

ISEE CORE VOCABULARY

SECTION 3

The following words will help you prepare for the vocabulary you will encounter on the Lower, Middle, and Upper levels of the ISEE. These words are sorted by subject category to help you learn groups of words with similar or related definitions. When you learn a word, pay attention to its part of speech (is it a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb?) and to other possible definitions of the word. The level of the word approximately corresponds to your grade level. Although any of these words might appear on any level of the ISEE, younger students may want to focus on the less difficult vocabulary first before tackling more challenging words.

Use this section as a study aid and write your own personal sentence for each word to help you remember it. To help cement your learning, try making separate flashcards for each word, writing the word on the front, and writing all of its definitions and your own personal sentence on the back. In order to master as many words as possible before your ISEE exam, create a daily schedule and make sure to review old words while you are learning new ones.

#	WORD	LEVEL	DEFINITION	SAMPLE SENTENCE	GROUP
1	colleague	6	N: a co-worker or fellow classmate	The young doctor impressed his colleagues with the difficult diagnosis.	Relationships & Emotions
2	compatible	7	ADJ: capable of getting along well with other people or things	George and Larry seem to have compatible personalities, as they get along quite well.	Relationships & Emotions

3	accommodate	8	V: (1) to be agreeable, acceptable, suitable, (2) to adapt. ADJ: accommodating	(1) This table is meant to accommodate six diners. (2) Jose worked to accommodate himself to the difficult economic times.	Relationships & Emotions
4	amiable	10	ADJ: friendly, kind, likeable	Kelly was an amiable hostess, friendly and welcoming to all of her guests.	Relationships & Emotions
5	congenial	10	ADJ: friendly, sociable, suited to one's needs	The college aimed to create a congenial atmosphere for both professors and students.	Relationships & Emotions
6	aloof	10	ADJ: emotionally distant	The grandfather was generally aloof and uninterested in playing with his grandchildren.	Relationships & Emotions
7	nonchalant	9	ADJ: casual, calm, unconcerned	The mayor's nonchalant attitude toward the disaster lost him many supporters.	Relationships & Emotions
8	apathetic	8	ADJ: showing no interest or concern. N: apathy	Politicians are wondering why voters are so apathetic this election year.	Relationships & Emotions
9	indifferent	8	ADJ: showing no interest or concern. N: indifference	I really don't care where we go for dinner tonight-- I am entirely indifferent.	Relationships & Emotions
10	sentimental	6	ADJ: overly emotional	Although he had long outgrown it, Neil felt a sentimental attachment to his baby blanket.	Relationships & Emotions

11	hysterical	8	ADJ: having excessive and uncontrollable emotion. N: hysteria	When she heard the news, Susan reacted with hysterical sobbing.	Relationships & Emotions
12	benevolent	10	ADJ: kind, generous. N: benevolence	Queen Elizabeth was a benevolent ruler, generous and responsive to the needs of her people.	Relationships & Emotions
13	compassionate	5	ADJ: kind, sympathetic. N: compassion	Mrs. White was a firm instructor but also compassionate towards her students.	Relationships & Emotions
14	empathy	6	N: understanding another's feelings. ADJ: empathetic	Caring and considerate, Liam always expressed deep empathy towards others.	Relationships & Emotions
15	charismatic	8	ADJ: charming. N: charisma	With his naturally magnetic and charming personality, he was a charismatic leader.	Relationships & Emotions
16	engaging	6	ADJ: interesting, charming, attractive	The students found the hands-on activity more engaging than simply reading a textbook.	Relationships & Emotions
17	gracious	7	ADJ: charming, generous, polite	Always a good sport, the losing player was still gracious in defeat.	Relationships & Emotions
18	courteous	6	ADJ: polite. N: courtesy	The staff was courteous and helpful when asked for advice.	Relationships & Emotions

19	cordial	9	ADJ: polite, friendly	The president extended a cordial invitation to the Chinese and Korean ambassadors.	Relationships & Emotions
20	tact	7	N: consideration and sensitivity in dealing with others. ADJ: tactful	Diplomats must display tact when dealing with sensitive issues between nations.	Relationships & Emotions
21	emulate	8	V: to copy or imitate, to look up to	An excellent team player, Christine is a role model whom everyone should emulate.	Relationships & Emotions
22	flatter	6	V: to praise excessively or dishonestly. N: flattery	At first flattered by his employee's compliments, the boss realized that she was only angling for a pay raise.	Relationships & Emotions
23	fidelity	8	N: faithfulness, loyalty	The knight served his king with utmost fidelity.	Relationships & Emotions
24	steadfast	8	ADJ: determined, loyal, steady	Maria's steadfast commitment to the cause won her great recognition.	Relationships & Emotions
25	fickle	7	ADJ: not reliable or dependable, changing opinions frequently	The fans were fickle, abandoning the team whenever it began to lose.	Relationships & Emotions
26	headstrong	6	ADJ: stubborn, disobedient	Elizabeth showed a headstrong determination to do things her own way.	Relationships & Emotions

27	obstinate	8	ADJ: stubborn, disobedient. N: obstinacy	Despite evidence to the contrary, Alex obstinately refused to admit he had made a mistake.	Relationships & Emotions
28	exasperate	6	V: to annoy, irritate. ADJ: exasperating	The mother was exasperated by her daughter's whining.	Relationships & Emotions
29	infuriate	7	V: to anger or enrage. ADJ: infuriating	The judge's decision against him infuriated the defendant.	Relationships & Emotions
30	indignant	10	ADJ: outraged, angry at something unjust.	The new ruling inspired an onslaught of indignant letters of protest.	Relationships & Emotions
31	mock	6	V: to ridicule or make fun of. N: mockery	The newcomer was mocked for his foreign accent.	Relationships & Emotions
32	malicious	7	ADJ: intending to harm or cause suffering N: malice	Jenny was deeply hurt by the malicious rumors spread about her.	Relationships & Emotions
33	exploit	6	(1) V: to take advantage of, (2) N: a bold action or deed	(1) The drug company exploited the system by abusing the patients' trust. (2) The daring exploits of Robin Hood are legendary.	Relationships & Emotions
34	belittle	7	V: to put someone down, to express a negative opinion	People would not belittle the disabled if they got to know them better.	Relationships & Emotions
35	jeer	7	V: to laugh at with scorn, N: a scornful laugh	When Ryan first got braces, the school bullies jeered at him.	Relationships & Emotions

36	snub	8	V: to behave coldly towards, to ignore	Mary could not understand why her friends now snubbed her and ignored her in the hall.	Relationships & Emotions
37	condescend	6	V: to look down on, to display arrogance. ADJ: condescending	The arrogant judge finally condescended to speak with the poor woman.	Relationships & Emotions
38	disdain	6	N: arrogance, scorn, V: to display scorn. ADJ: disdainful	The criminal showed disdain for the law.	Relationships & Emotions
39	hypocrite	7	N: someone who says one thing and does another. ADJ: hypocritical	Sam's father forced all of his children to eat their vegetables, but he hypocritically never ate his own.	Relationships & Emotions
40	admonish	8	V: to scold or warn strongly	The players were admonished for not paying close enough attention during the game.	Relationships & Emotions
41	reprimand	8	(1) V: to scold or warn strongly. (2) N: a strong warning	(1) The policeman reprimanded the careless driver but did not issue a ticket. (2) The student received a strong reprimand from the teacher for forgetting his homework.	Relationships & Emotions
42	vivacious	9	ADJ: lively, spirited	Catherine's vivacious and enthusiastic personality made her a great team member.	Relationships & Emotions

43	animated	7	ADJ: lively, spirited. N: animation	She approached the challenge with an energetic, animated attitude.	Relationships & Emotions
44	extrovert	8	N: a sociable, outgoing person. ADJ: extroverted	Outgoing and sociable, Elaine is a true extrovert.	Relationships & Emotions
45	introvert	8	N: a person who has a quiet, reserved personality. ADJ: introverted	James is friendly but introverted, keeping his thoughts and feelings to himself.	Relationships & Emotions
46	reserved	8	ADJ: quiet, shy, not showing one's feelings. N: reservation	Mark is a reserved person, not likely to share his feelings openly.	Relationships & Emotions
47	timid	6	ADJ: shy, lacking confidence	The timid animals ran away as we approached.	Relationships & Emotions
48	meek	7	ADJ: humble, tame	Despite his meek attitude, he was actually a courageous opponent.	Relationships & Emotions
49	docile	9	ADJ: obedient, tame	Sarah was a docile and obedient student who never questioned what the teacher said.	Relationships & Emotions
50	subdued	8	ADJ: quiet, low-key, hushed. V: subdue	The painting should be displayed in a room with soft, subdued lighting.	Relationships & Emotions
51	submissive	7	ADJ: giving in to orders, obedient. V: submit	Nova was an overly submissive dog, easily dominated by more assertive animals.	Relationships & Emotions

52	passive	8	ADJ: lacking in energy or will, submissive	Gordon is a passive group member, preferring to let others take charge and make decisions.	Relationships & Emotions
53	cynical	8	ADJ: believing the worst about people or events	Many young voters are cynical about politicians and their campaign promises.	Overcoming Obstacles
54	dejected	9	ADJ: depressed, sad. N: dejection	Eric was dejected after hearing the bad news.	Overcoming Obstacles
55	initiate	6	V: to begin	Customers can use the online forum to initiate discussion about the product.	Overcoming Obstacles
56	fatigue	7	N: exhaustion, tiredness. ADJ: fatigued	After his third night with little sleep, Michael was suffering from severe fatigue.	Overcoming Obstacles
57	feeble	6	ADJ: weak, faint, lacking strength	Aaron gave a rather feeble excuse for why he forgot his homework.	Overcoming Obstacles
58	diligent	7	ADJ: steadily persevering to complete a task. N: diligence	Mary is a diligent student, studying every day to improve her grades.	Overcoming Obstacles
59	industrial	7	ADJ: (1) diligent, hardworking, (2) related to making goods and services. N: industry	(1) The group approached the project with industry, working hard at each task until it was complete. (2) Factories and new inventions boomed during the Industrial Revolution.	Overcoming Obstacles

60	valiant	8	ADJ: showing courage or determination. N: valor	Although it was defeated, the team made a valiant effort during the soccer match.	Overcoming Obstacles
61	resolute	7	ADJ: determined, firm, unyielding. N/V: resolve	Martia's hard work and resolute determination earned her great success in her career.	Overcoming Obstacles
62	emphatic	7	ADJ: forceful, spoken with emphasis	When asked whether he would change his mind, Peter made an emphatic refusal.	Overcoming Obstacles
63	endeavor	7	V: to make an attempt, N: an attempt	Scientists are currently endeavoring to find a cure for cancer.	Overcoming Obstacles
64	endure	5	V: to suffer, to put up with something unpleasant. N: endurance	Residents of Siberia have to endure extremely cold, dark winters.	Overcoming Obstacles
65	withstand	7	V: to resist, to stand up to something	Strong as they were, the walls of the fortress could not withstand the attack.	Overcoming Obstacles
66	resilient	8	ADJ: springing back, recovering quickly	Policemen have to be resilient in order to cope with and bounce back from the stress of their work.	Overcoming Obstacles
67	robust	9	ADJ: strong, sturdy	There are few plants robust enough to survive the arctic climate.	Overcoming Obstacles
68	pragmatic	9	ADJ: practical, useful. N: pragmatist	The software's pragmatic design was intended to make it easier to use.	Overcoming Obstacles

69	fret	8	V: to worry unnecessarily	Relax, enjoy, and don't fret the small stuff!	Overcoming Obstacles
70	adversity	8	N: hardship, difficulty, misfortune. ADJ: adverse	Martin Luther King, Jr. had to overcome great adversity in his struggle for racial equality.	Overcoming Obstacles
71	plight	7	N: a difficult or extremely unpleasant situation	After the earthquake, the world was concerned about the plight of the citizens of Haiti.	Overcoming Obstacles
72	predicament	6	N: a difficult or extremely unpleasant situation	The doctor was faced with a difficult predicament: how could he treat the patient's infection if the patient was allergic to antibiotics?	Overcoming Obstacles
73	rigor	8	N: something very hard to endure. ADJ: rigorous	The rigorous curriculum was designed to challenge the students and teach them how to manage a heavy workload.	Overcoming Obstacles
74	strenuous	7	ADJ: requiring hard effort or energy	Mountain climbing is a strenuous activity, requiring strength as well as endurance.	Overcoming Obstacles
75	toil	6	V: to labor, to work hard N: hard work	At noon, the farmhands came back for lunch and a chance to rest from their toil under the hot sun.	Overcoming Obstacles