



Test Ninjas

VOCABULARY STUDY SERIES

GMAT VOCABULARY

GMAT Vocabulary: Change, Growth & Risk

55 focused words in Change, Growth & Risk

55

UNIQUE WORDS

1

CATEGORIES

GMAT

EXAM FOCUS



About this study guide

This vocabulary guide was prepared and published by Test Ninjas as an independent study resource. It is designed to help students build the precise word knowledge needed for demanding academic reading and reasoning.

How to use this guide

Study in short, repeated sessions. Read each definition, say the word aloud, and use the example to understand how the word functions in context. Return to unfamiliar words until you can explain them without looking at the definition.

Copyright and permitted use

© 2026 Test Ninjas. All rights reserved. A lawful purchaser may print this document for personal study or for students in one class directly taught by that purchaser. Redistribution, resale, public posting, dataset extraction, and use for training or evaluating automated systems are prohibited without written permission.

Independent publication. SAT, ACT, GRE, GMAT, and LSAT are trademarks of their respective owners. Their owners are not affiliated with, and do not endorse, Test Ninjas.

001 anachronistic *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Belonging to a period other than the one being portrayed; outdated

The novel's characters use smartphones in a story supposedly set in the 1950s, an **anachronistic** error the editor missed.

MEMORY CUE: A smartphone in an ancient castle is anachronistic because it belongs to another time.

002 awry *adverb/adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Away from the expected course; amiss

The carefully planned experiment went **awry** when a power outage corrupted the data at a critical stage.

MEMORY CUE: A wheel tilted awry sends the entire cart off course.

003 culminate *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To reach a climax or point of highest development

Years of research **culminated** in a paper that transformed the field of molecular biology.

MEMORY CUE: A climb culminates at the highest peak and final climax.

004 debacle *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

A sudden and ignominious failure; a fiasco

The product launch was a **debacle**, with software glitches rendering the device unusable.

MEMORY CUE: A debacle is a plan collapsing spectacularly into humiliating failure.

005 deflation *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

A general decline in the prices of goods and services across an economy.

Persistent **deflation** encouraged consumers to delay purchases because they expected prices to fall further.

MEMORY CUE: Deflation lets air out of the economy's price balloon, making the overall level shrink.

006 degrade *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Break down; deteriorate in quality or structure over time

Ultraviolet radiation causes plastics to **degrade**, releasing microparticles that contaminate soil and water.

MEMORY CUE: Sunlight can degrade material, breaking its quality down over time.

007 deteriorate *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To become progressively worse in quality, condition, or value

Without proper conservation, the medieval frescoes will continue to **deteriorate** from exposure to moisture and light.

MEMORY CUE: A once-solid wall crumbling over time shows it deteriorating.

008 dislocation *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Disturbance from a proper or original position; disruption

The rapid **dislocation** of traditional communities during industrialization created social upheaval that lasted generations.

MEMORY CUE: A dislocation knocks something away from its proper position or order.

009 dispersal *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

The action or process of distributing or spreading things over a wide area

Wind-driven **dispersal** of seeds allows certain plant species to colonize areas far from the parent organism.

MEMORY CUE: Dispersal scatters seeds outward across a wide area.

010 displacement *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

The moving of something from its place or position; the replacing of one thing by another

The **displacement** of indigenous languages by colonial tongues remains one of the most lasting effects of imperialism.

MEMORY CUE: Displacement pushes one object from its place and puts another there.

011 displacing *verb (present participle)*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Taking the place of; pushing aside

Automation is **displacing** workers in sectors that once provided stable middle-class employment.

MEMORY CUE: A new technology displacing an old one pushes it aside.

012 dissolution *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

The breaking up or disintegration of something; the closing down of an assembly

The **dissolution** of the Soviet Union in 1991 redrew the political map of an entire continent.

MEMORY CUE: Dissolution dissolves an organized whole until its parts break apart.

013 dormant *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Temporarily inactive; in a state of rest or suspension

The volcano had been **dormant** for centuries before showing signs of renewed activity.

MEMORY CUE: A dormant seed rests underground: alive but temporarily inactive and not growing.

014 eclipse *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To surpass in importance or achievement; to obscure or overshadow

The younger scientist's groundbreaking discoveries threatened to **eclipse** the contributions of her more famous mentor.

MEMORY CUE: A brilliant newcomer can eclipse a veteran by overshadowing their achievement.

015 eclipsed *verb (past tense)*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Surpassed or outshone; made to seem less important

The scandal **eclipsed** the administration's genuine policy achievements, dominating headlines for months.

MEMORY CUE: The moon eclipsed the sun, obscuring and outshining its disk.

016 emulated *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Matched or surpassed by imitation; strived to equal

Younger painters **emulated** her bold use of color, though none quite captured the emotional intensity of her originals.

MEMORY CUE: A student emulated the master, striving to equal the admired model.

017 enduring *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Lasting over a long period; durable

The philosopher's **enduring** influence can be traced in debates that continue to shape political theory three centuries later.

MEMORY CUE: An enduring bridge remains solid through years of storms.

018 engender *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To cause or give rise to a feeling, situation, or condition

The policy change **engendered** widespread resentment among the affected communities.

MEMORY CUE: A seed engenders a new plant by giving rise to it.

019 ephemeral *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Lasting for a very short time; transient; fleeting

Social media posts are **ephemeral** by nature, yet their consequences can be lasting and far-reaching.

MEMORY CUE: An ephemeral soap bubble shines briefly and vanishes.

020 extant *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Still in existence; surviving

Only three **extant** copies of the original manuscript are known to exist.

MEMORY CUE: An extant manuscript still exists rather than having vanished or been destroyed.

021 fiscal *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Relating to government revenue, taxation, spending, or public budgets.

The legislature adopted a **fiscal** stimulus that increased infrastructure spending during the economic slowdown.

MEMORY CUE: A fiscal policy sits in the government's budget book beside taxes and public spending.

022 fleeting *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Lasting for a very short time; passing quickly

The comet's appearance was **fleeting**, visible to the naked eye for only three nights before fading from view.

MEMORY CUE: A fleeting shadow crosses the wall and disappears almost immediately.

023 fostered *verb (past tense)*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Encouraged or promoted the development of something

The mentorship program **fostered** a sense of belonging among first-generation college students who might otherwise have felt isolated.

MEMORY CUE: A greenhouse fostered young plants by encouraging their development.

024 hibernation *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

A state of inactivity or dormancy (used metaphorically here for a practice that had gone dormant)

The art form had entered a kind of **hibernation** in the early twentieth century before a dramatic revival in the 1960s.

MEMORY CUE: A bear's winter battery drops to minimum during hibernation.

025 **imminent** *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

About to happen; impending

With floodwaters rising by the hour, the danger to downstream communities was **imminent**.

MEMORY CUE: An imminent event stands one second away on a countdown clock.

026 **immovable** *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Unable to be moved; fixed and rigid

The negotiator found her counterpart **immovable** on the key issue, forcing the talks to stall.

MEMORY CUE: An immovable boulder stays fixed despite every effort to shift it.

027 **immutable** *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Unchanging over time; unable to be altered

The laws of thermodynamics are considered **immutable**, governing everything from engine design to the fate of the universe.

MEMORY CUE: An immutable rule is carved into stone that cannot be changed.

028 **incessant** *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Continuing without pause or interruption; ceaseless

The **incessant** noise from the construction site made it impossible for residents to sleep or concentrate.

MEMORY CUE: An incessant alarm sounds continuously without pause.

029 **infusion** *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

The introduction of a new element or quality; an injection (as of capital)

The **infusion** of venture capital allowed the startup to hire top engineers and accelerate product development.

MEMORY CUE: An infusion pours a new element, quality, or capital into something.

030 **leverage** *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

The use of borrowed money to increase the potential return and risk of an investment.

Heavy **leverage** magnified the property fund's losses when rental income could no longer cover interest payments.

MEMORY CUE: Financial leverage uses a debt lever to lift returns, but the same lever can deepen losses.

031 **momentary** *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Lasting for a very short time; brief

A **momentary** lapse in concentration cost the chess grandmaster the match and the tournament title.

MEMORY CUE: A momentary light flashes for one brief instant.

032 monetary *adjective***CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK**

Relating to money, interest rates, credit conditions, or the money supply.

The central bank tightened **monetary** policy by raising interest rates to restrain rapid price growth.

MEMORY CUE: MONETARY resembles MONEY: it concerns the supply, price, and flow of money.

033 nascent *adjective***CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK**

Just beginning to develop; not yet fully formed; emerging

The **nascent** democracy faced numerous challenges in establishing stable institutions.

MEMORY CUE: A nascent idea is newly born and only beginning to develop.

034 obsolete *adjective***CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK**

No longer produced or used; out of date

The rapid pace of technological change renders today's cutting-edge devices **obsolete** within a few years.

MEMORY CUE: An obsolete device gathers dust in a museum because it is no longer used.

035 overshadowed *verb (past participle)***CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK**

To obscure or make less important by comparison; to cast a shadow over

The composer's symphonies have long been **overshadowed** by his more popular operas, though scholars argue they deserve equal attention.

MEMORY CUE: A huge spotlight on one achievement leaves the other overshadowed and less noticeable.

036 perennial *adjective***CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK**

Lasting throughout the year or for an indefinitely long time; enduring

The question of how to balance economic growth with environmental protection is a **perennial** challenge for policymakers.

MEMORY CUE: A perennial plant returns year after year; a perennial issue likewise endures.

037 pioneering *adjective***CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK**

Involving new ideas or methods; groundbreaking; trailblazing

Her **pioneering** research on gene therapy laid the groundwork for treatments that are now saving thousands of lives.

MEMORY CUE: Pioneering work walks first into territory no established method has crossed.

038 posthumous *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Occurring after death; awarded or recognized after one's death

The writer received **posthumous** recognition when her unpublished manuscripts were discovered and celebrated as masterpieces.

MEMORY CUE: A posthumous award arrives after the recipient has died.

041 primitive *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Relating to or characteristic of an early stage of development; unsophisticated

The **primitive** tools found at the site suggest human habitation tens of thousands of years earlier than previously thought.

MEMORY CUE: A primitive design belongs to an early, relatively unsophisticated stage.

039 postwar *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Occurring after a war, especially after World War II

The **postwar** economic boom transformed the country from an agrarian society into an industrial powerhouse within two decades.

MEMORY CUE: Postwar rebuilding begins after the war has ended.

042 recession *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

A broad and sustained decline in economic activity.

During the **recession**, households reduced discretionary purchases and many businesses postponed hiring and expansion.

MEMORY CUE: In a recession, the economic tide recedes and leaves production and employment lower.

040 precipitate *verb/adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To cause something to happen suddenly; done hastily without careful consideration

The assassination **precipitated** a political crisis that lasted for months.

MEMORY CUE: A pushed domino precipitates an event before it would normally occur.

043 relinquish *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To voluntarily cease to keep or claim; to give up

The aging monarch was reluctant to **relinquish** power, even as advisors urged him to step aside for his successor.

MEMORY CUE: To relinquish a claim, open your hand and voluntarily give it up.

044 remedial *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Given or intended as a remedy or cure; intended to correct or improve

The school introduced **remedial** reading programs for students who had fallen behind during the pandemic.

MEMORY CUE: Remedial work serves as a remedy meant to correct a weakness.

045 stagnant *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Showing no activity or advancement; not flowing or moving (wrong answer, contrasted with tested word)

The **stagnant** economy offered few opportunities for young graduates entering the workforce.

MEMORY CUE: Stagnant water sits unmoving; stagnant progress likewise goes nowhere.

046 stagnation *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

A state of little or no growth, activity, or development

After decades of rapid expansion, the industry entered a period of **stagnation** characterized by falling investment and flat revenues.

MEMORY CUE: Stagnation freezes growth and activity into a motionless pool.

047 superseded *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Taken the place of; supplanted something previously held or used

Newtonian mechanics was not so much disproved as **superseded** by Einstein's more comprehensive theory of relativity.

MEMORY CUE: A newer, more effective model rolls in and supersedes the old one.

048 trajectory *noun*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

The path or direction of development; the course of an argument

The **trajectory** of the nation's economic development over the last fifty years has been nothing short of remarkable.

MEMORY CUE: Trajectory traces the path an object, career, or argument follows.

049 transient *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Lasting only for a short time; impermanent; passing through with only a brief stay

The economic boom proved **transient**, giving way to a severe downturn within two years.

MEMORY CUE: A transient visitor arrives briefly and soon follows the exit arrow.

050 transitory *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Not permanent; lasting only a short time

Fame in the art world can be **transitory** ; many celebrated painters are forgotten within a generation.

MEMORY CUE: A transitory visitor stays only briefly before passing onward.

051 traumatic *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Deeply disturbing or distressing; relating to emotional shock

The **traumatic** experience of combat left lasting psychological scars that took decades of therapy to address.

MEMORY CUE: A traumatic event strikes deeply enough to leave emotional shock.

052 tumultuous *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Making a loud, confused noise; excited, confused, or disorderly; turbulent

The nation endured a **tumultuous** decade of revolution, civil war, and foreign intervention before achieving stability.

MEMORY CUE: A tumultuous crowd churns with loud confusion and disorder.

053 unprecedented *adjective*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Never done or known before; without previous example

The scale of the humanitarian crisis was **unprecedented** , overwhelming the capacity of relief organizations.

MEMORY CUE: An unprecedented event carries a FIRST EVER stamp with no earlier example.

054 upheavals *noun (plural)*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

Violent or sudden changes or disruptions

The political **upheavals** of the 1960s reshaped the cultural landscape of the nation in ways still felt today.

MEMORY CUE: Upheavals violently lift and disrupt the settled order.

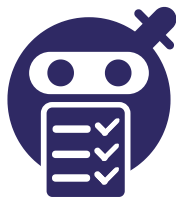
055 wane *verb*

CHANGE, GROWTH & RISK

To decrease gradually in power, size, or extent; to decline

Public interest in the scandal began to **wane** after several weeks without new revelations.

MEMORY CUE: The waning moon shrinks night by night as strength decreases.



GMAT VOCABULARY

Keep building your edge.

Vocabulary grows through repeated exposure and deliberate use.
Revisit this list, write with the words, and practice recognizing their
meaning in context.

More focused practice at test-ninjas.com