1984 Vocabulary (20 words)

**sordid**

foul and run-down and repulsive

"...and the places where the bombs had cleared a larger path and there had sprung up sordid colonies of wooden dwellings like chicken houses?" (3). [Book 1, Chapter 1]

**sanctioned**

formally approved and invested with legal authority

"Repairs, except what you could do for yourself, had to be sanctioned by remote committees which were liable to hold up even the mending of a window pane for two years" (21). [Book 1 Chapter 2]

**repudiate**

refuse to acknowledge, ratify, or recognize as valid

"...to repudiate morality while laying claim to it...." (35). [Book 1, Chapter 3]

**supersede**

take the place or move into the position of

"The largest section of the Records Department, far larger than the one in which Winston worked, consisted simply of persons whose duty it was to track down and collect all copies of books, newspapers, and other documents which had been superseded and were due for destruction" (40). [Book 1, Chapter 4]

**multifarious**

having many aspects

"And the Ministry had not only to supply the multifarious needs of the Party but also to repeat the whole operation at a lower level for the benefit of the proletariat" (43). [Book 1, Chapter 4]

**obsolete**

no longer in use

"The Eleventh Edition won't contain a single word that won't become obsolete before the year 2050" (51). [Book 1, Chapter 5]

**vapid**

lacking significance or liveliness or spirit or zest

"A sort of vapid eagerness flitted across Winston's face at the mention of Big Brother" (52). [Book 1, Chapter 6]

**proliferate**

grow rapidly

"It was curious how that beetlelike type proliferated in the Ministries: little dumpy men, growing stout very early in life, with short legs, swift scuttling movements, and fat inscrutable faces with very small eyes" (60). [Book 1, Chapter 5]

**incredulous**

not disposed or willing to believe; unbelieving

"In any case, to wear an improper expression on your face (to look incredulous when a victory was announced, for example) was itself a punishable offense" (62). [Book 1, Chapter 5]

**inextricable**

incapable of being disentangled or untied

"Only the proles used scent. In his mind the smell of it was inextricably mixed up with fornication" (65). [Book 1, Chapter 6]

**listless**

lacking zest or vivacity

"It struck him that the truly characteristic thing about modern life was not its cruelty and insecurity, but simply its bareness, its dinginess, its listlessness" (74). [Book 1, Chapter 7]

**strident**

unpleasantly loud and harsh

"The strident voices stopped abruptly. The women studied him in hostile silence as he went past" (83). [Book 1, Chapter 8]

**acrid**

strong and sharp, as a taste

He was everywhere at once, pushing, pulling, sawing, hammering, improvising, jollying everyone along with comradely exhortations and giving out from every fold of his body what seemed an inexhaustible supply of acrid-smelling sweat. [Book 2, Chapter 5]

**palpable**

capable of being perceived

'If there is hope,' he had written in the diary, 'it lies in the proles.' The words kept coming back to him, statement of a mystical truth and a palpable absurdity. [Book 2, Chapter 5]

**mutable**

capable of or tending to change in form or quality or nature

Whenever he began to talk of the principles of Ingsoc, doublethink, the mutability of the past, and the denial of objective reality, and to use Newspeak words, she became bored and confused and said that she never paid any attention to that kind of thing. [Book 2, Chapter 5]

**superfluous**

more than is needed, desired, or required

She did everything that was needed--cooked, washed, mended, made the bed, swept the floor, dusted the mantelpiece--always very slowly and with a curious lack of superfluous motion, like an artist's lay-figure moving of its own accord. [Book 2, Chapter 7]

**equivocal**

open to two or more interpretations

"For what evidence had he in reality that O'Brien was any kind of political conspirator? Nothing but a flash of the eyes and a single equivocal remark: beyond that, only his own secret imaginings, founded on a dream" (169).

**lurid**

glaringly vivid and graphic; marked by sensationalism

"It was night, and the white faces and the scarlet banners were luridly floodlit. The square was packed with several thousand people, including a block of about a thousand schoolchildren in the uniform of the Spies" (180).

**infallible**

incapable of failure or error

"Given this background, one could infer, if one did not know it already, the general structure of Oceanic society. At the apex of the pyramid comes Big Brother. Big Brother is infallible and all-powerful" (208).

**relinquish**

part with a possession or right

"We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means, it is an end" (263).