

NICKEL & DIMED VOCABULARY #3

SENTENCES AND DEFINITION

Vocabulary #3

1. **abasement** - - humiliation; degradation
They even join in the 'Wal-Mart cheer' when required to do so at meetings, I'm told by the evening fitting room lady, though I am fortunate enough never to witness this final **abasement**.
2. **banter** - good-humored, playful conversation
At least three of the thousand or so ads I scanned promised "fun, casual" workplace environments, and I pictured flannel-shirted teams **bantering** on their afternoon cider-and-doughnut breaks.
3. **chagrin** - a keen feeling of mental unease based upon disappointment. P15
Three days go by like this, and, to my **chagrin**, no one out of the approximately twenty places I've applied calls me for an interview.
4. **penury** p7 - a state of extreme poverty or destitution
Ideally, I should do this with two small children in tow, that being the welfare average, but mine are grown and no one is willing to lend me theirs for a month-long vacation in **penury**.
5. **sumptuous** - of a size or splendor suggesting great expense, lavish
The idea that led to this book arose in comparatively **sumptuous** circumstances.
6. **nonchalant** p. 58 coolly unconcerned, indifferent, or unexcited; casual
Not every place is so **nonchalant**.
7. **infiltrate** p. 51 to filter into or through
This might not make Maine an ideal setting in which to hunker down for the long haul, but it made it the perfect place for a blue-eyed, English-speaking Caucasian to **infiltrate** the low-wage workforce, no questions asked.
8. **hierarchy** p. 59 any system of persons or things ranked one above another
What these tests tell employers about potential employees is hard to imagine, since the "right" answers should be obvious to anyone who has ever encountered the principle of **hierarchy** and **subordination**.
9. **tchotchke** - an inexpensive showy trinket
Dusters get the most complete biographical overview, due to the necessity of lifting each object and **tchotchke** individually, and I learn that Mrs. W. is an alumna of an important women's college, now occupying herself by monitoring her investments and the baby's bowel movements.
10. **comportment** p. 78 - bearing, deportment, behavior
In the prison movies that provide me with a mental guide to **comportment**, the new guy doesn't go around shaking hands and asking, "Hi there, what are you in for?"
11. **eccentricities** p. 55 an oddity or peculiarity
He chuckles, as if sleeping in kitchens is just another one of the **eccentricities** you have to put up with in the landlord business.
12. **subordination** p. 59 Belonging to a lower or inferior class or rank; secondary
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13. **prurient** p. 84 obsessively interested in improper matters,
I had thought in my middle-class innocence that knee pads were one of Monica Lewinsky's **prurient** fantasies.
14. **futile** - Having no useful result; trifling and frivolous
In some **futile** bid for gentility, the management has barred employees from using the front door, so my first day I enter through the kitchen, where a red-faced man with shoulder-length blond hair is throwing frozen steaks against the wall.