

1/4/26

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 **T**.

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. Talisman (TAL•iss•man)
A: The lead pallbearer at a state funeral.
B: A trinket thought to have magical powers and bring good luck.
C: A protective case that holds religious text, such as a Bible or the Torah.
2. Terse (TERSS)
A: Non-rhyming poetry.
B: Description of an injured muscle that is stiff and painful.
C: Brief and to the point; using few words.
3. Turgid (TUR•jid)
A: Tediously pompous or bombastic, especially in language.
B: A harsh detergent used for industrial cleaning.
C: A young, stubborn child who has frequent tantrums.
4. Temerity (tem•EHR•it•tee)
A: Painful shyness.
B: Exceedingly loud noise
C: Fearless daring.
5. Torpor (TOR•per)
A: A state of inactivity, both physical and mental.
B: A natural material used to bind bricks when building a wall or other structure.
C: A state of constant dizziness, usually following an extended illness and period of bed rest.
6. Testator (TESS•tay•ter)
A: A person who testifies in a non-criminal court case.
B: A person who makes a will.
C: A person who monitors college exams to ensure the integrity of the tests.
7. Turbid (TUR•bid)
A: Cloudy or opaque, especially with liquids.
B: Infected.
C: A religious head dressing.

8. Tractable (TRACK•ta•bul)
 - A: Acreage that can be prepared for agricultural purposes.
 - B: Easily controlled or managed.
 - C: Streets and roads that are particularly suited for races and marathons.
9. Tangential (tan•JEN•chill)
 - A: The moment a speaker forgets his or her train or thought.
 - B: A form of algebra.
 - C: Of superficial relevance, if any.
10. Truculence (TRUCK•you•lence)
 - A: The trait of being quick to argue or aggressively defiant.
 - B: Excessive bleeding.
 - C: Moral decline cause by over-indulgence in luxury.
11. Teetotaler (tee•TOTE•ler)
 - A: A person who drinks too much alcohol.
 - B: A person who never drinks alcohol.
 - C: A person who gave up playing golf.
12. Tarantella (tar•run•TELL•ah)
 - A: A large, poisonous spider from South and Central America.
 - B: An ornate comb worn in the hair of a female flamenco dancer.
 - C: A rapid, whirling dance that originated in Italy.
13. Tilde (TIL•duh)
 - A: The plastic material that coats each end of a shoelace.
 - B: The mark that is placed over an “n” in Spanish when pronounced as “ny.”
 - C: The musical notation that tells the instrument player to rest.
14. Titian (TISH•in)
 - A: One of a group of giant human-like creatures from Danish mythology.
 - B: A bright brownish-orange color.
 - C: A small, colorful, extremely endangered Southeast Asian bird.
15. Trumpery
 - A: Showy but worthless.
 - B: A false, exaggerated story.
 - C: Bawdy humor.
16. Taciturn (TASS•it•turn)
 - A: Grumpy.
 - B: A person, usually a woman, who looks older than her years.
 - C: Reserved; saying very little.

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ANSWERS

1. Talisman B: A trinket thought to have magical powers and bring good luck.
2. Terse C: Brief and to the point; using few words.
3. Turgid A: Tediously pompous or bombastic, especially in reference to language.
4. Temerity C: Fearless daring.
5. Torpor A: A state of inactivity, both physical and mental.
6. Testator B: A person who makes a will.
7. Turbid A: A clouded liquid ... often with sediment.
8. Tractable B: Easily controlled or managed.
9. Tangential C: Of superficial relevance, if any.
10. Truculence A: The trait of being quick to argue or aggressively defiant.
11. Teetotaler B: A person who never drinks alcohol.
12. Tarantella C: A rapid, whirling dance that originated in Italy.
13. Tilde: B: The mark that is placed over an “n” in Spanish when pronounced as “ny.”
14. Titian: B: A bright brownish-orange color.
15. Trumpery A: Showy but worthless. (*Note: “Trumpery” is unrelated to President Trump. It is from Old French and has been used since the 17th century in English.*)
16. Taciturn C: Reserved; saying very little.