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tundra

(noun)

- 1. About one foot underground, the soil in the **tundra** is frozen all year long.
- 2. Mosses, grasses, and low shrubs grow in the **tundra**, but no trees grow there.
- 3. Caribou, arctic foxes, and polar bears live in the **tundra**.

grueling

(adjective)

- 1. Playing baseball in the hot sun can be **grueling**.
- A twenty-mile hike would be grueling, not effortless, for most people.
- 3. If something is **grueling**, it is very arduous.

insulate

(verb)

- 1. Marine mammals have a thick layer of blubber, or fat, that serves to **insulate** them in icy ocean water.
- 2. Feathers **insulate** birds from extreme heat and cold, and fur does the same thing for mammals.
- 3. People **insulate** their homes to keep heated or cooled air from escaping outdoors.

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exhaustion

(noun)

- 1. **Exhaustion** is a feeling of extreme tiredness, which can be either physical or mental.
- 2. The athlete was overcome with **exhaustion**, or fatigue, at the end of the marathon.
- 3. Lack of sleep can lead to **exhaustion** and difficulty concentrating.

inspiration

(noun)

- 1. Although Helen Keller is no longer living, her life story is an **inspiration** to us all.
- 2. The rainbow I saw after the storm was the **inspiration**, or motivation, for the poem I wrote.
- 3. My uncle's positive, hardworking attitude is an **inspiration** to everyone who knows him.

frostbite

(noun)

- 1. **Frostbite** is caused by prolonged exposure to freezing conditions.
- 2. **Frostbite** can cause numbness, tissue death, and gangrene in affected body parts.
- 3. The mountain climber had to have two of his toes removed after getting an extreme case of **frostbite**.

diphtheria

(noun)

- 1. **Diphtheria** is a highly infectious disease that causes severe inflammation of the respiratory system.
- 2. **Diphtheria** is a bacterial infection that makes it very difficult to breathe.
- 3. **Diphtheria** struck the town of Nome, Alaska, in 1925.

musher

(noun)

- 1. A **musher** is a person trained to drive a team of sled dogs over snowy terrain.
- 2. Each **musher** in Alaska's Iditarod race drives his or her team almost 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) in the dead of winter.
- 3. One female **musher**, Susan Butcher, has won the Iditarod four times.

mandatory

(adjective)

- 1. When something is **mandatory**, you have no choice in the matter--you must do it.
- 2. In our town, wearing a helmet is **mandatory**, or required, when we ride our bicycles.
- 3. It's **mandatory** that students learn reading, writing, and math in school.

incentive

(noun)

1. An **incentive** is a reward that motivates a person or group to behave in a particular way.

- 2. An **incentive** to work hard might be to make money, to be of service, or to do something one can be proud of.
- 3. Becoming famous might be an **incentive** to some people but a deterrent to others who would prefer privacy.

serum

(noun)

- 1. **Serum** is the clear part of blood that does not contain blood cells.
- 2. Blood **serum** of animals may be given to people to make them immune to certain germs that cause disease.
- 3. A sled dog named Balto delivered **serum** to Nome, Alaska, to save the lives of sick children.

ceremonial

(adjective)

- 1. When an event or position is **ceremonial**, it is not official and carries no real power.
- 2. At the opening of the Iditarod, the dogs make a **ceremonial**, or unofficial, run from Anchorage to Eagle River.
- 3. In the United Kingdom, the prime minister is the head of the government, and the queen's role is more **ceremonial**.