

SLEDWORDS

100 RARE WORDS TO EXPLORE AND ENJOY



Rob Smith

CORWIN

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rob Smith was born in Widnes, where he spent his youth playing rugby, before leaving to attend Northampton University to study Primary Education. Upon graduating, Rob began his teaching career in Kettering before moving back to his native North West, teaching in schools in Heywood and Manchester. Rob began to introduce short films into his writing lessons from the outset. These ranged from movie trailers to animated shorts and included offerings from the BFI and IntoFilm. Rob has always firmly believed that film has an incredibly important place within the classroom. Film gives children experiences of people and places that they may not have encountered before. Film has the ability to take viewers from the depths of the deepest oceans, into the jungles and deserts across the planet and then blast them into deep space and beyond. Film can send viewers back to the dawn of time and transport us into an imagined future. It is these experiences that Rob was able to tap into and fire the imagination of his students.

Rob created The Literacy Shed in order to store and share the film shorts. It became hugely popular with teachers and was very quickly used all around the world. Rob then started to visit schools to share how film could be used effectively in English lessons.

Rob now lives near Bury with his partner, Katherine, their three sons and a border terrier called Myrtle. He spends his time creating teaching materials, delivering teacher training, writing books and building Lego.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Words have been created since the dawn of time when people first started to communicate and name things. Through the ages, words have drifted in and out of regular usage for one reason or another. It is this constant ebb and flow of words, and their popularity, that keeps English in a constant state of flux. Often, popular culture can play a role in this. From Shakespeare introducing words such as ‘dauntless’ and ‘lonely’, Milton’s ‘pandemonium’ and Lewis Carroll’s ‘chortle’, authors have been able to add to our lexicon, and now modern culture has given us words like ‘emoji’, ‘bromance’ and ‘fatberg’. These are all very ‘buzzworthy’; however, the birth of new words can sound the death knell for older words.

In this book, I have attempted to breathe some new life into words which are rarely used or have already dropped out of common usage. But, why? As a teacher, I have always enjoyed sharing new words with students and engendering a love of language. When The Literacy Shed came into being, its social media offered a wider platform for sharing the words, and #ShedWords was born.

I spent many hours, in my spare time, searching for unusual words, and sharing, in my opinion, the most beautiful or interesting of them with an illustrative sentence, a definition and a striking image. People enjoyed them and I shared more, before having a discussion with my editor Amy Thornton at SAGE Publishing about the opportunity to turn this collection into a book. This is the culmination of that conversation and about two years’ worth of emails.

I should point out that this book is not an exhaustive list of great words to introduce to children. Neither is it a list of words that **MUST** be shared with all pupils to help them succeed or increase their vocabulary. It is important to understand that, if used too frequently, the words can overwhelm the reader, slow the reading and thus spoil the reading experience. Careful selection and precision of placement is key: these words should not be forced into a sentence where their splendour becomes muted.

So how might the book be used? Teachers may want to introduce a ‘word of the week’ to their students, and the words contained herein may be worthy candidates. Each page can be used as a writing prompt with the students encouraged to write about the image, whilst incorporating the ShedWord. The words might also be researched and their etymology studied. Ultimately, the book

can be used in a variety of ways, but students need to understand that these words, used sparingly, can add a speck of beauty to their writing. It is a treasury of words from which glittering jewels can be plucked by those who will admire them most and who will use them to adorn speech and writing only where they will sit best. If nothing else, I hope the book will kindle an interest in less-familiar vocabulary and revive some long-forgotten words that have become lost in the vaults of time.

Follow @LiteracyShed on Twitter and Instagram to see further ShedWord examples or search for the #ShedWords hashtag to see more examples.

For my Mum and Dad





adumbral

Adjective: *shadowy*

At dusk, in the **adumbral** forest, a figure crept slowly towards the mouth of the cave.

From Latin *adumbrates*, meaning to cast a shadow over.



advesperate

Verb: *to darken or to draw towards evening*

The day began to **advesperate**: the sky darkened, workers hurried home, fires were lit and curtains were drawn.

Another word borrowed from Latin: *ad* means to or towards and *vesper* is an archaic word for evening.



aestivation

Noun: *a period of dormancy which takes place in the summer; the opposite of the more commonly known 'hibernation' which is a period of dormancy that takes place during winter*

The Malagasy fat-tailed dwarf lemur and the East African hedgehog go into aestivation for several months of the year.



amaranthine

Adjective: *undying; immortal; eternally beautiful*

Beauty lay on a soft bed in the highest tower of the castle. The wicked witch had cast her into **amaranthine** slumber.

The amaranth is the undying flower of Aesop's fable.



ammil

Noun: *a glistening film of ice that covers twigs, leaves and grass after a freeze*

The light caught the ammil, which sheathed every surface, and in the early morning sunshine a glittering splendour shone across the valley.

From *amel*, an Old English word for enamel.

