

EDITORIAL WORDS

LEARNING ENGLISH & IMPROVING VOCABULARY

WORD OF THE DAY (01-31MAY21)

1. **flexitarian** (noun) - a person who eats mostly vegetarian food, but eats non-vegetarian food occasionally.
E.g. One in eight Britons claim to be vegetarian or vegan and another one in five **flexitarian**, eating meat-free sometimes; and although meat consumption rose over the last decade the big rise was in chicken, not red meat. Going veggie for the sake of the planet, rather than the animals, might have sounded eccentric (strange) a generation ago but it barely **raises a millennial (Gen Y born 1981-1996) eyebrow** now.
2. **prowl** (verb) - move (restlessly/stealthily/secretly) around in search of prey (victim/target).
E.g. Since public health services cannot deal with the catastrophe, citizens have been **left to their devices** to, literally, survive. When they seek each other's help to care for the sick in their families, the vigilantes who now **prowl** our virtual and physical streets, threaten violence as they defend the reputation of their political heroes.
3. **war cry** (noun) – a slogan made to rally (gather) people to support a cause; battle cry, rallying call.
E.g. The BJP's strident **war cry** of "Jai Shri Ram", aimed at inciting religious passions, was countered by the Trinamool Congress's more inclusive "Joy Bangla" and the party was successful in labelling the BJP as a party of *Bahiragawtos* (outsiders).
4. **sisyphean** (adjective) – futile, pointless, purposeless, impractical, hopeless, ineffectual, inefficacious, unproductive.
E.g. The main coping strategies available to these countries are **sisyphean** cycles of lockdowns and easing. These buy governments time and reduce the pressure on limited healthcare facilities, but they ravage the economy in the process. In poorer countries where state support is limited, lockdowns can be as deadly as the virus itself, because they remove people's ability to make a living.
5. **repatriation** (noun) – the return of (someone/something) to their country of origin.
E.g. The Australian government's drastic decision to temporarily stop all travellers from India entering Australia has me in tears almost every night, struggling to cope with the uncertainty of when I'll see my husband again. Before he departed Australia for India in March, I was stressed knowing that **repatriation** flights were **few and far between**.

Note:

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6. **hunky-dory** (adjective) – fine, good, quite satisfactory, going well, alright, free of trouble or problems.
E.g. Had the BCCI not wanted to make a point of everything being **hunky dory** in India, it could have played the tournament in the UAE like it did last year. That would have been safer in a small country where a majority of the citizens have been vaccinated... But the BCCI might have **overplayed its hand**. And nearly paid the price.
7. **engender** (verb) – cause, give rise to, bring about, produce, create, (a particular feeling, atmosphere, or situation).
E.g. The bicentenary (200th anniversary) of the Guardian is a cause for celebration and reflection... The Guardian is now one of the largest English-language global news websites – and a success that **engenders** hope.
8. **fast fashion** (mass noun) - cheap garments mass-produced quickly by copying and replicating luxury brands & independent designers' fashion trends and sold in large.
E.g. Big business is **getting in on the act** as sales of 'preloved' (secondhand/used) garments boom. But can the trend curb our love for **fast fashion**?
9. **fend off** (phrasal verb) – oppose, resist, prevent, repel, fight off, ward off, hold off, defend oneself against, keep at bay.
E.g. It is seeking **its pound of flesh** by demanding that its nominee be made the Deputy Chief Minister (in Puducherry). Mr. Rangasamy's reservations in accommodating this demand are pronounced. The tiny territory has never had such a political post. The early disagreement between the allies has led to a delay in the swearing-in of the Cabinet. But it may not be easy for him to **fend off** the BJP.
10. **revel in** (phrasal verb) - enjoy, delight in, take pleasure in, relish, rejoice, savour, bask in.
E.g. Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) rallies to edge out Red Bull's Max Verstappen to win Spanish Grand Prix. **Revelling in** pulling off (achieving) what had looked like an unlikely victory Hamilton immediately paid tribute to the team effort, describing it as a "perfect strategy"... "We were still here late most evenings discussing strategy and we had **all the bases covered** in that respect..." the F1 driver said.

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11. **wunderkind** (noun) – a child prodigy, genius, expert, master; Wunderkind is a German word ('wunder' means 'wonder' and 'kind' means 'child').
E.g. You can put the full force of your mighty tech brain into mining every imaginable piece of data, only to waste it on a wrong assumption. You'd think some **wunderkind** somewhere would wake up.
12. **variegated** (adjective) – multicoloured, multicolour, colourful, rainbow-like; diverse, various, mixed, diversified, varied, sundry.
E.g. The real threat to India's vibrant democracy, its rich **variegated** culture and diversity were the crude attempts to homogenise (make similar) it into a depressing monochrome.
13. **callous** (adjective) – uncaring, heartless, merciless, unfeeling, insensitive, compassionless, inhumane, thick-skinned.
E.g. Either the government was **callous** about the nation's continued fight against COVID-19, or wanted to abdicate responsibility to the States entirely. If not, it would have made a meticulously detailed 'Covid-19 Emergency' Budget for the year 2021-22.
14. **egg on** (phrasal verb) – urge or encourage someone to do something that is usually not good/wise; incite, instigate, provoke, goad, nudge, exhort.
E.g. The priority must be de-escalation to protect the lives of civilians, treated with such ruthless and fatal disregard by both the Israeli government and Palestinian militants. The international community must **bring its weight to bear**. Former US President Donald Trump **egged** Israeli Prime Minister Mr, Benjamin Netanyahu **on** at every turn. There is now an administration in Washington that can address these issues seriously.
15. **unfettered** (adjective) – unrestrained, unrestricted, unconstrained, free, unchecked, unconfined, uncontrolled.
E.g. An **unfettered** market approach or a regulated market with medical colleges that are publicly funded but privately operated, providing competition for traditional government medical colleges, is not the answer to the health workforce crisis.

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16. **salvage** (verb) – rescue, save, restore; retain, preserve, conserve; recover, retrieve, reclaim.
E.g. The UN security council will meet in open session on Sunday to attempt to **salvage** a common position on the new conflict between Israel and Hamas after a week in which the US has faced isolation in its efforts to defend its Israeli ally.
17. **staunch** (adjective) – firm, steadfast, resolute, loyal, faithful, committed, dependable, reliable, constant.
E.g. In his **staunch** defence of Israel, Joe Biden is sticking to a course set decades ago as a young senator, and so far he has not **given ground** on the issue to the progressive wing of his party or many Jewish Democrats urging a tougher line towards Benjamin Netanyahu.
18. **dexterity** (noun) – cleverness, skillfulness, deftness, acumen, finesse, expertise, mastery, subtlety/delicacy.
E.g. Turkey is also exhibiting diplomatic **dexterity**. Despite differences with Egypt over Libya, the East Mediterranean waters and Turkey’s affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood, Turkey now sees Egypt as a valuable partner to promote peace in Libya and pursue their interests jointly in the East Mediterranean by challenging Greece, Israel and Cyprus.
19. **microcosm** (noun) - a thing (a group, a community, a place or a situation) that has all characteristics & aspects of something much larger; a little world, miniature universe.
E.g. But for Palestinians, Sheikh Jarrah is simply a **microcosm** of life in Jerusalem.
20. **wherewithal** (noun) – money, finances, resources, funds; means, ability, capability (required to accomplish a task or purpose).
E.g. At this stage, there needs to be greater impetus in stepping up manufacturing and coverage of vaccines. Not many countries in the world have the **wherewithal** to manufacture their own vaccines if India cannot cater to the vaccination needs of its own citizens and that of the world.
21. **footloose** (adjective) - travelling, wandering, wayfaring, roaming, nomadic, gypsy, migrant.
E.g. Most informal workers are **footloose** casual workers and self-employed. They move from one place to another in search of livelihoods. Furnishing proof of livelihood and income details in the absence of tangible employer-employee relations is very difficult.

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22. **conspicuous** (adjective) - clearly visible, noticeable; obvious, evident, apparent, flagrant, blatant.
E.g. Anyone familiar with India's democracy would find it difficult to believe that we function under a federal Constitution (which has no doubt many unitary characteristics). Harmony between the Centre, and specially those States headed by Opposition parties, is **conspicuous** by its absence.
23. **willy-nilly** (adverb) - it describes something that is done quickly and carelessly without much thought or planning; haphazardly, aimlessly, erratically, randomly.
E.g. Reporting on the CPI(M) in Kerala **willy-nilly** puts reporters in a spot when the leaders start wondering why a particular issue, a controversy or development was treated by the media in a certain way.
24. **myopic** (adjective) - short-sighted, narrow-minded, small-minded, unimaginative, lacking foresight, parochial, illiberal.
E.g. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown just how fragile and **myopic** our civilisation is. While technology has played a huge role in finding a way out of the pandemic through the development of vaccines, it has also highlighted humanity's limitations as our societies became paralysed in the face of forces of nature more powerful than ourselves.
25. **indiscriminate** (adjective) – thoughtless, unthinking, unconsidered, casual, careless, aimless, foolish, mindless, impulsive, ill-considered.
E.g. Hamas has fired an **indiscriminate** and continuous hail (launching/firing) of rockets at Israel, while retaliatory airstrikes by Benjamin Netanyahu's government have rained down on Gaza.
26. **air piracy** (noun) – the hijacking of an airplane/aircraft; aircraft hijacking, skyjacking, airplane hijacking, aircraft piracy.
E.g. Belarusian police arrested opposition blogger Roman Protasevich and his girlfriend, Sofia Sapega, after forcing their Ryanair flight (flying from Athens, Greece to Vilnius, Lithuania) to land in the Belarusian capital Minsk, sparking outrage from European leaders, who have called the plane's grounding a hijacking and act of "**air piracy**".

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27. **vie** (verb) – compete, contend, contest, struggle, strive, fight (with others to do/achieve something).

E.g. Cheap groceries, free delivery, on your doorstep in 10 to 20 minutes. Fast-track grocery services have sprung up like weeds during the pandemic with players ***pulling out all the stops*** to tempt shoppers. At least seven key players are ***vying*** for dominance in the UK.

28. **head-on** (adverb) – directly; with direct opposition; in direct confrontation.

E.g. A recent poll shows more than 80% of the public want the Tokyo Olympics to be either cancelled or postponed again, an option the International Olympic Committee has ruled out. As the public see it, the Games are distracting the government from dealing with the Covid crisis ***head-on***.

29. **fallacy** (noun) – misconception, false idea/belief, mistaken belief, misbelief, false notion, misinterpretation, untruth.

E.g. Another ***fallacy*** of the centrist stance is that right and left are symmetrically extreme. Leftwing violence is largely a failed experiment that faded away in the 1970s. Also, in recent years the strongest voices on the left have mostly told important truths and those on the right have promulgated lies while arguing against basic human rights.

30. **behemoth** (noun) – a very large and powerful company/organization.

E.g. Throughout Amazon's supply chain, Bezos's ***behemoth*** violates workers' safety, dignity and privacy, putting them to work in worksites designed to squeeze as much labor out of them for as little money as possible. Workers do not ***take this lying down***. Supported by a myriad (a lot) of progressive allies, there is labor resistance all over Amazon's global map, with strikes and protests from Spain to São Paulo, from Delhi to Berlin.

31. **double down** (phrasal verb) – to be more firm & resolute on something (decided) even if that might be a risky choice; to double or increase a risk involved in doing something.

E.g. Naomi Osaka fined for media snub (rejection) and threatened with French Open expulsion... Osaka had announced last Wednesday that she would not take part in press conferences at Roland Garros due to their effects on her mental health... She will have two days to consider whether to ***double down*** on her decision not to speak with the press or to come up with an alternative solution.

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