

9/21/25

Elegant English

Estimated play time: Approximately 15 minutes

Number of players: Unlimited

Supplies needed: Scoring board/pad; noisemakers

Suitable for visually impaired players.

Overview:

The words in this game are not obscure, but they are not commonly used in everyday conversation. For example, most of us would say, “The star of that movie had black hair and very pale, white skin.” But perhaps a more elegant word choice would be to say that the movie star had *alabaster* skin.

In this game, we provide a list of “elegant” words. You should first try to come up with the correct definitions on your own. If you can’t, we have provided three definitions from which you must choose the correct one.

We will be posting this game format regularly until we complete the alphabet. This week, we are looking at elegant words that begin with the letter F.

Instructions:

1. This game can be played by individuals or in teams.
2. Read the first word and ask for its definition. Discussion is permitted among teammates. Prior to the start of the game, a method to signal when a team is ready to answer must be determined. Ringing bells and New Year’s blowers are just two inexpensive noisemakers. Raised hands work, but the host must be vigilant to watch for whose hand went up first. The host always has the final say in any disputes.
3. After a player/team is recognized as the first to signal, they may give an answer. If the first answer is incorrect, the other teams may “buzz” in and answer.
4. If no one comes up with the correct definition, read the three possible answers.
5. As before, the first player/team to signal may give an answer. If the answer is incorrect, the others may “buzz” in.
6. Score 10 points for each correct answer. Play until all questions have been asked and answered.

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INSTRUCTIONS: In this game, we provide a list of words that are not obscure, but not very commonly used. You should first try to come up with the correct definitions on your own. If you can't, we have provided three definitions from which you must choose the correct one.

1. Feckless: (FECK•liss)
A: Without emotion; apathetic
B: Clusters of brown spots on the face or arms
C: Incompetent; lacking determination
2. Fete: (FATE or FET)
A: An exclamation of disgust
B: To rot or become rancid
C: A special celebration event, usually to honor a person or occasion
3. Flotsam: (FLOT•sum)
A: Broken wood or waste materials found on the beach
B: An armada of warships
C: A master flute player
4. Foment: (fo•MENT)
A: To become light and bubbly
B: Chemical used in developing film
C: To instigate or stir up trouble
5. Foible: (FOY•bull)
A: An instrument that lifts heavy items
B: A major mistake in pronunciation
C: A minor fault or weakness in habit or character
6. Feral: (FER•ul)
A: A rebellious student
B: Reverting to wildness, especially after escaping from captivity
C: Very rusty
7. Fulminate: (FULL•min•ate)
A: To criticize severely or protest vehemently
B: To fully understand a complex concept
C: To waiver indecisively

8. Fastidious: (fas•TID•e•us)
A: To complete tasks overly quickly without much thought
B: Very concerned about accuracy and detail
C: To adhere to a diet too strictly
9. Febrile: (FEB•rile)
A: Bitterly cold
B: Exhibiting the symptoms of a fever
C: Unsterile
10. Firebrand: (FIRE•brand)
A: A troublemaker
B: An arsonist
C: An innovative person; an inventor
11. Fatuous: (FAT•chew•us)
A: Very tired; exhausted
B: Silly; foolish; purposeless
C: A tendency to be overweight
12. Finial: (FIN•e•ul)
A: An ornament at the end of curtain rods or the top of lamps
B: The last page of a book, usually blank
C: The end fin of aquatic animals such as seals, whales and fish

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ANSWERS

1. Feckless: C: Incompetent; lacking determination
2. Fete: C: A special celebration event, usually to honor someone
3. Flotsam: A: Broken wood or waste materials found on the beach
4. Foment: C: To instigate or stir up trouble
5. Foible: C: A minor fault or weakness in habit or character
6. Feral: B: Reverting to wildness, especially after escaping from captivity
7. Fulminate: A: To criticize severely or protest vehemently
8. Fastidious: B: Very concerned about accuracy and detail
9. Febrile: B: Exhibiting the symptoms of a fever
10. Firebrand: A: A troublemaker
11. Fatuous: B: Silly; foolish; purposeless
12. Finial: A: An ornament at the end of curtain rods or the top of lamps