

1. **geyser** - hot spring that sends up jets of water and steam

e.g. Iceland is famous for its geysers.

Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming has more than 300 geysers.

etymology: from the Icelandic word *Geysir*, name of a specific hot spring

interesting facts: there are two types of geysers: fountain geysers, which erupt in powerful bursts from pool of water, and cone geysers, which erupt like a steady jet of water from cones of geyserite, which is a variety of opal.

2. **giraffe** - a long-necked African animal

e.g. Giraffes are African mammals and the tallest living terrestrial animals.

etymology: from the Arabic word *zarafa* and the Italian word *giraffe*

interesting facts: Giraffes are herbivores and eat only plants and they can eat up to 45 kg of leaves and twigs a day; in the wild these beautiful animals live up to 25 years

3. **hemisphere** - half of the terrestrial globe

e.g. The equator divides Earth into a northern and southern hemisphere.

etymology: from the Latin word *hemisphaerium* and the Greek word *hemisphairion*, which means: *hemi* -half, and *sphaira* - sphere

interesting facts: the Northern Hemisphere has 90% of the land and the Southern Hemisphere has 90% water, so most of the world population lives in the Northern Hemisphere.

4. **hippopotamus** - river horse from Africa

e.g. Hippopotamuses, also known as hippos, are mammals from sub-Saharan Africa.

etymology: from the Greek word *hippopotamus*, which means river horse, from the words *hippos* -horse and *potamus*- river

interesting facts: hippos are considered the second largest land animal, after elephants; to stay cool in the African heat, hippos spend most of their days in rivers and lakes.

5. **illegible** - hard to read because of poor handwriting

e.g. Doctor prescriptions are often illegible.

etymology: from an assimilated form of in - “not, opposite of” + legible.

antonym: legible

6. **island** - land entirely surrounded by water

e.g. Malta is an island in the Mediterranean Sea.
A group of islands is called an archipelago.

etymology: from the Old English word *igland*.

interesting facts: the most populated island in the world is Java, in Indonesia, with more than 150 million residents; the Canary Islands are named after dogs, not canaries.

7. **karate** - method of self-defense
e.g. John has started karate training.

etymology: from the Japanese words *kara* -empty and *te* - hand.

interesting facts: when people practice karate they wear special clothes called karategi, made up of a white jacket and white trousers; they also wear coloured belts, which show how long you have trained.

8. **knight** - mounted soldier in the Middle Ages
e.g. The princess was rescued by a brave knight.
Mary was reading a book about King Arthur and his knights.

etymology: from the Old English word *cniht*, which means boy, youth, servant.

interesting facts: in the Middle Ages only the wealthiest nobles could afford to be knights, because they needed very expensive armour, weapons and a powerful war horse.

9. **lightning** - a brilliant electric spark discharge
e.g. One man died when he was struck by lightning.

etymology: from the Old English word *lightnen*, which means to make bright.

interesting facts: Lake Maracaibo in Venezuela is the place on Earth that receives the most lightning strikes; a single bolt of lightning is 5 times hotter than the surface of the Sun.

10. **limousine** - a large, luxurious car, especially one driven by a chauffeur

e.g. The actors arrived in a limousine to the film premiere.

etymology: from the French word *limousine*, from Limousin, region in central France.

interesting facts: the longest car in the world was built in California in the mid-1990s, and it has 26 wheels, a Jacuzzi and a large waterbed.

11. **malaria** - a disease characterized by chills or fever, caused by the bite of a mosquito
e.g. Malaria is a disease that is widespread in the tropical and subtropical regions around the Equator.

etymology: from Italian malaria: *mala*- bad and *aria* - air, because it was believed that the disease was caused by foul air

interesting facts: Malaria is caused by plasmodium parasites, which are transmitted only by female mosquitos.

12. **miscellaneous** - of mixed character, composed of elements or members of different kinds.

e.g. Michael threw out the miscellaneous papers in his drawer.

A book of miscellaneous essays on African culture.

etymology: from Sanskrit *misrah* -mixed, Old Church Slavonic *mešo*, *mesiti* - to mix

13. **monarch** - a hereditary sovereign, head of a state in a monarchy

e.g. In Europe there are twelve countries with a monarch.

Queen Elizabeth II has ruled for longer than any other Monarch in British history.

etymology: from the Greek word *monarkhes* which means - one who rules alone.

interesting facts: The Japanese monarchy is now the only monarchy that still uses the title of emperor.

14. **mosquito** - an insect that bites, some passing on certain diseases

e.g. The bites of mosquitos are very itchy.

etymology: from the Latin word *musca* which means fly.

interesting facts: There are around 3,500 species of mosquito; only female mosquitos bite.

15. **myth** - a traditional or legendary story, usually about some being or hero; a widely held but false idea

e.g. Some of the most popular myths are about Ancient Greece.

It is a myth that money can buy happiness.

etymology: from the Greek word *mythos* - speech, story, tale

interesting facts: the oldest recorded myth is East Indian, “the Epic of Gilgamesh”

16. **obvious** - easily understood or recognizable, clear

e.g. It was obvious that Mary has not read the book.

It is obvious that she doesn’t like him.

etymology: from the Latin word *obvius*, which means “that is in the way, open, commonplace”

antonyms: ambiguous, mysterious, unclear

17. **orchestra** - a group of performers on various musical instruments
e.g. James played the trumpet in the school orchestra.
The orchestra played a free concert for the national holiday.

etymology: from the Latin word *orchestra* and the Greek word *orkhestra* , which mean a semicircular place where dancers performed

interesting facts: The Royal Danish Orchestra claims to be the world's oldest still in existence, it was founded in 1448.

18. **orchid** - a flower of a plant in tropical regions
e.g. Orchids are my aunt's favourite flowers.

etymology: from the Latin word *orchideae* , which is the plant's family name.

interesting facts: orchid plants can live up to 100 years; there are more than 25,000 species of orchids around the world.

19. **pedestrian** - a person who goes on foot
e.g. The road is so dangerous that pedestrians avoid it.
In many cities there are areas for pedestrians only.

etymology: from the Latin word *pedester* , which means "on foot"

antonym: driver

20. **pizza** - flat, baked pie of Italian origin
e.g. Martha was making pizza for dinner.

etymology: from the Italian word *pizza* , which means cake or pie.

interesting facts: the Hawaiian pizza with pineapple was invented by a Greek man in Canada; in 2001 a pizza was delivered to the International Space Station.