

Vocabulary Book

summit

noun

The highest point of a hill or mountain



Synonyms:

peak

mountain-top

crown

“They had trekked to the headwaters of all the great rivers, and stood on the **summits** of all the unconquered mountains.”

Page 3

Chapter 1

perched

verb

Sit on something high or narrow.



Synonyms:

balanced

rested

sat

“He **perched** between his parents as Mum steered the explorermobile carefully along the winding lanes.”

Page 5

shaggy

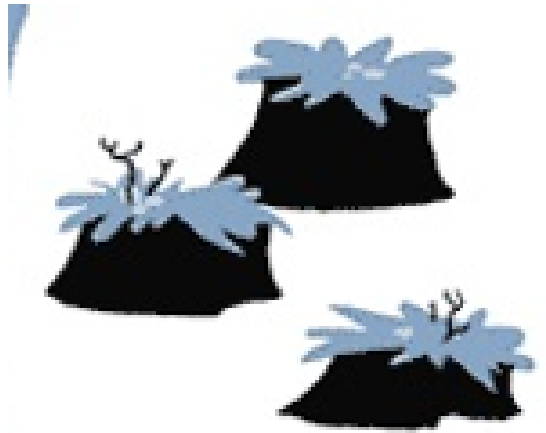
adjective

Having a covering that looks like rough, thick hair

Synonyms:

hairy bushy

“There it was: the blue bay all dotted with shaggy, steep-sided islands.”



Page 5

dappling

verb

Covered with spots of colour (or areas of light) that are lighter or darker than the main colour.

Synonyms:

speckling mottling

“It was big and grey, with orange lichen dappling its roof.”



Page 5

inflatable dinghy

noun

A small rubber boat that you row (or sail)

“His mother and father fetched down their inflatable dinghy from the explorermobile’s roof.”



Page 9

tossed

verb

Move (or make move) from side to side or backwards and forwards.

Synonyms:

lurched

swayed

flailed

“Their inflatable dinghy tossed between them as the waves broke under it.”



Page 12

uncharted

Adjective

Not mapped or surveyed

Synonyms:

unexplored undiscovered

“Most people would be a bit alarmed to find that their parents had disappeared along with a whole bunch of **uncharted** islands.”



Page 15

Chapter 2

barely batted an eyelid

phrase

Show no surprise or worry when something unexpected happens

“He had **barely batted an eyelid** when a bear stole his sleeping bag on the north face of Mount Rainier.”

Page 16

scampered

verb

Run with small quick steps

Synonyms

sprinted scurried skipped



“He **scampered** to where the dinghy waited, and shoved it out into the sea again.”

Page 18

heaved

verb

Raise or lift something with effort

Synonyms:

hauled dragged hoisted



“Oliver **heaved** himself aboard.”

Page 18

ramshackle

adjective

In a state of severe disrepair

Synonyms

dilapidated decrepit

neglected



“There was a **ramshackle** heap of twigs balanced on the pile of boulders which were the highest place on the island.”

Page 19

caterwauling

verb

A high, unpleasant noise like a cat made by a person or an animal

Synonyms:

screeching

wailing

shrieking



“She couldn’t see the point of sitting on rocks and **caterwauling** all day.”

Page 30

flotsam

noun

Things that have been rejected or discarded as worthless.

Synonyms

junk

cast-offs

wreckage

“They love to collect things, you see; all the bits of flotsam that the sea washes up on their heads.”

Page 39

Chapter 3

tussocks

noun

Small area of grass that is thicker or longer than the grass growing around it.

Synonyms:

clusters

“Its summit was mostly bald rock, with those tussocks of grassy hair sprouting here and there.”

Page 40



mournful

adjective

Feeling sadness, regret or grief

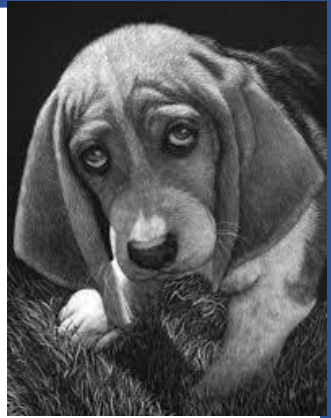
Synonyms

forlorn

grief-stricken

glum

doleful



“I don’t even know whether I can be bothered making the journey,’ the island went on, in its deep and **mournful** voice.”

Page 41

barnacles

noun

Small shellfish that fix themselves tightly to rocks and the bottoms of boats



“Well, you need a name,’ said Oliver, looking up at those craggy features, at the clinging **barnacles** and clumps of weeds.”

Page 44

wreck

noun

The destruction of a ship at sea (shipwreck); something that has been badly damaged or destroyed.



Synonyms

ruins

wreckage

remains

“The dinghy is a sort of **wreck**,’ Oliver pointed out.”

Page 46

submarine

noun

A ship that can go underwater.



“It was the world’s first **submarine**. The king of Spain built it to ferry treasure from his gold mines without English pirates noticing, but it didn’t work too well. It sank and nobody knows where.”

Page 46

rambling

adjective

walking for pleasure (in the countryside)

Synonyms

roaming strolling wandering

“He pointed the islands out to Iris. ‘Are they more **Rambling** Isles?’”



Page 51

Chapter 4

scent

noun

A distinctive smell (usually pleasant)

Synonyms

fragrance aroma perfume

“Oliver sniffed. Sure enough there was a **scent** on the air of green things growing and rotting.”



Page 53

becalmed

adjective

Unable to move through lack of wind

Synonyms

stranded stuck motionless unmoving



“Sailors fear it because their ships get **becalmed** here, and the weed tangles round them and traps them.”

Page 53

sarcastic

adjective

When someone says something, but means something else (often the opposite)

Synonyms

bitter derisive disparaging mocking

“It’s called the **Sarcastic** Sea, and sailors fear it because the weed keeps making horrid, hurtful comments about them.”



Page 54

witheringly

adverb

In a way designed to humiliate or look down on someone

Synonyms

scornfully

sneeringly

contemptuously

“Oliver noticed that as well as the little bladders that helped to keep ordinary types of seaweed afloat, its strands were dotted with beady eyes, which all looked **witheringly** at him.”



Page 55

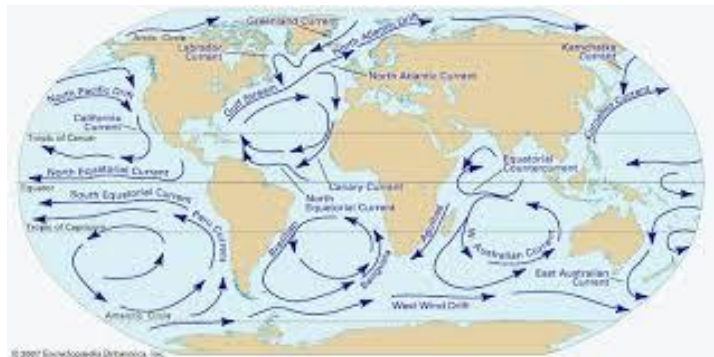
current

Noun

A movement of water in a particular direction

Synonyms

flow



“Two **currents** meet here,’ replied Iris primly.”

Page 58

intriguing

adjective

Arousing someone's curiosity or interest

Synonyms

fascinating captivating puzzling

“A beach of black sand, with steps carved in the cliff behind it, winding up past crumbled walls and watchful statues to those **intriguing** ruins on the summit.”



Page 71

Chapter 5

shrill

adjective

High-pitched and piercing

Synonyms

sharp ear-splitting high

“Her voice sounded very small and thin and **shrill** after the thunder of the Thurlstone's.”



Page 74

vulgar

Adjective

Lacking sophistication or good taste

Synonyms

tasteless showy flashy unrefined



“Don’t like the mermaid, though,” it said. ‘Mermaids are vulgar.’”

Page 74

glee

noun

Great delight, especially from your own good fortune or others’ misfortune.

Synonyms

pleasure joy elation cheerfulness



“Stacey de Lacey clapped his hands. ‘Come, my lovelies!’ he shouted and laughed with wicked glee.”

Page 80

loomed

verb

To appear as a large, often frightening or unclear shape or object



Synonyms

emerged materialized overshadowed

“As the Thurlstone loomed out of the fog to peer down at him he spread his arms out proudly to show it the gibbering, jabbering swarm of monkeys crowded on the shingle behind him.”

Page 90

glass orb

noun

spherical glass object or shape

Synonyms

sphere globe ball



“The glass orbs which were Oliver’s parents’ prisons bobbed on either side of it, towed on their tethers of rope.”

Page 95

subsided

verb

To sink to a low or lower level;
to become quiet

Synonyms

receded fell back sunk collapsed

“Cliff lifted his cave mouth out of the waves to say, ‘What’s the point? He’s beaten me.’ Then he **subsided** again.”



Page 98

Chapter 6

triumphantly

adverb

In a way that suggests you have
achieved a victory

Synonyms

jubilantly proudly gleefully

“He opened his explorer’s pack and **triumphantly** pulled out a foot pump and a Punctured Dinghy Repair Kit.”



Page 101

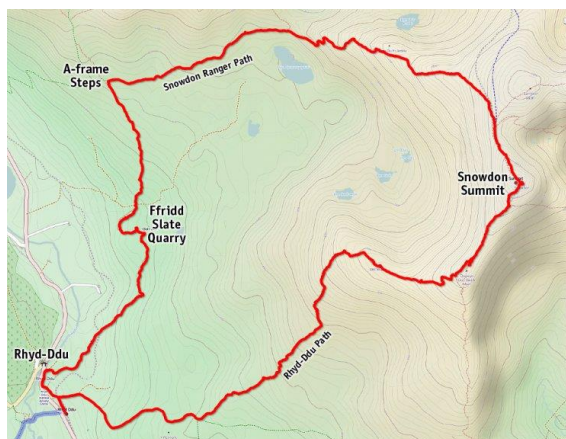
circuit

noun

A roughly circular route

Synonyms

lap tour journey



“Iris took the dinghy on a farewell **circuit** of the island.”

Page 103

sniggering

verb

Laughing at someone or something in an unkind way

Synonyms

ridiculing jeering tittering



“It kept jeering and **sniggering** at him and saying how *brave* it thought he was.”

Page 108

shoal

noun

A large number of fish swimming together



Synonyms

group

crowd

horde

mass

“Merfolk were darting in **shoals** between the islands’ feet.”

Page 114

Chapter 7

wary

adjective

Feeling or showing caution about possible dangers or problems



Synonyms

suspicious

doubtful

mistrustful

“The islands around it were all casting **wary**, envious looks at its fine wig.”

Page 114

yelped

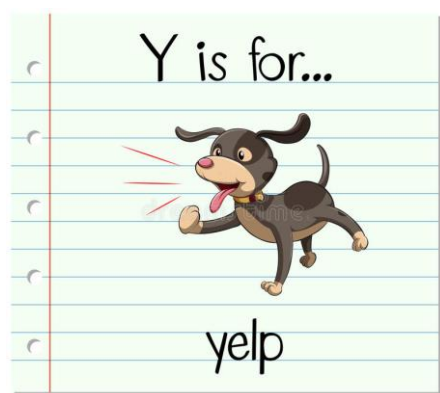
verb

To give a quick, sharp, shrill cry

Synonyms

squealed howled called out

“He **yelped** with fright as the creature doggy-paddled round in front of him, grinning madly.”



Page 118

crevice

noun

Narrow opening, especially in a rock or wall

Synonyms

fissure cleft gap crack nook

“From nooks and **crevices** in the island’s shores more monkeys were jumping down into the surf and swimming out to see what their friends had found.”



Page 120

swell

noun

A wave, especially when long and unbroken

Synonyms

wave

undulation

ripple



“The dinghy rose and fell upon a gentle **swell**.”

Page 127

Chapter 8

agitation

noun

A state of anxiety or nervous excitement

Synonyms

anxiety

distress alarm



“But what about the ARMY OF MONKEYS?’ she said, flapping her fins about in **agitation**.”

Page 129

modest

adjective

Not overly proud or confident or boastful

Synonyms

humble bashful unpretentious shy



“Of course you can!” they said. ‘This is no time to be **modest**! Come *along*!’”

Page 131

Chapter 9

huddled

verb

To crowd together closely

Synonyms

clustered nestled squeezed



“Mr and Mrs Crisp were asleep, **huddled** in the bottoms of the globes, which clinked gently against each other from time to time, like wine glasses.”

Page 135

fend off

verb

To defend yourself against someone or something

Synonyms

resist

repel

ward off



“Oliver tried to **fend** the monkeys **off**, but soon he was pinned down under a gibbering heap of them.”

Page 139

chortled

verb

To laugh or chuckle when pleased

Synonyms

giggled

chuckled

cackled tittered



“Now the Thurlstone’s wig is finished!” he **chortled**.
‘Not just *two* stupid Crisps, but the whole set!’”

Page 139

brow

noun

A person's forehead



“Oliver waited too, dangling from the Thurlstone’s **brow**, his glass globe swinging to and fro in its creaking basket of ropes..”

Page 147

Chapter 10

jutting out

verb

Sticking outwards

Synonyms

protruding

poking out



“On her summit towered a massive wig of trees and flowers and grasses, with rainbows knotted in it, and the prows of Viking longships **jutting out** like ornate hairpins.”

Page 149

preened

verb

To make yourself look attractive

Synonyms

groomed prettified beautified



“The prouder ones **preened** themselves, hoping to attract the votes of their neighbours.”

Page 150

captive

adjective

imprisoned

Synonyms

enslaved caged locked up



“**Captive** humans! How original! No island had worn **captive** humans for *centuries*.”

Page 151

crescendo

noun

A gradual increase in loudness



“Just then the song of the mermaids rose in a wild **crescendo**.”

Page 152

solemn

adjective

Formal and serious

Synonyms

dignified

awe-inspiring

serious



“Iris peered about, trying not to be distracted by the hoots of the angry islands, who were all outraged that a mere mermaid had dared to interrupt that **solemn** moment.”

Page 154

flinched

verb

A sudden, small movement because of pain or fear

Synonyms

recoiled

squirmed

wincing



“He snatched at out-juttings of rock to slow himself, and the Thurlstone **flinched** just as it had before.”

Page 162

bedraggled

adjective

In a messy state; wet, limp and dirty from mud and water

Synonyms

disheveled

untidy

soggy

grubby



“Stacey de Lacey sat on it, **bedraggled** and alone, using another, smaller piece of flotsam for a paddle.”

Page 178

mEEK

adjective

Willing to go along with what other people want to do

Synonyms

subdued

passive

quiet

“Mr and Mrs Crisp were very meek during the journey home.”



Page 183

Chapter 11

croTchetY

adjective

irritable

Synonyms

bad-tempered

cross

cantankerous

“He would even miss crotchety Mr Culpeper.”



Page 185