



11+ Vocabulary Word List - Essential (200 words)

A short list of high-priority vocabulary to build confidence quickly.

These lists are designed for general 11+ vocabulary preparation. Pick the size that fits your routine - smaller lists are easier to work through consistently; larger lists offer wider exposure. Each larger PDF includes everything in the smaller ones, plus more words.

Disclaimer: This is a general study aid for 11+ vocabulary practice. It is not affiliated with any exam board or school and does not guarantee coverage of words tested in your area. 11+ preparation and admissions vary by region and school.

Ideal if you want a manageable first step: little and often beats occasional long sessions.

How to use this sheet

For children

Use this sheet to learn and revise all the words. Keep it handy for quick refreshers.

For parents

Use this sheet to quiz your child: ask for the meaning of a word, or for an example sentence.

For the full online experience - word sets, learn, rounds, and review to help retention, visit 11plusvocabquest.co.uk. Keep this sheet handy for offline checks.

Word list

Words are listed alphabetically with numbers for easy reference (for example assigning ranges by week). Meanings are short guides for revision - encourage your child to put each word into their own sentence.

1. abandon

to leave something behind

Example: The family had to abandon their home due to the flood.

2. abode

a place of residence

Example: After years of travel, she finally returned to her childhood abode.

3. abominable

causing moral disgust or hatred

Example: The abominable behavior of the villain shocked everyone involved.

4. absence

the state of being away or not present

Example: The absence of evidence made it hard to convict him.

5. absolute

not limited or restricted

Example: The judge made an absolute decision that would affect the entire community.

6. abundant

existing in large quantities

Example: The garden was abundant with flowers of every color.

7. accessible

able to be reached or entered

Example: The library is accessible to all students after school hours.

8. accusatory

suggesting someone is guilty

Example: The accusatory tone in her voice made everyone uneasy.

9. acquiescence

the acceptance of something without protest

Example: Her acquiescence to the plan surprised everyone in the room.

10. acquire

to gain or obtain something

Example: Through hard work and dedication, she hoped to acquire new skills.

11. amusing

entertaining or funny

Example: The comedian's jokes were so amusing that everyone laughed out loud.

12. assistance

help or support provided to someone

Example: The teacher offered her assistance to students struggling with their work.

13. belies

to contradict or show something false

Example: Her calm demeanor belies the anxiety she feels inside.

14. bemuse

to confuse or puzzle someone

Example: The complicated instructions seemed to bemuse the students during the test.

15. benign

gentle and kindly in nature

Example: The teacher's benign demeanor made the students feel comfortable asking questions.

16. bewildered

confused and unable to think clearly

Example: She felt bewildered by the sudden change in plans.

17. biased

unfairly supporting one side

Example: The article appeared biased, as it only presented one viewpoint.

18. biodiversity

variety of life in a habitat

Example: The rainforest's biodiversity is crucial for maintaining ecological balance.

19. bipartisan

supported by two political parties

Example: The bipartisan agreement helped to pass the new law effectively.

20. bland

lacking strong flavor or character

Example: The soup was so bland that I added spices to enhance its taste.

21. blissful

extremely happy and full of joy

Example: The family enjoyed a blissful day at the beach, filled with laughter and sunshine.

22. braggart

a person who boasts excessively

Example: The braggart couldn't resist showing off his latest achievements.

23. cajole

to persuade through flattery

Example: She tried to cajole her parents into letting her stay out late.

24. calm

free from excitement or anger

Example: The lake was calm, reflecting the clear sky above.

25. candid

truthful and straightforward

Example: The teacher appreciated her candid feedback about the project.

26. candidate

a person being considered for a position

Example: The candidate presented a strong argument for her proposal during the debate.

27. canopy

an overhead covering of foliage

Example: The forest's canopy filtered the sunlight, creating a tranquil atmosphere.

28. catastrophe

a sudden disaster or event causing great damage

Example: The unexpected flood was a catastrophe for the town, leaving many families homeless.

29. cathartic

providing emotional relief or purification

Example: Writing in her journal proved to be a cathartic experience for Mia.

30. celestial

related to the sky or outer space

Example: The celestial bodies twinkled brightly against the night sky.

31. cemetery

a place for burying the dead

Example: The old cemetery was filled with ancient stones and whispered stories.

32. clamour

a loud and confused noise

Example: The clamour of the crowd made it hard to concentrate on my task.

33. content

satisfied or pleased

Example: She felt content after completing her homework early.

34. debate

a formal discussion on a topic

Example: The students engaged in a lively debate about climate change.

35. debunk

to expose falsehood or myth

Example: The scientist aimed to debunk the popular myth surrounding the experiment.

36. decline

to decrease or become less

Example: The school's enrollment began to decline as families moved away.

37. decorum

proper behavior or etiquette

Example: In formal settings, maintaining decorum is essential for respect.

38. deference

respect and esteem for someone

Example: In a show of deference, she listened carefully to her elder's advice.

39. definite

clearly defined or determined

Example: The teacher gave a definite deadline for the project submission.

40. demote

to lower in rank or position

Example: The manager had to demote the employee for repeated mistakes.

41. depressing

causing a feeling of sadness

Example: The news was so depressing that it affected everyone's mood.

42. derail

to cause a train to leave its track

Example: The unexpected snowstorm could derail the entire school trip planned for next week.

43. economical

using resources efficiently

Example: The economical choice in travel would save money without sacrificing comfort.

44. elect

to choose someone for a position

Example: The committee decided to elect a new chairperson for the upcoming year.

45. eloquent

fluent or persuasive in speaking

Example: The speaker was so eloquent that the audience was captivated.

46. elude

to avoid or escape from someone

Example: The clever fox was able to elude the pursuing hounds.

47. elusive

difficult to find or catch

Example: The elusive fox darted through the underbrush and vanished from sight.

48. embargo

a government order to restrict trade

Example: The government imposed an embargo to protect local businesses.

49. embarrass

to cause someone to feel awkward

Example: The unexpected question from the teacher began to embarrass Lucy in front of her classmates.

50. embellish

to make something more attractive

Example: To make her story more interesting, Clara decided to embellish the details.

51. embrace

to hold someone closely

Example: At the reunion, Sarah couldn't wait to embrace her long-lost friend.

52. errand

a short journey to complete a task

Example: Mia had to run an errand to buy milk for dinner.

53. fact

a true statement or reality

Example: It is a fact that the Earth orbits the Sun.

54. faint

to almost lose consciousness

Example: After sprinting up the hill, Liam felt so faint he had to sit down.

55. famine

severe shortage of food

Example: During the drought, the region faced a devastating famine that affected thousands.

56. farce

a comic dramatic work using absurdity

Example: The play was a farce, filled with ridiculous misunderstandings and chaos.

57. fatigue

a state of extreme tiredness

Example: After studying late into the night, Sarah felt an overwhelming fatigue the next day.

58. feasible

possible to do easily or conveniently

Example: The plan seemed feasible, given the resources we had.

59. ferocious

savagely fierce or cruel

Example: The ferocious storm caused extensive damage to the coastal town.

60. fiasco

a complete failure or disaster

Example: The play was a fiasco, leaving the audience confused and disappointed.

61. fickle

changing frequently without reason

Example: Her fickle nature made it hard for her friends to rely on her decisions.

62. flattering

making someone look good or attractive

Example: Her flattering remarks about his painting made him proud.

63. flawless

without any mistakes or imperfections

Example: The artist created a flawless sculpture that amazed everyone.

64. foal

a young horse

Example: The foal trotted happily alongside its mother in the sunlit pasture.

65. genealogy

the study of family ancestry

Example: Her fascination with genealogy led her to discover interesting family history.

66. genial

friendly and cheerful in manner

Example: The genial host welcomed all the guests with a warm smile.

67. genre

a category of artistic composition

Example: The novel belongs to the fantasy genre, filled with magic and adventure.

68. gentility

social superiority as a result of wealth

Example: Her gentility was evident in her poised demeanor at the gala.

69. glimpse

a brief look or view

Example: As she walked by, he caught a glimpse of her radiant smile.

70. gluttonous

excessively greedy, especially for food

Example: His gluttonous behavior at the buffet surprised everyone.

71. grandeur

the quality of being grand or impressive

Example: The grandeur of the ancient castle left the visitors in awe.

72. gratifying

causing pleasure or satisfaction

Example: Winning the art competition was a gratifying achievement for Sarah.

73. gratitude

the quality of being thankful

Example: Her gratitude for the help was evident in her smile.

74. grave

serious or solemn in manner

Example: The grave situation demanded immediate attention from the team.

75. grievance

a complaint or resentment

Example: The teacher listened carefully to the student's grievance about the unfair exam.

76. habitat

natural home of an organism

Example: The rainforest provides a unique habitat for countless species.

77. hackneyed

lacking in originality or freshness

Example: The film was deemed hackneyed due to its predictable plot.

78. hamper

to hinder or obstruct progress

Example: The sudden rainstorm did not hamper the team's efforts to complete the project.

79. haphazard

lacking a plan or order

Example: The haphazard arrangement of books made it hard to find anything.

80. hapless

unfortunate or unlucky person

Example: The hapless travelers found themselves stranded in a storm.

81. harass

to disturb or trouble persistently

Example: The student felt anxious after being harassed by classmates daily.

82. harmonious

forming a pleasing or consistent whole

Example: The harmonious colors in her painting created a serene atmosphere.

83. harrowing

extremely distressing or traumatic

Example: The harrowing tale of loss left the audience in tears.

84. hearth

the floor of a fireplace

Example: The family gathered around the hearth to enjoy their evening together.

85. hinge

a joint allowing movement of a door

Example: The old door creaked as it swung on its rusty hinge.

86. hue

a shade or color

Example: The artist chose a vibrant hue for the sunset painting.

87. idiosyncrasy

a peculiar or individual trait

Example: Her idiosyncrasy of talking to plants amused her friends.

88. ignorant

lacking knowledge or awareness

Example: Despite her opportunities, she remained ignorant of the latest developments.

89. illuminate

to light up or make clear

Example: The teacher used diagrams to illuminate complex concepts during the lesson.

90. immaculate

perfectly clean or free from flaws

Example: The immaculate presentation impressed all the judges at the competition.

91. immoral

not conforming to accepted standards of morality

Example: His immoral actions contradicted everything he stood for.

92. impartial

not biased or prejudiced

Example: The judge remained impartial throughout the trial.

93. implicitly

in a way that is understood without being stated

Example: The rules implicitly suggest that teamwork is essential for success.

94. implore

to beg earnestly for something

Example: She had to implore her parents to let her attend the concert.

95. imprudent

not showing care for the consequences

Example: His imprudent decision to invest all his savings brought him trouble.

96. jargon

specialized language of a profession

Example: The lawyer's jargon made the contract difficult to understand.

97. jubilant

feeling or expressing great happiness

Example: The jubilant crowd cheered loudly as the team won the championship.

98. justice

fair treatment and judgment

Example: The court aims to ensure that justice is served in every case.

99. lax

not strict or careful about rules, behaviour, or standards

Example: The school became lax about uniform rules, allowing pupils to dress more casually.

100. leisure

time for relaxation or enjoyment

Example: During the summer holidays, Emma enjoyed her leisure time by reading books in the park.

101. levity

lightness of mood or demeanor

Example: Her levity during the serious discussion surprised everyone.

102. liberal

open to new ideas and change

Example: The school's liberal approach encouraged students to express their opinions freely.

103. lieu

in place of something

Example: In lieu of a gift, she donated to charity.

104. limit

a point beyond which something cannot go

Example: The teacher set a limit on the number of pages for the assignment.

105. listless

lacking energy or enthusiasm

Example: During the long lecture, Sarah felt increasingly listless and struggled to concentrate.

106. lucrative

producing a great deal of profit

Example: The internship provided a lucrative opportunity for students seeking experience.

107. ludicrous

so absurd it's laughable

Example: The idea of a cat flying a plane is ludicrous and made everyone laugh.

108. lulled

to calm or soothe someone

Example: The gentle music lulled the baby to sleep.

109. magnanimous

generous or forgiving, especially towards rivals

Example: The magnanimous leader forgave his opponents and promoted unity.

110. magnetic

having the power to attract iron

Example: The magnetic charm of the city drew many visitors to its historic sites.

111. magnitude

the size or extent of something

Example: The magnitude of the earthquake was measured at 7.0 on the Richter scale.

112. majestic

having grandeur and beauty

Example: The view from the mountain was so majestic that it took my breath away.

113. malign

to speak about someone in a harmful way

Example: She refused to malign her opponent, choosing instead to focus on her own strengths.

114. masculinity

the quality of being male

Example: In many cultures, masculinity is often associated with strength and leadership.

115. maverick

an independent-minded person

Example: As a maverick in her field, she often surprised others with her unconventional ideas.

116. meddle

to interfere in someone's affairs

Example: It is unwise to meddle in matters that do not concern you.

117. mediate

to intervene in a dispute

Example: The teacher had to mediate between the two arguing students.

118. mitigate

to make something less severe

Example: The doctor prescribed medication to mitigate the patient's pain.

119. nauseating

causing a feeling of sickness

Example: The nauseating smell from the dumpster made everyone feel ill.

120. negotiate

to discuss options to reach an agreement

Example: The students had to negotiate the terms of their group project.

121. nemesis

an opponent or rival

Example: In the thrilling novel, the hero faced his nemesis in a final showdown.

122. noxious

harmful or poisonous

Example: The factory emitted noxious fumes that made the air unsafe to breathe.

123. oblique

not explicit or done in a direct way

Example: The teacher's oblique reference left the students confused.

124. oblivious

not aware of or concerned about something

Example: She was oblivious to the commotion around her as she read her book.

125. obnoxious

extremely unpleasant or offensive

Example: The obnoxious behavior of the crowd made the event unenjoyable.

126. obsession

an idea or thought that preoccupies someone

Example: Her obsession with perfecting her painting consumed her every thought.

127. obstinate

unreasonably determined to have one's way

Example: Despite his friends' advice, Tom remained obstinate about his decision.

128. obtuse

not sharp or quick to understand

Example: The obtuse questions on the exam baffled many students.

129. omen

a sign of future events

Example: The dark clouds were seen as an omen of the coming storm.

130. omit

to leave out or exclude

Example: In order to improve the essay, Sarah decided to omit unnecessary details.

131. onslaught

a fierce or destructive attack

Example: The village faced an onslaught of invaders during the night.

132. pacifist

a person who opposes war

Example: As a committed pacifist, Clara always advocated for peaceful solutions.

133. pacify

to calm someone or something down

Example: The teacher tried to pacify the upset students after the incident.

134. palpable

able to be touched or felt

Example: The tension in the room was so palpable that everyone fell silent.

135. panacea

a solution for all problems

Example: Many believe that technology is a panacea for societal issues.

136. panic

sudden uncontrollable fear or anxiety

Example: In the face of danger, she felt a surge of panic and froze in place.

137. parable

a simple story with a moral lesson

Example: The teacher used a parable to illustrate the importance of honesty.

138. paradigm

a typical example or pattern

Example: The new project presented a paradigm that changed the industry.

139. paraphrase

to restate in different words

Example: In her essay, Sophie had to paraphrase the author's main points clearly.

140. placid

calm and peaceful

Example: The placid lake reflected the clear blue sky perfectly.

141. plump

having a round and full shape

Example: The plump little bird perched happily on the branch.

142. punctual

arriving or happening on time

Example: Being punctual is important for maintaining a good reputation at school.

143. quaint

charmingly unusual or old-fashioned

Example: The quaint cottage stood at the end of a narrow lane, surrounded by blooming flowers.

144. quarry

a place to extract stone or minerals

Example: The workers at the quarry carefully extracted the heavy stone.

145. ramshackle

in a state of severe disrepair

Example: The ramshackle house seemed ready to collapse at any moment.

146. ratify

to formally approve or confirm

Example: The parliament will ratify the new treaty next week.

147. rationale

the reasoning behind a decision

Example: The teacher explained the rationale for the new classroom rules to the students.

148. reactionary

opposing political or social change

Example: The reactionary views expressed during the debate surprised many attendees.

149. rebuke

to express sharp disapproval

Example: The teacher had to rebuke the student for talking during the lesson.

150. recede

to move back or withdraw

Example: As the tide began to recede, shells were revealed on the sandy beach.

151. receptive

willing to consider new ideas

Example: The teacher found the students very receptive to new concepts during the lesson.

152. rectify

to correct a mistake or error

Example: The teacher asked the students to rectify their errors before submitting the assignment.

153. reflective

capable of reflecting light or thoughts

Example: The student's reflective nature helped him understand complex problems.

154. sabotage

deliberately destroy or damage something

Example: The team worked hard, but one member attempted to sabotage their efforts.

155. sacred

connected to religion or worship

Example: The ancient trees in the forest were considered sacred by the villagers.

156. sanction

a penalty for disobeying a law

Example: The government imposed a sanction on the country for its actions.

157. sanctity

the state of being sacred or holy

Example: The sanctity of the temple was respected by all visitors.

158. satisfying

causing pleasure or contentment

Example: The well-prepared meal was truly satisfying to everyone at the table.

159. savour

to enjoy a taste or smell

Example: As she took a bite of the chocolate cake, she closed her eyes to savour its rich flavour.

160. scathing

critically harsh or severe

Example: The teacher's scathing remarks left the student embarrassed.

161. sceptical

not easily convinced

Example: Despite the evidence presented, Jessica remained sceptical about their claims.

162. skirmish

a small, brief fight or dispute

Example: The two rival teams had a skirmish on the field during the match.

163. taciturn

reserved or uncommunicative in speech

Example: Despite his taciturn nature, he surprised everyone with his insights.

164. tangible

perceptible by touch or clear

Example: The tangible benefits of studying hard were evident in her exam results.

165. tardy

being late or delayed

Example: The student was tardy to class and missed important instructions.

166. temper

a person's emotional state or mood

Example: Despite her warm smile, her temper could flare up unexpectedly.

167. tempest

a violent storm with strong winds

Example: The tempest raged outside, shaking the windows and rattling the doors.

168. temptation

a desire to do something wrong

Example: The temptation to skip homework was strong, but she resisted.

169. terrestrial

related to the earth or land

Example: The terrestrial habitats of the planet are home to diverse wildlife.

170. texture

the feel or appearance of a surface

Example: The artist paid careful attention to the texture of the canvas.

171. thoughtful

showing consideration for others

Example: She wrote a thoughtful note to her friend, showing she cared.

172. trivial

of little value or importance

Example: During the meeting, she focused on trivial matters rather than the main issue.

173. ubiquitous

present everywhere at the same time

Example: In today's world, smartphones are ubiquitous, found in almost every household.

174. uncaring

not showing concern or kindness

Example: The uncaring attitude of the staff baffled the concerned parents.

175. undermine

to weaken or damage something gradually

Example: The constant criticism began to undermine her confidence in her abilities.

176. undulate

to move in a smooth wave-like motion

Example: The flag began to undulate gently in the breeze.

177. unforgiving

not willing to forgive mistakes

Example: The unforgiving terrain made it difficult for hikers to navigate.

178. unorthodox

not conforming to accepted beliefs

Example: Her unorthodox approach to solving problems impressed the judges.

179. unpretentious

not attempting to impress others

Example: The artist's unpretentious style appealed to many viewers.

180. unravel

to untangle or solve something

Example: The detective worked tirelessly to unravel the mystery behind the missing jewels.

181. unrestricted

not limited or controlled

Example: The unrestricted access to the library allowed all students to explore various subjects.

182. vacant

not occupied or filled

Example: The vacant house stood silently at the end of the street.

183. valid

legally or logically acceptable

Example: The contract was deemed valid after thorough review by the lawyer.

184. venerable

worthy of respect due to age

Example: The venerable professor was admired for his decades of knowledge and experience.

185. verify

to confirm the truth of something

Example: The scientist managed to verify her research findings through extensive testing.

186. veritable

genuine or real; authentic

Example: The museum displayed a veritable collection of ancient artifacts.

187. viable

capable of working successfully

Example: The team's proposal was innovative and viable for implementation.

188. vigilant

keeping careful watch for danger

Example: The vigilant lifeguard noticed the swimmer in trouble and quickly reacted.

189. vilify

to speak ill of someone or something

Example: He tried to vilify her reputation with false accusations.

190. virtue

a good moral quality or trait

Example: Her kindness and honesty are true virtues that inspire others.

191. wasteful

using more than necessary

Example: Her wasteful spending on luxury items raised concerns among her friends.

192. whimsical

playfully quaint or fanciful

Example: The whimsical decorations in her room made it feel like a fairy tale.

193. whining

making a high-pitched complaining sound

Example: The dog's whining became unbearable during the storm.

194. wilful

deliberately determined to behave

Example: Her wilful refusal to listen caused frustration among her teachers.

195. willpower

the ability to control oneself

Example: With strong willpower, she managed to resist the dessert temptation.

196. wistful

having a feeling of yearning or regret

Example: She gazed wistfully out the window, reminiscing about her childhood.

197. wither

to become dry and shriveled

Example: Without water, the plants began to wither under the hot sun.

198. yield

to produce or provide something

Example: Farmers hope their crops will yield a bountiful harvest this year.

199. zenith

the highest point or peak

Example: The explorer reached the zenith of the mountain after a challenging climb.

200. zestful

full of energy and enthusiasm

Example: Her zestful approach to learning inspired her classmates.