



Test Ninjas

VOCABULARY STUDY SERIES

GMAT VOCABULARY

GMAT Vocabulary: Language, Records & Communication

55 focused words in Language, Records & Communication

55

UNIQUE WORDS

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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.

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001 abridged *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Shortened or condensed while retaining the essential content

The **abridged** edition of the novel omits several subplots but preserves the central narrative arc.

MEMORY CUE: An abridged bridge is shortened, yet still connects the essential points.

002 allusion *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

An indirect or passing reference to something

The poet's **allusion** to the myth of Icarus underscores the novel's theme of overreaching ambition.

MEMORY CUE: An allusion points sideways toward an idea without naming it directly.

003 ambiguous *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Open to more than one interpretation; having a double meaning; unclear

The contract language was deliberately **ambiguous**, allowing both parties to claim compliance.

MEMORY CUE: An ambiguous road sign points both left and right, leaving more than one possible meaning.

004 analogous *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Comparable in certain respects; similar or equivalent in function

The structure of an atom was once considered **analogous** to a miniature solar system, though this model has since been refined.

MEMORY CUE: Analogous objects stand on a comparison bridge because certain features correspond.

005 articulate *verb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To express clearly and effectively

The witness was able to **articulate** the sequence of events with remarkable precision despite the trauma she had endured.

MEMORY CUE: An articulate speaker turns complex thoughts into clear, well-shaped words.

006 asset *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

A resource owned or controlled by an organization that has economic value.

The patent became a valuable **asset** because it gave the company exclusive rights to its invention.

MEMORY CUE: An asset sits on the value side of the ledger because it can provide future benefit.

007 banal *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

So lacking in originality as to be obvious and boring; trite

The critic dismissed the film's dialogue as **banal** and predictable.

MEMORY CUE: A banal idea is so overused that it produces a bored yawn.

008 bombastic *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

High-sounding but with little meaning; inflated and pretentious in language

The senator's **bombastic** speeches impressed few of his more thoughtful colleagues.

MEMORY CUE: Bombastic language inflates a small idea inside a huge pompous balloon.

009 cacophony *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

A harsh, discordant mixture of sounds

The **cacophony** of car horns, construction, and shouting vendors defined the city soundscape.

MEMORY CUE: A cacophony is a crashing mixture of horns, alarms, and discordant noise.

010 coherent *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Logically consistent; forming a unified, intelligible whole

The defense attorney failed to present a **coherent** alternative theory that could account for all the evidence.

MEMORY CUE: A coherent argument links each logical step into one clear, unbroken chain.

011 connotation *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

An idea or feeling that a word invokes in addition to its literal meaning

The word 'regime' carries a negative **connotation** that 'administration' does not, even when describing the same government.

MEMORY CUE: Connotation is the emotional luggage a word carries beyond its definition.

012 convoluted *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Extremely complex and difficult to follow; intricately twisted

The tax code has become so **convoluted** that even accountants specializing in it disagree on basic interpretations.

MEMORY CUE: A convoluted path coils into complex loops that are difficult to follow.

013 crisp *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

(Of writing or description) Clear, concise, and to the point

The journalist's **crisp** prose conveyed complex policy debates in language any reader could follow.

MEMORY CUE: Crisp prose snaps cleanly into clear, concise sentences.

016 diffuse *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Spread out over a large area; not concentrated; lacking clarity

The essay's argument is so **diffuse** that the reader loses track of the central thesis by the third paragraph.

MEMORY CUE: Diffuse light spreads broadly instead of concentrating in one beam.

014 declarative *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

In the form of a declaration; relating to factual information or explicit memory

The opening paragraph makes a bold, **declarative** statement that the rest of the essay spends two hundred pages defending.

MEMORY CUE: A declarative statement plants a clear factual flag instead of asking.

017 distinctively *adverb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

In a way that is characteristic and distinguishing; uniquely

The architect's use of curved glass facades made her buildings **distinctively** recognizable across the city skyline.

MEMORY CUE: A distinctively striped tail uniquely distinguishes one animal from others.

015 didactic *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Intended to teach or instruct, often excessively moralistic

The novel's **didactic** tone undermines its literary merit, as characters exist only to deliver moral lessons.

MEMORY CUE: A didactic story points a teaching finger at its audience.

018 elaborate *verb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To develop or present in further detail; to add more information

The professor asked the student to **elaborate** on her thesis, which he found provocative but insufficiently supported.

MEMORY CUE: To elaborate, unfold a simple point into richer supporting detail.

019 elaboration *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

The process of developing something in further detail

The theory requires further **elaboration** before it can be tested against the full range of available data.

MEMORY CUE: Elaboration adds branches of detail to a bare central idea.

020 elicit *verb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To evoke or draw out a response, answer, or fact

The prosecutor's carefully worded questions were designed to **elicit** a confession.

MEMORY CUE: A skillful question draws a hidden response out into the open.

021 elucidate *verb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To make something clear; to explain or shed light on

The professor's examples helped **elucidate** the complex theorem for the students.

MEMORY CUE: Elucidate by switching on a light that makes the explanation clear.

022 equity *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

The owners' residual interest in a business after its liabilities are subtracted from its assets.

After repaying every creditor, the remaining value of the company belongs to shareholders as **equity**.

MEMORY CUE: On the accounting scale, equity is what remains for owners after debts leave the asset side.

023 euphemism *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

A mild or indirect word substituted for one considered too harsh or blunt

Calling layoffs a 'workforce restructuring' is a common corporate **euphemism**.

MEMORY CUE: A euphemism wraps a harsh fact in softer, indirect language.

024 evoke *verb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To bring or recall to the conscious mind; to call forth

The composer's use of minor keys and sparse orchestration was designed to **evoke** a sense of solitude and longing.

MEMORY CUE: A familiar scent can evoke a memory, calling it into consciousness.

025 explicit *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Stated clearly and in detail, leaving no room for doubt

The contract makes **explicit** that either party may terminate the agreement with thirty days' written notice.

MEMORY CUE: An explicit instruction labels every detail clearly and leaves nothing hidden.

026 facetious *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Treating serious issues with deliberately inappropriate humor; flippant

His **facetious** remarks during the meeting were not appreciated by the board members.

MEMORY CUE: A facetious grin puts a joke hat on a serious issue at the wrong time.

027 immediacy *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

The quality of being vivid, direct, and without intervening medium

The war correspondent's dispatches had an **immediacy** that transported readers directly to the front lines.

MEMORY CUE: Immediacy removes distance so an experience feels vivid, direct, and present.

028 implicit *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Implied though not plainly expressed; understood but not directly stated

There was an **implicit** understanding among the staff that disagreeing publicly with the director could end one's career.

MEMORY CUE: An implicit message travels beneath the words instead of being directly stated.

029 insipid *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Lacking flavor; lacking vigor or interest; dull

The **insipid** dialogue made the film unwatchable despite its impressive visual effects.

MEMORY CUE: Insipid soup and insipid conversation are equally lacking in flavor.

030 intelligible *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Able to be understood; comprehensible

The translator's challenge was to render the poet's dense symbolism **intelligible** to readers in a different cultural context.

MEMORY CUE: An intelligible message passes through a clear doorway into understanding.

031 liability *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

A debt or obligation that an organization is responsible for paying or fulfilling.

The unpaid supplier invoice appears as a **liability** until the company settles the amount it owes.

MEMORY CUE: A liability is a bill clipped to the ledger, marking an obligation still owed.

032 lucid *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Expressed clearly; easy to understand; bright or luminous

The professor was praised for her **lucid** explanations of otherwise impenetrable theories.

MEMORY CUE: A lucid explanation shines like a clear lamp with no fog around it.

033 lurid *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Presented in vividly shocking or sensational terms; gruesome

The tabloid published **lurid** accounts of the scandal, embellishing every detail for maximum sensational effect.

MEMORY CUE: Lurid headlines glow with vividly shocking, sensational details.

034 metaphorical *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Figurative; using one thing to represent another symbolically

The author's use of the garden as a **metaphorical** stand-in for civilization pervades the entire novel.

MEMORY CUE: A metaphorical bridge connects unlike ideas symbolically rather than physically.

035 paraphrase *verb/noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To express the meaning of something using different words; a rewording

Students were asked to **paraphrase** the passage in their own words to demonstrate genuine comprehension.

MEMORY CUE: To paraphrase, carry the same meaning into different words.

036 patent accessibility *noun phrase*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Quality of being obviously and easily understood or reached

The **patent accessibility** of her writing allowed readers without scientific training to grasp the significance of the research.

MEMORY CUE: Patent accessibility means the path is plainly open and obviously easy.

037 pithy *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Concise and forceful in expression

The editor demanded **pithy** headlines that could capture a story's essence in five words or fewer.

MEMORY CUE: A pithy sentence packs dense meaning into a tiny verbal seed.

038 prosaic *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Lacking poetic beauty or imagination; commonplace; dull and ordinary

The truth behind the legend turned out to be disappointingly **prosaic** —a simple accounting error, not a grand conspiracy.

MEMORY CUE: A prosaic passage walks the plain prose road without poetic color.

039 radicals *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Root or base elements of a word from which derivatives are formed

Understanding Latin and Greek **radicals** can help students decode the meanings of unfamiliar English words.

MEMORY CUE: Word radicals are root elements from which related forms grow.

040 rambling *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

(Of writing or speech) lengthy and confused; disorganized

The witness's **rambling** testimony, full of tangents and contradictions, tested the patience of both the judge and the jury.

MEMORY CUE: A rambling speech wanders down many side roads without clear direction.

041 receivable *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Money owed to a business by a customer who purchased on credit.

The overdue **receivable** remained an asset, although managers doubted that the customer would pay it fully.

MEMORY CUE: A receivable is money marked TO BE RECEIVED from a customer later.

042 revenue *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Income generated from a company's ordinary sales of goods or services before expenses are deducted.

Subscription **revenue** rose during the quarter, but higher marketing expenses prevented profit from increasing.

MEMORY CUE: Revenue is money entering through the sales door before costs take their share.

043 rhetoric *noun*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Persuasive or grandiloquent language; discourse aimed at influencing opinion

The candidate's soaring **rhetoric** inspired millions, though critics wondered whether the policies could match the promises.

MEMORY CUE: Rhetoric arranges language deliberately to persuade and influence an audience.

044 rhetorical *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Relating to or concerned with the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing

The author's use of **rhetorical** questions forces the reader to confront uncomfortable truths about complicity.

MEMORY CUE: Rhetorical skill shapes language into an effective instrument of persuasion.

045 semantic *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Relating to meaning in language

The dispute was largely **semantic**, with both parties agreeing on the substance but disagreeing about the terminology.

MEMORY CUE: Semantic questions concern what words and sentences mean.

046 strident *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Loud and harsh; presenting a point of view in an excessively forceful way

The **strident** tone of the editorial alienated readers who might otherwise have agreed.

MEMORY CUE: A strident voice turns an opinion into a loud, harsh demand.

047 tacit *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Understood or implied without being stated; unspoken

There was a **tacit** agreement among the committee members to avoid discussing the controversial topic.

MEMORY CUE: A tacit agreement is understood through silence rather than spoken words.

048 tangential *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Diverging from a previous course; only marginally relevant

The professor's **tangential** remarks, while entertaining, distracted from the main lecture topic.

MEMORY CUE: A tangential remark leaves the main subject along a side road.

049 terse *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Sparing in the use of words; abrupt and concise

The general's **terse** battlefield dispatches—sometimes only three words long—became legendary for their economy of expression.

MEMORY CUE: A terse reply is short, clipped, and sharp at the edges.

050 trite *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Lacking originality or freshness; overused and consequently dull

The commencement speech was full of **trite** advice about 'following your dreams' that the graduates had heard a hundred times before.

MEMORY CUE: A trite phrase comes from a stamp that has printed the same words too many times.

051 underscore *verb*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

To emphasize; to underline the importance of something

The rising number of extreme weather events only serves to **underscore** the urgency of addressing climate change.

MEMORY CUE: An underscore literally draws a line beneath an important point to emphasize it.

052 unequivocal *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Leaving no doubt; unambiguous; clear and decisive

The court's ruling was **unequivocal** : the statute was unconstitutional.

MEMORY CUE: An unequivocal arrow points only one way and leaves no room for doubt.

053 vapid *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Offering nothing that is stimulating or challenging; dull and uninspiring

The **vapid** television programming was criticized for failing to engage viewers intellectually.

MEMORY CUE: Vapid conversation is flat air offering nothing stimulating or substantial.

054 verbatim *adverb/adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

In exactly the same words; word for word

The court stenographer recorded the testimony **verbatim** , capturing every word and hesitation.

MEMORY CUE: Verbatim repetition copies the exact words, word for word.

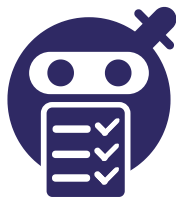
055 vocal *adjective*

LANGUAGE, RECORDS & COMMUNICATION

Expressing opinions or feelings freely or loudly

The most **vocal** opponents of the policy were community leaders who had seen similar measures fail in the past.

MEMORY CUE: A vocal supporter freely and loudly expresses an opinion.



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.

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