behaving in an unacceptable way, taking a wrong path or direction; wandering in search of adventure and romance
erstwhile = former, earlier but not any longer
erudite = scholarly, carefully researched
escalate = rapidly increase in seriousness
escapade = adventure *especially* a light-hearted one
espouse = support or promote
euphoric = highly elated, in a joyful state of mind
evade = avoid (capture)
evasion = avoidance of telling the truth or of facing difficulties >> *evasive is the adjective form*
evocative = stimulating the senses & the imagination, and recalling memories from the past
exasperation = irritated frustration
excessively = too much
exhale = breathe out
exhilarating = bringing pleasure, excitement and a sense of energy
expansiveness = talking at length in a relaxed and friendly manner on a subject of general interest to everyone present
expat >> short for expatriate = person living in a foreign country
exploit = notable action or adventure
exposure = having one's crimes or wrongdoings made public or more widely known;
expound = talk at length
extinguish = put out (a fire)
extort = force money from somebody by means of threats >> extortionate price = excessively high price
extremis >> *in extremis = (Latin) at the point of death*
extricate = escape from, get out of (*a difficult or awkward situation*)
exuberancy = happy high spirits and vitality
exultant = extremely happy about one's success

fable = (fairy) story with a hidden message (*usually* concerning morality)
fabricate = construct (an explanation or story) *especially* one which is false or untrue
facetious = ironically humorous *especially* in a stupid or inappropriate manner
faeces = medical word for excrement (i.e. 'shit!' >> *see "fan" below*)
fall guy = (*slang*) scapegoat, person who takes the blame for another's crime
fallible = capable of making mistakes
falter = hesitate in uncertainty, lose strength or vitality
fan >> the faeces will hit the fan = *Sirén's own version of the common expression: "the shit will hit the fan"*
= "there will be serious consequences"
fantastical = Shakespearean-period word meaning "eccentric"

far-fetched = unlikely, hard to believe
far-flung = far away, remote
fathom = understand *also* measurement of depth (most often in water) = 1.829 metres
fatigue = great tiredness
faux pas = (originally *French*) saying the wrong thing *especially* in social contexts
fawn over somebody = seek attention from somebody *especially* by use of excessive flattery
feasible = practicable, possible, believable
feign = pretend, act out
felon = criminal
feral = like a wild animal, living by instinct (*especially of* domesticated animals that have escaped into the wild)
ferment = state of stormy or frenzied excitement
fester = suffer slow-acting but prolonged infection, suffer chronic bitterness or irritation
fête = entertain (somebody) with much honour and respect
fiddle = informal word for violin [*often suggesting a less professional instrument*]
fiddle with = handle restlessly and with no obvious point
fidgety = unable to keep still
field = (*verb*) catch, pick up, receive, answer (a question or complaint), handle, deal with; (*noun*) area of farming land, area for sport or games, area of knowledge or expertise, range of possibilities
figure = be or appear significant
file out = leave in an orderly queue
fin de siècle = (*French*) end of the (19th) century
fine-tooth comb >> with a fine-tooth comb = intensively and with regard to the smallest details
finger post = (*Br*) signpost indicating direction with a pointing finger or hand
fitting = appropriate
fix = routine dosage *especially* of injected heroin or similar drugs
fixate on = become obsessed with, focus on (something) while forgetting everything else
flagrant = openly and unashamedly shocking, outrageous
flakiness = (*slang*) silliness, absurd eccentricity
flair = talent
flamboyant = showy, colourful, theatrical
flaming = attractive patterns formed by the wood grain on the surface of a violin's (viola's, etc) body
flammable = catching fire easily
flank = border
flare up = become suddenly angry
flash = (*slang*) expose one's sexual organs in public
flatly = *spoken* with little expression or feeling
flatter = praise somebody's beauty or talents (perhaps dishonestly to manipulate or gain an advantage)
flaunt = display something (or oneself) with excessive pride
flawed = containing serious faults or mistakes
flawless = without faults or mistakes
flecked = coloured or spotted here and there
fleeting = brief, soon over
flicker = quick movement backwards and forwards, short flash of light
flinch = make an uncontrollable movement in response to pain, fear or shock
flip = (*slang*) go mad, lose one's mental balance
flippant = inappropriately lighthearted or humorous
flirtatious = playfully suggesting sexual invitation
flit >> do a flit = (*Br slang*) leave suddenly, escape
floodgate = a gate or barrier used to control or stop the flow of water in a river or canal
florid = ornamented or decorated to an extreme degree
fluke = unlikely event happening by chance

flustered = confused, slightly in a panic
flutter = move quickly and lightly up and down
fob off = (*Br*) discourage an approach by somebody (with excuses or lies)
foetal position = in the position of a growing embryo with raised knees and bent arms
foil = fool, trick, prevent an opponent from winning
folly = foolishness, stupidity
fondle = touch and caress *especially* in an erotic manner
foppish = (of men) excessively concerned with one's own fashionable appearance
forecourt = open area in front of a building *eg* in front of a service station
foreordained = decided beforehand by 'fate'
foreplay = sexual stimulation before full intercourse
foreshadow = suggest or be similar to something (*usually* unwelcome) which will happen in the future
forfeit = give up, lose
forthright = direct and honest in manner
foul-up = mess caused by bad handling of a situation
frail = physically weak and delicate
frayed = torn at the edges
freckles = small brownish (melanin pigmented) spots on the skin
free'n'easy wiv [London accent] >> free and easy with = generous with
fretful = troubled
frill = luxurious extra
fringe = edge
frisson = (*originally French*) shudder, shiver, thrill
froth = foam, mass of tiny bubbles (in a liquid)
frugal = very economical, un wasteful
fruitcake = (*Br slang*) mad or eccentric person
fruition = maturity, successful completion
frumpish = lacking in fashionable taste or elegance
fucksake >> for fucksake! = *taboo swear word version of* for heaven's sake!
fugitive = person trying to avoid capture
Full marks! = Congratulations (for being 100% correct)!
full tilt = maximum speed
fumble (with something) = handle (something) in a clumsy manner
fuming = very angry
furnace = very hot fire or oven (*eg* for smelting iron or firing ceramics)
fuss = (*noun*) unnecessarily busy or excited activity >> fuss over = (*verb*) bother somebody with unwanted (though well-meaning) attention

gaffer tape = heavy, silver-coloured adhesive tape
gaga = crazy
gagged = having one's mouth tightly covered or bound to prevent speaking or shouting
gag for something = (*Br*) be desperate to get something *especially* sexual satisfaction
game for = ready for
gamut = range
garbled = spoken quickly and unintelligibly
garrotte = strangle (*especially* with a wire noose)
gasp = breathe violently, struggle for breath *or* sudden intake of breath
gauge = measure
gawk = stare in a stupid manner
geezer = (*Br? slang*) slightly eccentric (usually old) man
gen = gen(eral information) (*Br*)
genial = cheerful, easy-going

get away with (something) = escape detection or punishment (of/for something)
get off (on something) = get high (on drugs), reach orgasm (by some means)
ghoulish = fascinated by death and dead bodies
gibber = make unintelligible noises (resembling monkey calls)
gibe = tease, joke
giggle = laugh repeatedly and nervously in a girlish manner >> giggle one's head off = giggle vigorously or uncontrollably
gingerly = cautiously *especially* in fear of pain
girder = large and strong metal beam acting as a support in a building structure
girth = measurement around something (*especially* around a person's waist)
glade = pleasant open area inside a forest
glean = obtain information by careful and lengthy study
gleeful = delighted, merry
glitch = malfunction, error in the workings of an electrical system
gloating = expressing or feeling satisfaction at someone else's misfortune
gloom = near darkness *also* gloomy = dark and depressing
Gloucestershire = county in western England
gnawing = biting repeatedly
gnome >> garden gnome = plaster or concrete fairy or gnome-like figure used to 'decorate' gardens
go >> have a go = try
goad = tease maliciously
gobble up = eat greedily
gobsmacked = (*slang*) totally amazed
goings-on = (*slang*) suspicious or (possibly) immoral actions or events
goody-goody = excessively well-behaved and virtuous person
gossip = talk excessively about other people's business
grace = God's love and forgiveness
gracile = gracefully thin or slender
graft = (*Br slang*) work
graphic = clearly and precisely visible, expressed strongly in a visual form
grasping = greedy (with regard to money and possessions)
grate = irritate
gratified = pleased, satisfied *also* gratification = pleasure, satisfaction
gratuitous = unnecessary and without proper cause
graveyard humour = black or disturbing humour
grief = extreme sadness for example at the death of a loved one *also* (*slang*) confusion, problems, distress
grimace = pull a face, make a strong facial expression
gripe = moan, complain
grisly = horrifying, disturbingly ugly *also* (of hair colour; often spelt 'grizzly') = rather grey
groomed >> well-groomed = tidily and carefully cleaned and brushed
grope = (*slang*) touch or fondle another person's body for one's own sexual pleasure
grotesque = strange in an unpleasant or ugly way
ground >> go to ground = find a safe hiding place
gruesome = inspiring horror and disgust
guard >> off guard = unprepared >> lower one's guard = show one's true feelings or thoughts
guarded = cautious, wary, hiding one's true opinions
gunwale = the top side edges of a boat
gurgle = make a sound like water flowing down a drain; for example: a small baby's laughter
gut = stomach
gut feeling = instinctive feeling or belief
gutsy = boldly enthusiastic
gutter = channel at edge of road where rain water collects and flows

hacksaw = carpenter's tool *especially* for sawing harder or metal objects
hag-ridden = harassed by a woman or witch >> "hag-ride" *seems to be a newly invented verb based on the normal adj. form*
hairy = (*slang*) scary, frightening
hallowed = sacred, holy
haltingly = uncertainly, hesitantly
ham-fisted = clumsy
hang >> get the hang of = become familiar with, begin to understand
hang with = (*slang*) spend time with
haphazard = unplanned and without clear logic
harangue = shout angry complaints
harass = persistently or repeatedly bother, attack or question
Harpy = Greek mythical monster, half woman half bird of prey
hassle = (*slang*) trouble, bother
haunt = (*noun*) a place where one regularly spends time; (*verb*) continually trouble somebody's thoughts
haven = safe harbour, place of comfort and security
hazardous = dangerous
haze = misty conditions or appearance *often* caused by heat or hot weather
head off = set off, begin a journey; *also see* giggle or laugh one's head off
heart-rending = causing great emotional pain
heed >> pay heed to = consider carefully
heels >> head over heels = totally in love *also* hot on the heels of = immediately behind
helping = portion of food
hem = sown-over edge of a piece of clothing
herald = precede, bring in, announce
hermetically sealed = closed without access to the outside air, airtight
hideaway = hiding place
hideous = horrifyingly ugly
hidey-hole = hiding place
hilarious = very funny
hindsight = knowledge or understanding gained after the event
hit it off = get on well, have a good relationship (with somebody)
hit the sack = (*slang*) go to sleep, go to bed
honours >> do the honours = perform an action on behalf of the whole group (of people present)
hooch = illegally made alcoholic spirit
hoof = foot of certain animals *eg* a horse >> "on the hoof" = while walking
hook >> off the hook = no longer suspected *also* 'engaged' (with land-line telephones)
hooker = (*slang*) prostitute
horny = (*slang*) sexually aroused
hotchpotch = jumbled or confused mixture
hubbub = noisy confusion
hubby = informal word for "husband"
huddle = gather together in a close group; move closer towards somebody to gain comfort
hue = colour
humiliation = experiencing great shame
hung up = (*slang*) upset, obsessed
hyped up = (*slang*) excited
hyperbolically = with exaggeration, unnecessarily complicated
hypodermic syringe = needle for injecting liquid beneath the skin
hypostasis = settling of blood in the body after death

idiosyncratic = individual, uniquely original
ignite = set alight, start (something) burning
ill-starred = unlucky, opposed by fate
illustrious = distinguished, deservedly famous
imbibe = old-fashioned expression for "drink (alcohol)"
imitation = [*music*] compositional technique where melodies from one part or voice in the texture are systematically repeated in other parts or voices
immaculate = perfect, spotlessly tidy
immediacy = strongly direct feeling or experience
imminent = just about to happen
immoderate = going too far in terms of what is healthy or morally acceptable
immutable = unchangeable, permanent
impair = reduce effectiveness or usefulness
impassive = calm, not showing obvious emotion
impending = soon to happen
imperceptible = not noticeable, too small or insignificant to notice
impersonation = imitation of another person's (*especially* a famous person's) voice and mannerisms
impervious = cannot be penetrated (*especially* by water)
impetuosity = behaving in a spontaneous manner without fully thinking of the consequences
impish = playful, mischievous (like a small mischievous sprite or fairy)
implacable = unforgiving
impoverished = extremely poor, penniless
impressionist = artist employing the stylistic characteristics of impressionism *also* comedian or actor who mimics other (in particular famous) people's voices, facial expressions, etc.
improper = immoral >> impropriety = unethical or immoral behaviour
incandescent = glowing like a hot flame
incarceration = being locked up in prison
incisive = cutting
incompatible with = cannot fit together with or coexist with
incorporeality = lacking solid physical form
incredulous = unbelieving, refusing to believe
increment = an increase
incriminating = showing evidence of criminal behaviour
indelible = impossible to erase or remove
indifferent = having little or no interest (in something)
indignity = embarrassment, loss of one's sense of self-worth or self-esteem
indiscretion = mistaken or inappropriate action, giving away of secret or private information [*also see* "discreet"]
indisposition = mild (not serious) illness
indisputable = impossible to disagree with
indomitable = not easily defeated, courageous
indulge = be patient with, spoil (a person)
inert = not moving, lifeless *also* inertia = lack of energy or motivation
inexorable = unstoppable
in extremis = (*Latin*) in desperate circumstances, at the point of death
infatuation = immature (and usually short-lived) feelings of love (for somebody)
infirmity = illness, physical weakness or disability
inflict = force *something* on an unwilling person *especially* pain or suffering
infringe on = encroach on [*see above*]
in for >> "he's got it in for you" = "he wants to make trouble for you"
infuriating = extremely irritating
ingenious = cleverly designed

ingenuous = innocent, naive
ingest = eat or drink
ingratiating = consciously try to get oneself liked or favoured by another person *especially* a person of higher status
iniquity = wickedness
initiative = ability to begin or carry through something
inkling = slight suggestion or suspicion
innards = insides; stomach, intestines, etc.
innate = present at birth, inborn
inscrutable = mysterious, difficult to analyse or understand
insinuate = get oneself gradually and cleverly into a situation *usually* for personal advantage
insolence = disrespectful behaviour
insubstantial = of little weight, flimsy [*see above*]
integrity = honesty, high-morality
intemperance = lack of self-control
intently = with much concentration
intercept = catch or stop somebody on their way to somewhere
interminable = (almost unbearably) never-ending
intermingle = mix together
intersect = cross paths
intervene = come between two people arguing, step in to handle a problem
intimidate = threaten, discourage, weaken another person's self-confidence
intricate = cleverly complicated
intriguing = fascinating
intruder = someone who enters a home or building uninvited
invulnerable = impossible to harm or defeat
ire = anger
iridescent = glowing, bright
irksome = irritating, boring, tedious
irreverent = lacking respect (*especially* in a religious context)
issue forth = (*old-fashioned, very formal*) come out, emerge
'istory, etc >> *London accent features: 'h' sound dropped from beginnings of words. Examples: 'iz = his; 'im = him; 'izself = himself; 'e = he; 'e'd 'ad = he'd had; 'az = has; 'iccups = hiccups; 'ole = whole; 'Andel = Handel; 'ard = hard; an 'undred = a hundred; 'ammered = hammered; 'th' sound becomes 'f' or 'v'. Examples: wiv = with; anuvver = another; fings = things; muvver = mother; the word 'wot' in the text represents "what" in situations where 'who' or 'that' would generally be considered more 'grammatical'.*

jammed = squeezed *also* stuck
jarring = disturbing or painful to the ears (or other senses)
jeopardize = put in danger *also* >> double jeopardy = (*in law*) being tried in court a second time for the same crime
jerry-built = built in a hurry and with inferior materials
jest >> in jest = joking
jettison = throw away, get rid of
jetty = wooden structure projecting into the water where boats can dock
jibe [*alternative spelling of 'gibe': see above*]
jinx = evil spirit bringing bad luck
jittery = nervous, restless
job on hand = present job, job now needing attention
jocular vein >> *Adrian's play on words: jocular = humorous or joking & "in a jocular vein" = "in a humorous style or manner"; meanwhile jugular vein = large vein in the neck that returns blood from*

the head to the heart; *also* "go for the jugular" = strongly attack the enemy's weakest spot
john = (*Br slang*) prostitute's customer
joint >> [*see 'nose' below*]
jolly along = to encourage in a cheerful way (*Br*)
Jolly hockey sticks! : (*old-fashioned*) supposedly upper-class schoolgirl's expression = "How nice!" [*Now usually used sarcastically.*]
jolt = sudden bump or shock
jot = write down quickly for future reference
jowl >> heavily jowled = with a sagging, over-fleshy jaw line
joy rider = person (*usually* adolescent) who steals a car for the excitement of driving it (often dangerously)
judgemental = making critical judgements about another person's behaviour
juggler = performer who throws and catches several objects at the same time
just >> the just = those who behave justly towards others >> just deserts = appropriate punishment
kerb = raised edge of pedestrian pavement next to the road
kick-start = start (something) decisively [*like kick-starting a motorbike with the foot*]
kid or kiddy = child
killjoy = person who prevents or discourages others from enjoying themselves
kindred spirit = person with whom one feels great empathy
kit = set of components from which something may be built or constructed
knocking-shop = (*Br slang*) brothel
knockout = extremely impressive person, thing or event

laboured = overdone, exaggerated
laden = weighed down, burdened
ladle = large spoon or bowl-shaped tool for transferring liquids *eg water or soup* >> ladleful = amount of liquid contained in a ladle
lads >> the lads = a man's group of male friends or acquaintances (*e.g. in a pub, sports club, etc*)
landing = floor or corridor at the top of stairs or between two flights of stairs
Land of Song = common nickname for Wales (*referring to the Welsh nation's fame for having excellent singing voices*)
lank = long and hanging straight (possibly untidy, even dirty)
lapels = folded sides of a jacket continuing down from the collar
large >> at large = in general
largo = slow and dignified piece >> Handel's largo = *instrumental piece based on his Aria Ombra mai fù and* >> "largo louts" is a play on words from the slang expression: "lager louts" = drunk, rowdy and aggressive young men (*especially* those on holiday abroad)
lascivious = exciting sexual desire
lashes = strokes of a whip
latch onto = attach oneself to, take (mental) hold of
latent = possessing unused potential, dormant
laugh >> have the last laugh = get one's revenge >> laugh one's head off = laugh vigorously or uncontrollably
launch = begin, set in motion
lavish = available in large, generous amounts
lead = electric cable or wire *also* direction or clue to be followed up in an investigation
leak >> go for a leak = (*slang*) urinate
lean times = periods of time with little food or resources
learned = educated, well-read, knowledgeable
lectern = speaker's or lecturer's upright desk (for keeping papers and lecture notes)
ledge = narrow shelf or strip attached to a wall
legacy = gift made according to a will (i.e. last testament)
legion = (adjective) numerous, large in number

leech after = lust after, desire sexually
lethal = certain to cause death
level-headed = sensible, not easily panicked
lever = (*noun*) straight handle used for operating a machine, etc.; (*verb*) turn or bend, manipulate into a new position, encourage or force somebody to cooperate
liability = somebody who gets in the way or prevents a successful result
liberate = free *also* (*ironic slang*) steal
liaison = relationship, (*especially* sexual) contact
ligature = a thread or wire tied around something, *especially* to limit flow [*also see* "noose"]
likes >> the likes of... = somebody like...
lilt = music-like flow
lineage = family line
linger = delay leaving, be reluctant to leave
lingo = (*slang*) language
listless = restless, unable to concentrate
loathe = hate with disgust
loins = (*Biblical language*) lower abdomen *really meaning* male sexual organs
loll = hang loosely
loo = (*Br polite slang*) toilet, WC, (*Am equivalent* = washroom, bathroom)
loom = stand dominantly high (perhaps threateningly) above
loony = mad person (*Br slang*)
loop >> out of the loop = not involved, not in the inner circle or group
loose tongues = people who gossip
louring = dark and threatening
lucrative = well-paid
ludicrous = absurd
lugubrious = excessively miserable
lull = quiet period between more generally noisy or busy ones >> *as in the idiom* "lull before the storm" = a deceptively quiet moment before something dramatic or disastrous happens; *Miranda changes* "storm" to "maelstrom" *i.e. a powerful whirlpool that sucks everything into itself*
lunacy = madness
lure = [*noun*] temptation, draw *also* [*verb*] tempt or draw away by promising a reward
lurk = hide (in a threatening manner)
luscious = deliciously attractive
luxuriant = thickly leaved

mac = macintosh *ie* raincoat
Mac = Apple Macintosh computer
madcap = reckless, impulsive
make-believe = imaginary situations or events *often* as a child's pretend game
malaise = feeling of mild depression or sickness
malevolent = wishing or intending evil
malicious = wishing evil
malleable = easily moulded or manipulated
Manchurian = person from Manchester
mandatory = compulsory
mannerism = typical act or behaviour
manoeuvre = carefully planned and calculated action
mantle = cloak
mar = spoil or disfigure
marginally = only just, not significantly
marital status = whether married or unmarried

mash = mashed potatoes (Br)
mate = (biological terminology) have sexual intercourse
maudlin = excessively sentimental >> maudlin spiel = lengthy and excessively sentimental speech
maunder = wander with no clear direction
max = (spoken) short form of maximum
mayhem = violent & destructive confusion
mead = wine made from fermented honey (often with added spices)
meander = move from side to side like a slowly winding river
measure >> for good measure = taking or doing a bit extra to be sure it's enough
mediocrity = being no more than just average or ordinary
medium = artistic channel through which an artist reaches the audience
megalith = giant stone [*as used in prehistoric monuments like Stonehenge*]
ménage à trois = (French) a sexual arrangement involving two men & a woman, or two women & a man
mendacious = lying, untruthful
mentor = wise and trusted adviser or guide
Mercutio: *Romeo's quixotic and humorous friend in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet*
mete out = distribute or share (*usually* something unpleasant)
meticulously = thoroughly, with attention to the smallest detail
mewl = (*Shakespearean word*) cry like a baby
midriff = area of the body between chest and waist
milieu = surroundings, location, environment
mill around = move about in a random manner
mimic = copy or imitate another person's voice and/or mannerisms *also* mimic to a 'tee' = mimic exactly
mind-boggling = (*slang*) astounding, more than the mind can properly handle or understand
mindset = way of thinking *especially* when inflexible or hard to change
ministrations = actions of assistance or support (*especially* when) performed by a priest or clergyman
minute = tiny, very small
mire = bog, marsh
miscarriage = loss of a fetus (partially formed baby) born too early to survive
mischievous = naughty, teasing
misdemeanour = small crime
misguided = following or acting upon mistaken or inappropriate ideas
miss >> give it a miss = (*Br slang*) not bother with it, not try it
moan = complain; make a long low sound expressing pain, unhappiness, or extreme pleasure
MO >> see *modus operandi*
mock = pretend, false
mockery = making fun of, laughing at
modicum = small amount
modulate = control the tone or volume (of a sound or voice)
modus operandi = procedure, way of performing a task
molest = physically abuse
momentous = of great significance
monogamania >> *Phillip's own mixture of "monogamy" = marrying one person only and the suffix "-mania" = a craze or exaggerated enthusiasm (for something)*
Montezuma's revenge = acute diarrhoea: *ironic reference to American tourists visiting Mexico*
moodiness = changeable in mood; showing bad temper or unhappiness
moron = idiot *also* moronic = idiotic
morose = unsociable, untalkative, bad-tempered
mortal fear = fear of dying >> under mortal threat = threatened with death
motions >> going through the motions = doing something only out of habit or a sense of duty
moue = (*originally French*) small but critical facial expression
mourn = show sorrow and respect for a person who has recently died

muck about = (*slang*) be silly, behave in a foolish or joking manner
muck-stirring = (*Br slang*) spreading malicious gossip
muddle through = try to manage in spite of difficulties (*Br*)
mugger = street thief (often using violence or the threat of violence)
mug-shot = photograph of the face *especially* one taken by the police for official records
mumbo jumbo = foolish ritualistic language, meaninglessly overcomplicated speech
muse = consider to oneself, be thoughtful
muster = gather together *also* pass muster = manage reasonably well
mute = make silent *also* >> muted = quiet (colours) or muffled (sounds), *as with a mute (It. sordino) for string & brass instruments of the orchestra*
mutilate = permanently injure and/or disfigure

nab = catch, grab
nag = repeatedly criticize in an irritating way
nail (somebody) = expose or prove (somebody's) guilt
nape = back of the neck
narcissistic = self-loving
nasty piece of work = (*Br*) cruel and unpleasant person
natter = chat, talk at length about nothing serious
navel = belly button, remains of the physical connection to one's mother until birth
necro : *Tero's own shortened version of "necrophilia"* = sexual intercourse with a dead body
neither here nor there = of no importance
neoclassical = in the arts: a conscious return to classical models
nerve >> lose one's nerve = lose courage
never-never >> on the never-never = (*slang*) on hire purchase, paying for something afterwards in monthly amounts
niceties = (social) refinements of behaviour
nick = small crack or cut along the edge of something
nightcap = (alcoholic) drink taken just before bedtime
nipper = (*Br slang*) small child
nit-pick = be pedantically critical
nominal = of minimal size or value
noncommittal = giving no definite answer, expressing nothing definite about one's opinions
nondescript = without obvious or interesting characteristics
noose = a knotted loop of rope, wire, etc which tightens when pulled
nose >> "put somebody's nose out of joint" = really irritate somebody; *also* >> "rub somebody's nose in it" = enjoy reminding somebody of their bad luck or unhappiness
nosiness = excessive interest in other people's business
notch = step or level *also* V-shaped nick or cut
notorious = famous for negative reasons
nubile = (of a young woman) newly arrived at sexual maturity, sexually attractive
numb = anaesthetized, feeling little or nothing
nurture = help to grow

obliging = helpful
obliterate = wipe out, destroy completely
oblivious = unaware, not noticing
obnoxious = very distasteful, extremely unpleasant
obscene = disgustingly immoral
obscure = difficult to see or understand
obsequious = exaggeratedly helpful intending to flatter
observance = following of a traditional (*especially* religious) rite or formal procedure

obsession = idea or desire that cannot be forgotten
ocular fluid = liquid inside the eye
odious = inspiring disgust or contempt
offence = criminal act; anger or hurt feelings; something that causes anger or hurt feelings
offender = criminal, someone who breaks the law
officious = unnecessarily or exaggeratedly 'official' in manner
ogle = amorous or lustful stare
ominous = warning of coming difficulties or evil
ooze = flow slowly and thickly
opportunistic = taking spontaneous advantage of an unexpected opportunity
ops = military abbreviation for "operations"
opt for = choose
option = choice, alternative *also* >> keep one's options open = delay a decision because there are other alternatives still available
opulent = luxurious, showing great wealth
ornate = ornamental, decorated with attractive details
ostensibly = seeming to, pretending to
ostentatious = theatrically exaggerated, showy
outcropping = rock formation showing through or sticking out of the ground's surface
outhouse = a smaller extra building separated from the main building (= Am. outbuilding)
outraged = shocked and angry
outrageous = shocking
outright = completely, immediately, openly
outstay one's welcome = stay too long
ovation = show of great praise
overboard >> go overboard = take something too far or too seriously
overdrive = very high gear used at high motoring speeds
overdue = late
overendowment = possessing more advantages than are necessary or fair
override = take priority over
oversight = mistake caused by forgetting or not noticing something
overt = obvious, plain to see, stated directly and openly
over the top = totally exaggerated, taken too far
overwhelming = impossible to fight or resist
oxymoronic = placing two words or ideas together that conflict in meaning [*also see "moron" above*]

pacify = make peaceful, calm (somebody) down
pale = (*adjective*) lacking strong colour; (*verb*) become dull or empty in feeling
pallor = paleness, lack of colour *especially* in the face
palpable = obvious, easily felt or noticed
pamper = spoil, treat (perhaps too) well but with affection
panache = behaving in a lively, self-confident and stylish manner
pane = a single piece of glass in a window
pangs of conscience = uncomfortable or painful feelings of guilt
panting = breathing heavily
Papal bull = formal document issued by the Pope >> [NB: "bull" is *also slang* for "rubbish" or "nonsense"; probably a shortened version of "bullshit"]
papier-mâché = modelling material made from small pieces of paper first soaked and then dried
paradigm = stereotypical example
paramount = of the greatest importance
parapet = low wall around the edge of a roof
pariah = social outcast, person hated and despised by the community

parry = block an attack or blow (as in boxing or sword fighting)
parsimonious = extremely careful with money or resources
partial to = have a taste for
pass >> make a pass = make a sexual advance
pass the torch = pass on responsibility for continuing an important task or tradition
patchy = uneven in quality, not successful everywhere or always
pater = *uncommon & old-fashioned (Latin origin) word for "father"*
paternal = (adjective) in connection with a father or fathers
pauper = person living in poverty, penniless person
peaky = pale and sickly, ill looking
peal of laughter = bright sound of laughing
Pearly Gates = (*slang*) the entrance to heaven
peccadillo = sinful act
peck = quick kiss
peckish = a bit hungry (Br)
peddle = sell *especially* in the street or unofficially
pedigree = history of family line, genealogy
peer = look hard at something *especially* with narrowed eyes
peeved = (*slang*) irritated, angry
peltast = ancient Greek foot soldier armed with light shield & javelin
penetrate = find or force a way into
penitent = ashamed, very apologetic
pent-up = imprisoned, repressed
perched = sitting or standing on the edge or close to danger
peril = great danger and perilous = very dangerous
perimeter = outside edge *especially* of an area of land
perk = (*abbreviation of "perkquisite"*) extra (sometimes unofficial) benefit coming from one's job
permeate = leak or spread totally into
perpetrator = somebody performing a guilty or criminal act
perplexing = puzzling, confusing, causing doubt
peruse = read or examine carefully in one's own time
pester = bother, annoy repeatedly
peter out = fade away
pet theory = favourite theory
petting >> heavy petting = strongly erotic mutual caressing
petty = unnecessarily mean or pedantic, unimportant
pickings >> small pickings = small rewards or profit
pinch = (*Br slang*) steal (*NB Am equivalent might be "squeezed"*)
pince-nez = glasses held on the nose only (without side pieces over the ears) >> pince-nezed = wearing pince-nez
pinkie = (*slang, mainly Am*) little finger (i.e. fourth finger)
pinup = photograph of a beautiful model, film star, etc (suitable for pinning up on one's wall)
piquancy = spiciness, sharply interesting flavour
pissed as wombats = extremely drunk: Phillip's own variation on the expression "pissed as rats". (*NB in Am "pissed" = annoyed, angry*)
pit >> pit stop = brief stop during a motor race for repairs or refuelling *also* >> orchestra pit = place where musicians sit in an opera house or theatre
pitch = frequency or level of a musical sound
pit oneself against = fight with determination against
pivotal = of decisive importance
placate = make somebody less angry by saying or doing something pleasing
placid = calm, unexcitable

platitude = dull, common, overly predictable expression or thought
plausible = reasonable, easy to believe
pledge = promise
pliable = easily moulded, soft
plough through = work through a series of hard and/or boring tasks
pluck up (courage) = gather or try to find enough courage (to do something)
plume = feather, something resembling a feather in its shape
plump = pleasantly and not excessively fat
plunge >> take the plunge = dare to do something difficult
ply one's trade = carry on one's commercial or business activity
pogrom = organized attack on an ethnic group (*especially* Jews)
poignant = deeply (even painfully) touching
poised = dignified, self-possessed
poky = (*Br*) lacking in space, claustrophobic
ponce = (*Br*) a prostitute's male keeper, pimp
ponder = think deeply and seriously
ponderous = slow and (excessively) serious
pools = (*Br*) large-scale organized gambling which involves guessing the results of coming football matches
portal = large, impressive doorway or gate
posse = (*especially* in the Wild West) a temporary group of men recruited by the sheriff to chase a criminal
post-coital = after sexual intercourse
posthaste = as quickly as possible
post-proscenium: unusual expression meaning "after performing on stage"
posture = manner of holding one's body when standing or sitting
potboiler = work of 'art' produced quickly and mainly to make money
pout = push out one's lips (as when kissing or when showing irritation or distaste)
prank = childish joke
preamble = introductory comments
precarious = easily unbalanced
precedent = an event which is afterwards used as an example to be followed
precinct = district or area *usually* of a town or city
precipice = high, vertical cliff
preconception = idea formed before knowledge of all the facts, prejudice
predator = animal that hunts another for food, person who hunts another for selfish sexual pleasure
predilections = tastes, preferences
predominantly = mainly, mostly
pre-empt = perform an action before someone else has time to do the same
prelim = (usually only spoken) short form of preliminary = initial, starting, preparatory
premature ejaculation = reaching (specifically male) orgasm before achieving penetration
premeditated = planned in advance
premises = building
premonition = vision of an event that will happen in the future
preoccupied = lost in thought, concentrating >> preoccupation = being preoccupied
preordained = decided beforehand
Pre-Raphaelite >> *refers to an English 19th century artistic movement*
press charges = take somebody to court for criminal acts
prestigious = highly respected
pretext = excuse
prevailing = widespread, most typical
prezzie (*written as 'PREZY' in phone SMS*) = a present, gift (*Br slang*)
prim = precise & formal
primeval = ancient

primordial = ancient, primitive, from the dawn of time
prise (open) = (*Br*) carefully force open (*NB Am equivalent would be "pry"*)
private means = regular income from family or property
privy to = sharing secret or private knowledge about
probe = search into, question closely
procreate = produce children
prodigy >> child prodigy = a child showing exceptional early talent or genius
profane = unholy *also* >> profanities = swear words, oaths
profusely = freely and extravagantly
programmatic = [music] following a clear story line, based directly on a literary subject
promontory = (pointed) land sticking out into the sea or a lake, headland
propel = push or throw forcefully
prop = lean against, support from the side
proprietary = (adjective) in connection with ownership of something
protégée [*feminine form with final "-e"*] = person guided and supported by another (*especially in professional life*)
protrude = stick out
provenance = documented history of a valuable object
providential = fortunate, fateful
provisional = temporary, for the time being
provocative = intended to stimulate a strong (probably angry) reaction
prow = (pointed) front of a boat
proxy = authority to act (*eg sign a document*) on behalf of somebody else
prudish = excessively shy or narrow-minded in sexual matters
prying = unwelcomely curious
pub crawl = visiting a number of pubs in sequence in the same evening
pubis = region of the lower abdomen situated above the outer sexual organs (generally covered in hair)
puffed-up = proud of oneself
pulchritude = *less common (Latin origin) word for "beauty"*
pulpit = raised platform or dais in a church where a priest (etc) reads or speaks to the congregation
pun = play on words involving two words of different meaning with the same or similar sound or spelling
punter = (*Br slang*) customer
purse one's lips = close and round one's lips as if about to kiss
pursuit = hobby, activity
put somebody away = put somebody in prison
put somebody off = stop somebody concentrating, discourage somebody's interest or enthusiasm, persuade somebody not to participate or attend (at least, not yet)

quadrangle = rectangular courtyard; *possibly snobbish word for school playground*
quarry = animal or person being hunted
quarters >> at close quarters = very close together (*especially in combat, i.e. in a fight*)
quash = suppress, reject or make invalid by force or from a position of authority
queer = (*slang*) homosexual
quell = subdue, calm (verb)
quench = put out (a fire) >> "Put out the light . . . etc." *Quote from Shakespeare's Othello: as Othello murders his wife out of misplaced jealousy.*
quickie = (*slang*) short and rapid sexual intercourse (possibly in a public place)
quibble = argue about small, unimportant matters
quicken = intensify, bring life to
quick on one's feet = fast to react in a demanding situation
quintessential = most typical, most representative
quip = joke >> a killing joke (or quip) = an extremely funny joke

quirk = person's individual and peculiar mannerism >> quirky = showing or using quirks in one's behaviour

quits >> call it quits = agree to end a contest or argument

quiz = question (somebody) in great detail >> quizzical = showing interest in the answer to something, showing puzzlement or doubt

R & D = research and development

racy = lively & spirited (perhaps with a hint of sexual impropriety)

rag >> lose one's rag = (*Br*) lose one's temper

ragged = untidy, disorganized

raging thirst = powerful thirst

rail against (somebody) = complain bitterly to (somebody)

railings = metal 'fence' around a balcony, stairs, a garden or park

rally = get back one's strength or determination >> rally to = come to someone's aid, give support to

ramble = talk in an unfocused way at unnecessary length >> ramblings = lengthy and unfocused talking

rampant = gone wild, out of control

rancour = irritation, anger

ranks >> close ranks = work together to protect a team or group member

ranting and raving = shouting like a mad person

rat somebody out = tell about somebody's crimes or misbehaviour (*NB alternative: "rat on somebody"*)

rattled = (*Br*) upset, confused, uncertain, losing confidence

raven = shiny black colour [*after the bird of the same name*]

realm = kingdom

reappraise = take another look to reconsider something's value

rebuff = reject or refuse in a sharp manner

recede = fade, lose intensity

reckless = taking foolish risks

reclusive = avoiding others' company, spending much time alone

recoil = sharp backward reaction (like a gun when it is fired)

reconcile contradictions = explain away seemingly impossible differences

reconnaissance = gathering information about an enemy's position or movements

recoup = get back

recourse = alternative or solution

redemption = being set free from one's sins (*for example, in the Christian religion by the death of Christ*)

red-light district = area where prostitutes gather

redundant = not needed

reedy = shrill, high-pitched, thin-sounding

refrain from = stop oneself from (doing something)

register = (*in linguistics*) style of language for a specific social situation or subject

rein >> give full rein to = give complete freedom to >> reined in = tightly controlled

reincarnate = reborn, turned back into physical form

rejoinder = quick and clever reply

rekindle = set alight again, reawaken (feelings)

relegate = place in a less important position or category

relentless = never giving up, never relaxing in intensity

relief = picture which stands out 3-dimensionally from its background

relish = enjoy to the full *especially* flavours

reminiscent of = similar to, reminding one of

remorse = feelings of guilt or regret

rendering = interpretation, version

rendezvous = meeting

repercussions = negative consequences

replete with = overflowing with, richly full of
replica = copy
reprehensible = deserving blame or criticism
reprimand = (official) criticism for bad behaviour
reprisal = act of revenge or retaliation (often against civilian targets) in time of war
reproach = criticize, draw attention to a person's bad behaviour
requisition = officially take control of, take into police, army or government use
resent = feel bitter (about something) *also* resentment = feelings of bitterness or of being unfairly treated
reservations = uncertainties, doubts
residence = home
residual = still remaining
resilient = able to stand stress or difficulties
resolve = decision made with certainty or determination
resort to = be forced to use a less satisfactory alternative
respite = rest period, relief from worry or strain
restraining order = legal court order to stay away from somebody else (*for example wife, ex-girlfriend, child*)
resume = start again, return to (an activity) *also* résumé = summary, shortened version
resurge = flow back
retaliate = fight back
reticent = reserved, quietly spoken, talking no more than necessary
retort = answer quickly, perhaps also cleverly *often* with annoyance or anger
retract = take back
retribution = punishment, revenge
retrospect >> in retrospect = looking back (after the event)
rev (up) = run a car engine (noisily) at high speed
revel = make merry, party in a noisy manner >> revel in = thoroughly enjoy
revelation = sudden understanding
revenue = income
revere = [verb] respect highly, honour, worship
Rhondda Valley: *in South Wales; once famous for its coal mining industry, though last mine closed 1990*
rictus = fixed uncontrollable grin *usually* in response to fear or horror
rife = widespread
rigueur >> *incorrect spelling of rigueur! Will be corrected in a later edition. [See "de rigueur" above.]*
righteous >> the righteous = those who follow in God's path
rigmarole = long complicated process or speech *especially* when pointless or incomprehensible
rile up = make angry
ringer >> dead ringer = person who looks identical to another
rip somebody off = cheat somebody of money or goods, steal from somebody (*Br slang*)
robb'd >> "She that's robb'd... etc": *Adrian is quoting (not quite correctly) from Shakespeare's Othello*
rote >> learn by rote = learn mechanically by constant repetition (perhaps without true understanding)
rough (behaviour) = violent (behaviour)
round >> my round = my turn to buy drinks for everybody
rouse = wake up, prompt (somebody or oneself) to action
rout = drive an enemy away in defeat and confusion
rowdy = noisy and confused, loudly anarchic
rowing boat = *Am* rowboat
rowlocks = U-shaped metal supports for the oars of a boat
RP = received pronunciation: *linguistics term for so-called Oxford or BBC English pronunciation*
rub >> [*see 'nose' above*]
rudimentary = basic
rueful = regretful (often used in an ironic way when thinking about oneself)

ruffle somebody's feathers = upset or irritate somebody
rumble >> ready to rumble = ready for violent or exciting action (*especially* a 'street gang fight' *as in West Side Story*)
runner >> do a runner = (*Br slang*) leave suddenly, escape, run away
running trots = acute diarrhoea (*Br slang*)

sacrilege = misuse of something holy or deserving great respect
sacrosanct = holy, untouchable
sail close to the wind = take dangerous risks
salubrious = good for one's health, luxurious
salvation = being rescued or saved
sanctimonious = narrow-minded and self-important
sanctity = holiness, moral value deserving the highest respect
sanctuary = place of safety
sapling = young tree
sassy = cheeky, insolent, disrespectful
satiated = completely satisfied
savour = taste, smell or otherwise enjoy with pleasure
savvy = (*slang*) clever, sharp, well-informed
scald = burn with hot liquid or steam
scalp = skin on top of the head from which the hair grows
scapegoat = somebody blamed for another person's actions
scanty = very limited, barely enough
scarce >> make oneself scarce = leave, disappear
scatty = (*Br*) absentminded, empty-headed (*NB: Am equivalent* = "flighty")
scheming = manipulating situations and people to one's own selfish advantage
scoop = sensational piece of news (*especially* when appearing in just one newspaper) *also* pick up with a sideways movement
scoop-necked = rounded- & low-necked
score (noun) = printed music showing the parts for every instrument together
score (verb) = succeed in finding a sexual partner (*Br slang*)
scourge = means of causing great suffering
scramble = climb or move in a struggling manner
scramble up = mix up
screw around = have promiscuous sex
screw up = fail badly, make a mess of something
scruff of the neck = back of the neck *especially* of dogs & cats
scrupulous = careful, precise
scrutiny = careful & detailed study >> scrutinize = study carefully and in detail
scuzzy = (*slang*) untidy, old and/or dirty
sea-change = magical change or transformation [*invented by Shakespeare in The Tempest*]
seam = line where two pieces of cloth are sown together
searing = burning (the surface of something)
seasoned = experienced
secateurs = (*Br*) strong scissors-like tool used by gardeners for pruning (cutting) bushes and trees
secluded spot = quiet place away from other people
sedated = asleep or calmed by drugs
sedentary = sitting, seated
seedy = worn-out, no longer smart in appearance
seep out = leak out slowly
seethe = moving violently or feeling violent emotions in a way similar to a boiling liquid
self-delusion = fooling oneself into believing something untrue

self-imposed = forced upon oneself by oneself
self-indulgent = allowing oneself to take (*often* unnecessary or excessive) pleasure in something
self-righteous = overconfident about one's own sense of morality
sequester = legally occupy somebody's home or property *usually* only for a temporary period
serenity = peacefulness, (quiet) calm
serration = fine tooth-like edge to a knife blade
settle for = accept as sufficient (i.e. enough)
sever = cut
shabby = old & worn-out
sham = something false or faked
shard = sharp broken piece of glass or metal
shed = throw off (*as a dog sheds its winter fur or a snake sheds its old skin*)
sheepish = shy, embarrassed
shillyshally = (*slang*) be indecisive, hesitate over an important decision
ship oars = remove oars from the water and place them inside the boat or along the gunwhales
shoo out = drive or chase out *especially* annoying people or animals
shoot = photographic or cinematographic session
show something off = display something with pride
shreds = torn pieces >> tear (an alibi) down in shreds = show (it) to be totally false
shrine = place used for remembrance and worship of somebody or something holy
shrinking violet = shy person usually female (*Br slang*)
shudder = shake or tremble violently
shun = avoid, ignore
shy >> [*see "twice shy"*]
sidetracked = led away from one's correct or intended path
sidle = walk or move sideways
signify = indicate, show
simplistic = too simple, naïve
skew = twist, distort
skimpy = small and lightweight, made of very little material
slacken = make looser >> slacken one's speed = go more slowly
slag heap = a hill made of stony waste matter from processing coal, etc.
slam = throw hard
slant = angle, appearance, viewpoint
slatted = constructed with parallel strips of wood
slattern = woman of untidy and dirty habits and appearance
slaughter = kill, murder
slide off = leave quietly without comment
slime = unpleasant and slippery mud or similarly textured material *also (slang)* shameful & disgusting people
slipshod = careless, lazy, with little attention to detail
slob = lazy, untidy person or behave like a slob
slouch = walk or sit lazily with lowered shoulders and bent back
slump = relax or collapse ungracefully
slurring = (of speech) unclear, difficult to understand
slut = [*abusive word for*] a sexually immoral woman
smallholding = (*Br*) very small farm
smirk = smile uncontrollably or irritatingly
smoochy = suitable for kissing and cuddling (i.e. 'smooching') on a dance floor
smoulder = burn very slowly
SMS (Short Message Service) = mobile phone text message
smug = (too much) pleased with oneself >> smug bugger = (*Br slang*) irritatingly smug person

snap judgement = quick decision or conclusion (often before having all of the important facts)
snap up = take quickly before it's too late, grab
snatch = take suddenly (by force)
sneer = a look of distaste or derision, usually with the upper lip curled
snide = (*slang*) sarcastic
snog = (*Br slang*) heavy kissing session
snub = behave abruptly and rudely (towards somebody)
snuff = (*slang*) murder
snugly = cozily
social disease = venereal disease, sexually transmitted disease
sodding = [*Br mild swear word*] annoying
solace = comfort
solicitous = showing consideration, concern and (perhaps) affection
sole beneficiary = only person to receive the benefits (*eg of a will or last testament*)
solfège = training the voice *especially* to sight-read music
solicit = (of a prostitute) try to attract customers in a public place
sommambulist = sleepwalker
song >> for a song = very cheaply, almost free
sonorous = richly, resonantly sounding
sorcery = magic
sordid = in bad taste, (socially) crude and unpleasant
sound = reliable, logical
sound post = wooden 'stick' transmitting vibrations from top to bottom faces of a violin body
sour grapes = envy
spasmodically = in short broken periods of activity
spectre = ghostly figure
speculative = considering, thoughtful
sped = *past & perfect form of the verb* to speed
spellbound = fascinated, hypnotized
spew = fly outwards in a stream, vomit
spiel = (*slang*) excessive or lengthy talking *especially* in support of a specific idea
spilling = pouring out (like a liquid) through lack of space
spin-doctor = person (*usually* in politics) responsible for making a bad situation appear positive
spinster = woman who has never been married
spite = small-minded wish to hurt or humiliate someone
spittle = saliva, spit, liquid forming in the mouth
splayed = spread out at an (awkward) angle
spleen = bad temper, spitefulness
split = (*slang*) leave
spur >> on the spur of the moment = spontaneously, without previous planning
splutter = spit out explosively, choke (on one's food)
spooky = ghostly
spotted dick = an English sponge pudding containing raisins
sprawl = lie lazily, taking up much space
spread-eagled = lying with outstretched arms and legs (taking up the maximum space possible)
spree = session of excessive self-indulgence
sprung hinge = a device (sometimes pneumatic) that automatically closes a door after it has been left open
spurious = false, not genuine
spurn = reject *especially* in matters of love
squat = [*adj*] short and broad; [*verb*] adopt a low position with knees bent and shoulders forward
squeal = high-pitched sound made *for example* by braking car tyres
squeamish = easily disturbed by or sensitive to the sight of blood, injury, etc.

squint = look with one's eyes almost closed
squirm = wriggle like a worm or snake
staff = heavy stick for hiking >> "break my [magic] staff... etc": *quote from Prospero's epilogue in Shakespeare's The Tempest*
stagger = walk uncertainly and irregularly (*eg as if drunk*)
stairwell = vertical space in a building down the middle of successive flights of stairs
stake = heavy wooden post
stakeout = police surveillance
stalk = follow (somebody) quietly and in secret *especially* repeatedly or regularly
stalk off = walk away with long, decisive steps (possibly in anger)
stark = without ornament, desolate
startling = surprising
stash = (*slang*) store (*especially* secretly)
station >> above one's station = higher than one's true social class
stationer = shop selling paper, pens, office materials, etc
stature = body size and shape
stave = the five parallel lines upon which music is notated
steam >> under one's own steam = without help from others
steel oneself = prepare oneself for determined (and difficult) action
steeple = tall pointed (church) tower >> steeple (*verb*) = imitate the shape of a steeple
step up = increase in intensity or frequency
stern = the rear end of a boat
stick it out = not give up, keep going
sticks >> out in the sticks = (*slang*) far away from the city centre
still = equipment (*usually illegal*) used for manufacturing alcoholic spirits
stinking rich = (*slang*) extremely rich
stint oneself = limit oneself with regard to luxuries or pleasures
stocky = solidly, thickly built (of body shape)
stonewall = be uncooperative, obstruct by refusing to give direct answers to questions
stoop = bend over slightly, not stand straight
stow = store, leave in a safe place
stagnant = without flow or movement, stale, dull
straddling = on both sides of
straggler = person left behind or unable to keep up with others
strains = musical sounds or melodies
straitened circumstances = bad financial situation
strand = single length of something long & thin (*eg* hair, wire, rope, wool)
stratagem = clever way of achieving something *especially* by fooling an opponent or enemy
streak >> reckless streak = tendency to put oneself in danger or act unwisely
strenuous = energetic
strides >> make strides = make progress
stroke = breaking of a blood vessel in the brain
strut = walk in a self-important way (*like a cockerel*)
stubborn = refusing to change one's mind or cooperate
stub out = pushing the burning end of a cigarette or cigar against something to put it out
stuff >> bits of stuff = (*slang*) sexy young women
stumble = trip, lose one's footing *also* stumble on = find by chance
stunning = amazing
stunt = crazy or dangerous act
sturdy = strongly built
subcutaneous = beneath the skin
subdue = defeat, control, make quiet >> *also* subdued = quiet, retiring

sublime = noble, of high aesthetic, intellectual or spiritual value
subliminal = below the level of consciousness
submission = accepting defeat, giving up resistance
subtle = difficult to define or analyse
subservient to = less important than, under the control of
subside: short for subsidiary (i.e. additional) subject
substance abuse = official terminology for illegal use of drugs
substantiation = proof or confirmation that something is true
subtle = having a quiet/gentle but significant effect, difficult to analyse or define
succulent = full of juice, freshly ripe, exciting desire
succumb = give in, surrender
sullen = unwilling to be sociable or friendly
sultry = sensuous and passionate in appearance (*especially* of a darker skinned woman)
summon = request or demand that somebody comes >> summon up = try to find or gather the necessary resources *especially* courage or strength
sundry >> all and sundry = absolutely anybody
supercilious = behaving in a proud and scornful manner
superfluous = unnecessary, no longer useful
superstition = irrational belief in 'supernatural' consequences from certain actions (*eg bad luck after walking under a ladder, that 13 is an unlucky number, etc.*)
surge = strong (and sudden) wave (*of water, electricity, etc*)
surmise = conclusion or explanation based on only limited evidence
surreptitious = trying not to be noticed
surrogate = substitute
surveillance = close watching (often in secret) *especially* of a suspect
suss out = (*slang*) realize
swagger = extremely (perhaps excessively) proud behaviour and mannerisms
swap over = exchange places
swarthy = dark-skinned
swathe = amount of cut grass or hay
sway = change (someone's) opinion
swivel = spin, turn on a fixed point
sycophant = someone who flatters important people

tableau = dramatically or theatrically laid out scene (often motionless)
tabloid = smaller-format newspaper (*eg Daily Mirror, National Inquirer, Ilta Sanomat*) [*compare "broadsheet" above*]
tack = (*verb*) take a zigzag course when sailing into the wind *also* (*noun*) direction
tactile = involving the sense of touch
tad = little bit, small amount
tail off = become gradually quieter and then silent
taint = contaminate, pollute, spoil
tamper with = interfere with
tangible = having a solid physical character
tankard = large mug *especially* for beer
tantamount to = as good as (saying), equivalent to
taper = become narrower towards one end
tardy = late, slow
tassel = parallel loose threads or strips of material used as decoration on clothes, curtains, cushions, etc.
tatty = (*Br slang*) in bad condition
taunt = tease (repeatedly)
tedious = boring

tee >> to a tee = (matching) perfectly, exactly
teeth >> set one's teeth on edge = make one feel very uncomfortable or irritated
tell on somebody = report somebody's wrongdoings to a boss or higher authority
telltale = clearly showing or revealing the truth or certainty of something
temper = soften or lighten the effect of (something)
tempestuous = stormy
temples = sides of the forehead
tenant = somebody living in a house or flat *especially* a person paying rent
tentative = cautious, hesitant, calculating the risks
tenuous = weakly connected, unconvincing
tepid = only slightly warm
terminal = certain to cause death
terminus = end stop of a bus, tram or train route
terrain = local or natural environment, scenery
tetchy = bad-tempered, easily irritated
Thespian = actor (often used ironically)
third degree = aggressive interrogation
thong = narrow strip made of leather or similar material
threshold = imaginary line crossed when passing through a doorway
throes >> death throes = violent, convulsive movements in the final moments before death
thwart = prevent success, frustrate
ticking off = informal (usually not very serious) criticism for bad behaviour
tidings = news
tightknit = closely integrated
timbre = sound 'colour'
time warp = sudden shift to a different point in time [*as in science fiction stories*]
tipping down = (*Br*) raining heavily
tirade = long angry critical speech
tiz-woz >> in a tiz-woz = confused, anxious, overexcited (*Br*)
toddler = small child just learning to walk
token = nominal, as a matter of duty only
top >> over the top = extreme
topped = (*Br slang*) killed, murdered
torch >> pass the torch = pass on responsibility for continuing an important task or tradition
torment = torture, continually tease or worry
torpor = inactivity, apathy
torrent = fast-flowing stream
tosser = stupid, worthless person (*Br slang: literally means 'masturbator'!*)
tow = pull (a car) away >> in tow = following (passively)
tract = extended area (of land)
trait = characteristic
transfigure = change appearance completely (as if by a magical or holy act)
transmute = transform, change the character or nature (of something)
travesty = absurdly false imitation, mockery
trawl for = search widely for
treacherous = turning against one's own side or country
treat >> "My treat!" = "I will pay for it."
trek = make a long and difficult journey
trepidation = fear
trespasses = sins >> *heard in The Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. . ."*
trickle = flow in a thin stream

trigger = the cause of an action or reaction
trite = overused, boring
trolleybus = bus taking power from overhead electric cables (*Br*)
troop = move or march in an organized line
trophy = prize, object that reminds one of success
trump card = something valuable held in reserve (*as in the game "bridge" where a card of higher value may be held back for later and more significant use*)
tryst = secret meeting between lovers
tubular bells = orchestral percussion instrument that imitates church bells
tuck under = push, fold or position something under >> tucked away = hidden, positioned or stored conveniently >> tucked up = comfortably settled *usually* in bed
tug = pull
tumult = emotional or mental disturbance, agitation
turn off = kill (somebody's) interest (in something) [*Phillip here creates his own variation on the common expression: "Whatever turns you on!", i.e. "Whatever excites you!" often used in a sexual sense.*]
turn on = (*slang*) something that creates sexual excitement
turn oneself in = surrender oneself to the police
turn over (a room, home, office, etc.) = to break in and steal valuables, *probably* leaving the place in a mess (*Br*)
tweak = make small changes or adjustments to improve or repair something
twice shy: refers to the saying "once bitten, twice shy" = avoid making the same mistake twice
twinge = short, sharp feeling of pain
typing pool = open plan office with a number of (usually female) typists
tyrant = cruel and merciless dictator; tyrannical = [*adj. form*]

ubiquity = seeming to be everywhere
unabashed = not embarrassed or ashamed
unassailable = cannot be attacked or disproved
unassuming = modest, unpretentious
unattainable = impossible to get or achieve
unblinking = staring, eyes never closing
uncanny = strange, beyond what is normally expected, supernatural
unceremonious = sudden, without dignity
uncondescending = without behaving in a superior way to others, without looking down on others as less intelligent or of lower status
unconsenting = without giving permission or approval
undaunted = not discouraged
undemonstrative = reserved, not showing one's feelings very openly
underpinning = something that gives foundation or validity
underplay = present something as having less than its true significance or importance
underway = already happening
uneasy = (mentally or emotionally) uncomfortable, slightly nervous or worried
unfazed = unconcerned, not bothered or put off
unflinching = not turning away from difficulties or danger
unfold = open something and spread it out; tell something gradually; develop or expand over time
unfurl = unroll and flatten out
unhallowed = unholy
unjaded = not worn out by or tired of something in spite of long contact or experience with it
unmanned = made incapable of action, cowardly
unnerving = disconcerting, weakening one's courage
unobtrusive = not obvious, not *especially* noticeable
unpalatable = unattractive tasting, difficult to eat or accept

unravel = find a solution to a complicated problem *also* unwind, come apart bit by bit
unrestrainable = uncontrollable, unstoppable
unsavoury = distasteful, immoral
unscrupulous = ready to you use any (even immoral) means to achieve a goal
unsettling = slightly disturbing or worrying
unsolicited = unasked for, unrequested
untrammelled = unrestricted, uncontrolled
unwarranted = undeserved, unnecessary and inappropriate
unwind = relax, forget everyday stresses and worries
unwittingly = without realising, unintentionally
upbeat = optimistic, cheerful
up for it = ready to do it
uplifting = cheerful, raising one's spirit
uproarious = loud and lively
urge = strong need (to do something) *or* strongly persuade (somebody to do something)
usher = lead, escort *also* person who assists audience in theatres and concert halls
utensils = tools *especially* for use in the kitchen or for eating
utmost = most or best possible

vagabond = much travelled person with no permanent address
vagrant = homeless person
valiantly = bravely
veg out = (*slang*) spend time doing nothing useful, being lazy
vehicle = wheeled transport *eg* car, van, bus, tram, lorry, etc
veiled = partly hidden
vendor = seller
veneer = thin decorative layer (usually of wood)
venerable = deserving respect because of great age, personal character & status
venison = deer (or elk) meat
vent = let out or show (for example: anger or frustration), release
venture = speak or act cautiously in a potentially risky or uncertain situation
venue = place where something (*especially* an organized event) happens
veracity = truth
verge >> on the verge = on the edge, just about to (do something)
verily = old-fashioned word for indeed, in truth
vernacular = everyday spoken language of a country or geographical region
vernal = [*adjective*] in connection with the spring >> "Live life on the vernal edge!" *Adrian combines two ideas*: live life on the edge = take exciting risks *and* vernal edge *supposedly means* beginning of spring.
vertiginous = producing a sense of dizziness or vertigo [vertigo = fear of being in high places]
vestige = small remaining amount, trace
viable = practicable, possible to achieve
vicariously = sympathetically sharing (at second hand or from a distance) in someone else's experiences
vicinity = neighbourhood, nearby area
vile = disgustingly evil
vindicate = show to be innocent or in the right
violate = seriously mistreat physically (and/or emotionally), sexually assault, rape
vitriolic = acidic, extremely bitter or hostile
void = emptiness
volition = choice
voluptuous = (of women) sexually attractive in a full, curvaceous way
vouch for = guarantee

vulnerability = weakness, openness to attack

waive = voluntarily give up or not claim something

wallflower = (*informal*) shy person sitting alone at a party or dance

wallow in = indulge oneself in

waning = weakening or decreasing gradually

wary = cautious in the face of trouble or danger

washout = disappointment, failure

watering hole = (*earlier 20th century slang*) pub or similar drinking place

watershed = important dividing line, event of significant change

wayward = wanting to have one's own way, unpredictable

wench = (*old-fashioned word*) girl or young woman *especially* a lively, buxom one

wheedle = manipulate somebody with gentle (and possibly irritating) persuasion

wherewithal = necessary resources or equipment (to perform some action)

whiff = slight sniff or smell

whisk = carry, take or remove quickly

white-knuckled = gripping very hard with the hand(s), frightened

wield = handle or use a weapon or tool

Williephile >> *Phillip's own invention which presumably means a lover of William Shakespeare [since the suffix: '-phile' means 'lover of'; see "Celtophile" above]. But 'willie' is also an informal British word for 'penis': mostly used when talking to children.*

whim = sudden and relatively unimportant thought or idea *also* >> on a whim = impulsively, without planning or previous thought

whimper = cry or sob quietly

whiz kid = highly talented young person *especially* in science & technology field

wield = use, apply

wild-goose chase = attempting something absurd or hopeless

will or last will & testament = official document telling how a person's possessions should be distributed after his or her death

wimp = wimpy person [*see next word*]

wimpy = weak, ineffectual, incapable of achieving results

wince = sharp physical reaction to pain

wind >> *see "sail close to the wind" above*

windfall = something useful obtained unexpectedly by chance

wind somebody up = (*Br slang*) intentionally try to annoy or panic somebody

wings = (hidden) sides of a theatre or concert hall stage

winning number >> "Every one a winning number!" = *fair ground (Tivoli) lottery stall sales-cry*

winsome = charming

wisecrack = (*Am slang*) joke, humorous comment

wispy = light and curling

wistful = sadly thoughtful, wishing for something

wither = fade and fall away to nothing (*especially* of a plant or flower)

withering = showing scorn or contempt

wobbly = unsteady, unstable

womanizer = man who seeks sexual liaisons with many different women, Don Juan

woodwind = *section of the orchestra: includes flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons & saxophones*

worm out = obtain information by persistent and persuasive questioning

worse for wear = tired out and dishevelled after too much work, drinking, partying, etc.

wot: *incorrect spelling of "what" to represent Phillip's intentionally 'ungrammatical' use of "what" where "that" would be considered correct by most so-called 'educated' speakers*

wrench = twist or pull violently

wrath = anger

writhe = move violently and convulsively (as if in pain)

wrong-footed = off-balance, unprepared

wry = dryly humorous, ironic

yardstick = measure or standard against which other values are compared

yawning = extremely wide and open

yearning = greatly wishing for or desiring (something)

Y-fronts = an old-fashioned style of men's underpants (*Br*)

zeal = intense enthusiasm *also* zealous = showing zeal *also* zealot = (over)zealous person

zestful = enthusiastic

zombie = monster, walking dead body