Mr. Valentine’s 12th Grade English – Vocabulary List 7 - Honors

1. Abjure – (Verb) - formally reject or disavow a formerly held belief.

Example – If Hermia becomes a nun, she must “abjure forever the society of men.”

Synonyms – Forswear, renounce, abstain from. Antonyms – Allow, emphasize.

2. Austerity – (Noun) - self-denial, especially refraining from worldly pleasures.

Example – Monks and nuns live a life of austerity, often swearing off wealth, romance, and other things.

Synonyms – Strictness, rigor, hardness. Antonyms – Indulgence, luxuriousness.

3. Comedy – (Noun) - any play in which the main characters manage to avert an impending disaster and have a happy ending. The comedy did not necessarily have to be funny, though sometimes were. Shakespeare’s comedies often have complicated, intertwined plots, mistaken identity, and end with a wedding.

Example – A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night, and the Merry Wives of Windsor are all Shakespearean comedies.

Synonym – N/A Antonym – N/A

4. Drama – (Noun) - A play presenting -- in actions, gestures, and dialogue -- a narrative involving conflict between a character or characters and some external or internal force.

Example – Most of the works Shakespeare is famous for are classified as dramas.

Synonyms – Plays, stage performances. Antonyms – N/A

5. Edict – (Noun) - a formal or authoritative proclamation.

Example – The king issued a formal edict that all men must wear purple pants on Thursdays.

Synonyms – Order, proclamation. Antonyms – Request.

6. Entreat – (Verb) - ask for or request earnestly.

Example – The maiden entreated the duke to pardon her for defying his orders.

Synonyms – Beg, plead, request. Antonyms – Demand, command.

7. Extempore – (Adverb) - With little or no preparation or forethought; ad lib.

Example – The actor was happy that the part could be done extempore, for he was bad at memorizing lines.

Synonyms – Ad lib, impromptu. Antonyms – Scripted, planned.

8. Feign – (Verb) - Make believe with the intent to deceive.

Example – The actor feigned many emotions, from fear to joy, anger to sorrow.

Synonyms – Fake, pretend, act. Antonyms – be honest, be true, tell truth.

9. Forswear – (Verb) - formally reject or disavow a formerly held belief.

Example – When Joe-Bob made a convincing argument, Gilbert forswore his former opinion.

Synonyms – Recant, retract, reject, disavow. Antonyms – Approve, accept, admit.

10. Gallant – (Adjective) - having or displaying great dignity or nobility.

Example – The man proved himself gallant when he stood between the lion and the helpless child.

Synonyms – Noble, dignified, courageous, brave. Antonyms– Cowardly, ungentlemanly, unmannerly.

11. Iambic Pentameter – (Noun) – Verse / poetry whose lines are composed of five pairs (iambs) of syllables, or ten syllables, total.

Example – Many famous authors, such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth, wrote in iambic pentameter.

Synonyms – N/A Antonyms – N/A

12. Interlude – (Noun) - a brief show between the sections of a longer performance.

Example – The amusing commercials provide fun interludes to a lengthy Superbowl.

Synonyms – Intermission, hiatus, interruption, interval. Antonyms – Continuation, resumption.

13. Pastoral – (Noun) – Any work of art or literature dealing with the life of shepherds or with a simple, rural existence. It usually idealized shepherds' lives in order to create an image of peaceful and uncorrupted existence. More generally, pastoral describes the simplicity, charm, and serenity attributed to country life.

Example – The beautiful painting was a pastoral of a man sleeping beneath a tree, beside his herd of sheep, beneath a beautiful blue sky.

Synonyms – Agrarian, rustic, country, rural. Antonyms – Urban, metropolitan, city.

14. Pomp – (Noun) - ceremonial elegance and splendor.

Example – The millionaire’s wedding showed pomp and splendor.

Synonyms – Splendor, magnificence, ostentatiousness. Antonyms – Modesty, simplicity, plainness.

15. Relent – (Verb) - give in, as to influence or pressure.

Example – Judy wished that Joe-Bob would relent in his persistent flirting, for she was not interested.

Synonyms – Give up, give in, cease, stop. Antonyms – Continue, persist.

16. Tawny – (Adjective) - having the color of tanned leather.

Example – The coat and hat the man wished to by were a tawny brown.

Synonyms – Brown. Antonyms – N/A

17. Tragedy – (Noun) - A serious play in which the chief character, by some peculiarity of psychology or weakness of character (i.e. tragic flaw), passes through a series of misfortunes leading to a final, devastating catastrophe.

Example – Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Macbeth, and King Lear are some of Shakespeare’s tragedies.

Synonyms – N/A Antonyms – N/A

18. Verse – (Noun) – Referring to any type of poetry or, sometimes more specifically, to poetry written in meter.

Example – Some books are written in verse, such as the works of Shakespeare, and some are written in the natural speech of prose, such as the Lord of the Rings or Song of Fire and Ice novels.

Synonyms – Poetry. Antonyms – Prose.

19. Vexation – (Noun) - anger produced by some annoying irritation.

Example – The constant error messages, slow-downs, and crashes filled the computer-user with much vexation.

Synonyms – Annoyance, frustration. Antonyms – Happiness, joy.

20. Wont – (Adjective) – Accustomed or used to something (usually an infinitive of some sort).

Example – The man was wont to sleep in on Saturdays, and did not enjoy the interruption to his routine.

Synonyms – Used to, accustomed to, in the habit of. Antonyms – Unaccustomed to, unused to.