Negative words

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| Tumult | Loud violent noise | The tumult was unbearable to the ears.  |
| Detachment | Separated or removed from something | Emotionally, she was so detached from her mother. |
| Intransigent | Stubborn | Such intransigence will lead to loneliness.  |
| Pallid | White, lacking energy | His pallid face gave away his fear.  |
| Plaintive | A sad melancholic cry | The plaintive cry of the young girl was enough for the guard to help her escape. |
| Lurid | Terrible, gruesome  | The lurid comments in the newspaper were unacceptable |
| Fallacious | Deceitful | The fallacious comments in the newspaper resulted in John Simpson taking legal action against them.  |
| Perfidy  | Treachery, betrayal | The wind was so cold, it seemed like perfidy to the soul.  |
| Egregious  | Standing out for being bad | His egregious temperament often led to him getting into fights.  |
| Susceptible  | Vulnerable  | The baby was susceptible to illness. |
| Indolent  | Lazy | The number of times the teacher said his students were indolent resulted in him getting fired.  |
| Intractable  | Stubborn | The mother refused to give in to the intractable cries of the child.  |
| Recalcitrant  | Resisting authority or control, hard to deal with  | The recalcitrant student ended up being expelled. |
| Surreptitious  | Secretive, obtained by stealth | The way they found the password was surreptitious.  |
| Execrable | Wretched, detestable, shocking | I’ve never seen such execrable behavior. |
| Baleful | Menacing, pernicious, miserable | He was such a baleful character, and everyone feared him. |
| Despondent | Dejected, feeling of hopelessness | His reaction was so despondent that you couldn’t help feeling sorry for him.  |
| Ashen | Drained of colour | His eyes had a vacant look to them, his face was ashen: he was scared senseless.  |
| Fractious | Irritable | They tried hard, but her fractious nature meant she had to leave the team. |
| Gaunt | Thin | The homeless man, with his sickly, gaunt bones, suffered horribly in the cold evenings.  |
| Venomous | Nasty | She attacked him with the most venomous words you’ve ever heard.  |
| Haughty | Snobbish, conceited | Sometimes the rich present themselves in a haughty manner. |
| Disparaging | Belittling, putting down | The disparaging comments only made her feel worse. |
| Furtive | Secretive and sinister | She furtively looked over at the salesman as she shoved the sweets in her pocket. |
| Belligerent  | Wanting to argue/fight | His belligerent attitude didn't help the situation at all. The anger in the room increased two-fold.  |
| Disdain | Contempt, looking down on someone/thing as though you're better than it/them.  | The look of disdain she gave him almost turned him to stone. |
| Feckless | Useless  | She was tired of his feckless attempts to fix their relationship. It was clear his heart wasn’t in it. |
| Hubris | Arrogance  | The hubris spoken by the official at the convention was startling. How could anyone have such certainty about an unknown topic? |
| Insidious | Nasty, slow moving | Cancer is an insidious disease, slowly eating the body’s cells. |
| Pernicious | Hateful, spiteful, wicked | When she looked at him with such pernicious eyes, he knew it was over.  |
| Malevolence | Wishing ill or harm to others | He had a level of malevolence about him that made him a real nasty man, one to be avoided at all costs.  |
| Preposterous | Ridiculous | It was a preposterous decision to expel the student. He was actually a really good kid.  |
| Recumbent | Idle, lazy | He sat there, recumbent, smelling, fixated on the TV. |
| Aggrandizement  | Making something seem larger than it is | Politicians love a bit of aggrandizement don’t they, when talking about anything good they may have been responsible for. |
| Capricious  | Erratic  | The capricious behavior of the young man made everyone believe he was on drugs.  |
| Asperity  | Harshness  | The asperity in his voice crushed her soul.  |
| Acrimonious  | Caustic, harsh | The relationship was acrimonious, with insults always being hurled at each other. It resulted in a large fight. |
| Inept  | Useless, lacking skill | The referee was inept, and didn’t even know the rules properly.  |
| Feeble | Weak | The feeble effort from the group resulted in a loss for the team. |
| Perplexed | Confused | The teacher sat there perplexed at the way the class was behaving. |
| Obtuse | Slow witted or slow to understand | The government displayed some very obtuse thinking when it came to the idea of making tax fairer for everyone. |
| Disparity  | Unequal | The disparity between the rich and poor in this country is shocking. |
| Conceited | Full of yourself | He was so conceited that even when the truth came out, he still kept up the lies.  |
| Indignant | Angry at perceived injustice | It didn’t take long before he became indignant, and everything fell apart after that.  |
| Ambiguous | Confusing, unclear | The main question was ambiguous, and so everyone failed the exam.  |
| Accosted | Confront aggressively | The old lady was accosted on the street by the young thugs. |
| Rancour | Bitterness | He spoke with such rancour that the wedding party decided to punch him in the face.  |

Positive words

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| Invigorate | To energise | They climbed the mountain to invigorate their minds. |
| Perceptive | Having insight into something | The student’s answer was very perceptive, and showed a deep understanding of the topic. |
| Invulnerable  | Can’t be wounded or hurt | The young girl was invulnerable to the bullying that was aimed at her.  |
| Elegant | Graceful, luxurious | She was always elegant, even when she was arrested.  |
| Deference  | Respect for authority or wisdom | They showed great deference to the old lady and instantly gave her a seat. |
| Dauntless  | Fearless | His dauntless nature made him the best candidate for the mission.  |
| Resolute | Determined | They approached the situation with a resolute attitude, and that’s why they succeeded. |

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| Ardent | Keen, passionate | She was enthusiastic, helpful, and ardent in her love for the school |
| Formidable | Worrying strength | The formidable power of the gang terrorized the whole community.  |
| Genial | Pleasant | The old lady was so genial that the young boys decided to join the club. |
| Fervour | Warmth and sincerity | It’s wonderful to see the fervour that children approach Christmas with.  |
| Jocund | Happily | He certainly had a jocund, warm personality, and she always felt better around him. |
| Propitious  | Favourable  | The situation seemed very propitious for making lots of money.  |
| Entranced | Mesmorised, captured, intrigued | She was entranced by her eyes, and instantly fell in love. |
| Voluptuous | Full of sensuousness  | Her lips were voluptuous, and her eyes like emeralds. |
| Intoxicating  | Exhilarating, exciting | The intoxicating aroma of the food made you feel like you were even hungrier than you were.  |
| Reveries | Daydream | He was often lost in the reveries of his mind, and hardly heard a word his mother said.  |
| Venerable  | Held in great esteem or well thought of | My grandfather was a venerable man, always helping those around him. |
| Flourished  | Succeeded  | She flourished in her studies, and was awarded the top score in the whole of the UK. |
| Intrigue  | Great interest | There was a great deal of intrigue about the new school.  |
| Munificence  | Generosity  | The munificence of the old lady was wonderful. She gave all of her money to charity. |
| Melodious  | Sweet sounding | The melodious tones of her voice made it the most wonderful concert.  |
| Transcended  | Moving across  | The success of the movie transcended the actor into a new level of fame. |
| Unblemished  | Unmarked, untouched | His skin was unblemished, probably because he was a vegan.  |
| Prudent  | Wise, smart choice | It’s not very prudent to ignore the health warnings about smoking.  |
| Exquisite  | Amazing, intricate, special beauty or charm | It was an exquisite dress, which is why it cost a fortune. |
| Celerity  | Quickness, speed | The celerity of his movement allowed him to avoid the oncoming bus.  |
| Earnest | Genuine, sincere | He tried to get involved with earnest enthusiasm, but they didn’t want a half-monkey half-man in their play. |

General descriptors

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| Attenuated | Weakened | She let out an attenuated cry; she was finally defeated.  |
| Interminable | Never ending | The exam seemed interminable.  |
| Insouciant | Carefree | The insouciant student unfortunately didn’t pass his exams. |
| Indisputably | Can’t be argued against | Indisputable, the champion was crowned with the title. |
| Incongruent | Inconsistent | The whole speech seemed incongruent, and people left frustrated with the manager. |
| Inconceivable | Can’t imagine or believe something | Failure was inconceivable to the determined athlete.  |
| Promptly | On time, quickly | The bell rang promptly everyday until it caught fire and burned down the school. |
| Invariably | Usually | English people invariably get sunburnt whenever the sun comes out. |
| Contrary | Opposed to, against | Contrary to public opinion, sharks are friendly. |
| Frankly | Openly, truthfully | ‘Frankly my dear, I don’t give a damn.’  |
| Profound | Deep understanding | Her words were profound, and everyone listened intently.  |
| Diffident  | Shy | His diffident nature meant that the girl of his dreams left the party before he could speak to her. |
| Jettisoned  | To throw out | She jettisoned any hopes he had of getting back together.  |
| Susceptible  | Vulnerable  | The baby was susceptible to illness. |
| Inexorable  | Relentless, no stopping it | She approached the subject with almost inexorable interest.  |
| Compunctious | Remorseful, regretful | I wish I didn’t have such compunctious feelings about the move to my new job.  |
| Irrepressible | Can’t be contained | We all love her irrepressible laughter. |
| Imperceptible | Hardly noticeable  | The change in tone was almost imperceptible, but it was enough to upset the young child.  |
| Inexplicable | Can’t be explained | The judge stated his decision, but it seemed inexplicable to most in the courtroom.  |
| Capacious | Plenty of room and space | The capacious bedroom could sleep all of her friends at the sleepover.  |
| Vociferous | Energetic loud voice | The crowd was vociferous against the referee’s decision. |
| Insatiable | Can’t be satisfied | Her hunger for success was insatiable. |
| Laconic | Using few words, being concise | The company name Laconic Industries was the worst tile ever for an acting company. |
| Conspicuous | Easily seen | His new haircut made him very conspicuous.  |
| Timidly | Shyly, with reservation | The young girl approached the roller coaster timidly. |
| Beseeched | Implore, insist, beg | The father beseeched his daughter to listen to his point of view: the party was going to be too dangerous.  |
| Equanimity | Calmness, composed | One of her strongest qualities was her equanimity. She always calmed everyone around her.  |
| Unanimous | Common agreement | The decision to become vegan was unanimous. Everyone wanted to prevent animal cruelty happening in the future.  |
| Expedite | Quicken, speed up a process | The judge expedited the case, and it many of the defense’s witnesses weren’t allowed to give their testimony. |
| Stupefied  | Overwhelmed  | The tourist was stupefied in the new environment; she didn’t know where to go or how to speak the language. |
| Impinged  | Make an impression, to strike | The sight of the accident impinged on his memory forever. |
| Vantage | Superior view | He had an excellent vantage, and so could see the army approaching easily. |
| Luminous | Full of light | The painting seemed bright and luminous, and made you feel a sense of joy when looking at it.  |
| Undulating | Wave like motion | The constant undulating motion of the boat caused the seasickness. |
| Ubiquitous | Everywhere | Mobile phone use is ubiquitous nowadays.  |
| Antithesis | Opposite | He was the antithesis of everything she believed in. He wanted money at all costs: she wanted equality and fairness.  |
| Arbitrary | Random | It seemed like an arbitrary decision, which upset the people at the meeting who wanted a logical response from the council.  |
| Ramifications | Consequences | The ramifications of not studying for exams really hit home when the student failed, and consequently couldn’t get a job.  |
| Transient | Temporary, ephemeral | The transient nature of his lifestyle made it impossible for him to be in a long-term relationship.  |
| Opaque | Hard to see through | The thought processes of the man seemed rather opaque. He didn’t seem to make any logical sense at all.  |
| Obliged | Compelled; debt of gratitude | ‘I’m much obliged to you for your friendliness in this difficult time’, said Mary. |
| Resolved | Determined  | She was resolved to finishing the work that had been building up over the weeks.  |
| Diminish | Reduce | The hopes of the nation diminish when a racist leader is elected.  |
| Lustrous | Shiny | The dog’s coat was certainly lustrous after his bath. |
| Reverently | With respect | He reverently approached the situation and it allowed him to see things in a new light.  |
| Conducive | Favourable, helpful | The light winds weren’t conducive to flying the new kite.  |

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| Recourse | Access to help or protection | The sacked employee wondered if there was any recourse in challenging the decision.  |
| Surfeit  | Excessive amount | The young boy had a surfeit of confidence, which sometimes got in the way of him listening to any advice. |
| Paramount  | Utmost importance | It is paramount to the survival of humans that we abolish nuclear weapons. |
| Affinity  | Connection | The young girl had a real affinity with gymnastics. She seemed to never fall over. |
| Benevolent  | Good willed | It is a benevolent soul that dedicates itself to ensuring others are happy before satisfying its own needs. |
| Aversion  | Turn away | Lots of young people have an aversion to eating healthy food. |
| Countenance  | Facial expression | His countenance dropped significantly when he heard the bad news. |
| Aberrations  | Departing from the usual course | His poor behavior was an aberration. He was normally such a polite student.  |
| Emphatically  | With assertion,  | He declared his position emphatically, and no one spoke after such a powerful argument. |

Words to use instead of SAID

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| Remonstrated | Protest | The student remonstrated with the teacher that the homework wasn’t set, but lost the argument because it was clearly labeled on The Homework Manager. |
| Conjecture | Throwing out opinions without proof | There was lots of conjecture about the identity of the criminal. Many said he was a terrorist.  |
| Lamented | Regretful sorrow | ‘It is a ridiculous decision to cut off the benefits to the disabled young mother of 3’, the official lamented..  |
| Aggrandized  | Making something seem larger than it is | ‘Our team is so much better than your team’, he aggrandized.  |
| Embellished  | Made to seem better, exaggerated | The reporter embellished the facts to suit the views of the owner of the TV station.  |
| Modulated  | Made to seem less, controlled | Punishing him modulated his bad behavior. |
| Construed  | Thought of, believed to be | The murder of Martin Luther King was construed to be the worst day in American history. |
| Vilified | Slander, defame, to speak ill about someone | Because she felt so vilified she decided to leave the club. |
| Beseeched | Implore, insist, beg | The father beseeched his daughter to listen to his point of view: the party was going to be too dangerous.  |
| Endeavoured | Trying with energy | After he endeavoured to get Mary to go surfing, Johnny ended up going alone, as his friend just wouldn’t budge.  |