

# **Our Town**

  

## **by Thornton Wilder**

### **Definitions**



# Our Town

## Definitions



1.	<b>alacrity</b>	uh LAK ruh tee	prompt and cheerful response
	Synonyms >>	celerity	Antonym >> indolence
	I accepted his invitation to the prom with alacrity.		
	Derivatives >>	alacritous	
2.	<b>belligerent</b>	buh LIJ er unt	waging war; inclined to or exhibiting assertiveness
	Synonyms >>	bellicose, pugnacious, combative, contentious, quarrelsome	Antonym >> peaceful
	A belligerent nation always seems to be at war.		
	Derivatives >>	belligerence, belligerency, belligerently	
3.	<b>conceit</b>	kun SEET	excessively high opinion of one's own worth or ability
	Synonyms >>		Antonym >> humility
	The conceited girl suddenly found herself with no friends.		
	Derivatives >>	conceited, conceitedly	
4.	<b>cynical</b>	SIN uh kul	given to faultfinding, sneering, and sarcasm; exhibiting mocking disbelief
	Synonyms >>	misanthropic, pessimistic, misogynic	Antonym >>
	Some people are so cynical they sneer at everything that would make life worthwhile.		
	Derivatives >>	cynic, cynically, cynicism	
5.	<b>despairing</b>	deh SPARE ing	hopeless, despondent, discouraged
	Synonyms >>		Antonym >> hopeful
	The woman's despairing tears touched the hearts of many.		
	Derivatives >>	despair, despaired, despairful, despairfully, despairingly, despairingness	
6.	<b>diligent</b>	DIL eh junt	characterized by steady, attentive and energetic effort in a pursuit or study
	Synonyms >>	industrious, assiduous, sedulous	Antonym >>
	The students in the special course were studious and diligent.		
	Derivatives >>	diligence, diligency, diligently, diligentness	
7.	<b>epitaph</b>	EP uh taf	an inscription in memory of a dead person (usually on a tombstone)
	Synonyms >>		Antonym >>
	She wants to write her own epitaph before she dies, rather than have someone else write it later.		
	Derivatives >>	epitaphial, epitaphless, epitaphic	
8.	<b>languid</b>	LANG gwid	slow, sluggish, listless, weak
	Synonyms >>	lethargic, stuporous, torpid	Antonym >> animated
	The old man's walk was languid, each pace requiring great effort.		
	Derivatives >>	languidly, languidness, languish, languisher, languishing, languishment	
9.	<b>legacy</b>	LEG uh see	a gift by will, something handed down by an ancestor or predecessor
	Synonyms >>		Antonym >>
	Most presidents wonder what their legacy to the country will be.		
	Derivatives >>	legacies	
10.	<b>lugubrious</b>	loo GOO bree us	excessively mournful
	Synonyms >>		Antonym >> rejoicing
	The woman shed lugubrious tears at the funeral of her husband and daughter.		
	Derivatives >>	lugubriosity, lugubriously, lugubriousness	
11.	<b>muse</b>	MYOOZ	to ponder
	Synonyms >>	meditate, ruminate	Antonym >>
	I have often mused about life on a tropical island.		
	Derivatives >>	mused, museful, musefully, museless, musing	

12.	<b>savant</b>	suh VAHNT, SAY vant	a scholar, a learned person
	<b>Synonyms &gt;&gt;</b>		<b>Antonym &gt;&gt;</b> dunce
	Woodrow Wilson is an example of a savant who became president .		
	<b>Derivatives &gt;&gt;</b>	savants	
13.	<b>sentinel</b>	SEN tuh nul	one who keeps guard as a sentry
	<b>Synonyms &gt;&gt;</b>		<b>Antonym &gt;&gt;</b>
	The oak trees hovered over the house as sentinels.		
	<b>Derivatives &gt;&gt;</b>	sentineled, sentineling, sentinels	
14.	<b>shrill</b>	SHRIL	high-pitched or piercing (sound)
	<b>Synonyms &gt;&gt;</b>		<b>Antonym &gt;&gt;</b> muted
	The shrill sounds of the sirens pierced the night.		
	<b>Derivatives &gt;&gt;</b>	shriller, shrillest, shrilling, shrillness, shrilly	
15.	<b>unobtrusive</b>	un ob TRUE siv	not readily noticeable, inconspicuous
	<b>Synonyms &gt;&gt;</b>		<b>Antonym &gt;&gt;</b> noticeable; obvious
	He is very unobtrusive sitting over there in the corner.		
	<b>Derivatives &gt;&gt;</b>	unobtrusiveness, unobtrusively	
16.	<b>vestiges</b>	VES tij is	remnants, traces, remains
	<b>Synonyms &gt;&gt;</b>		<b>Antonym &gt;&gt;</b>
	The archaeologists were looking for vestiges of ancient Egyptian civilizations.		
	<b>Derivatives &gt;&gt;</b>	vestige, vestigial, vestigium	

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These words which appear in **Our Town** have been identified as words or derivatives of words that have appeared on past SAT tests. They are listed here in alphabetical order.

1. alacrity
2. belligerent
3. conceited
4. cynicism
5. despair
6. diligent
7. epitaph
8. languid
9. legacy
10. lugubriousness
11. musingly
12. savant
13. sentinel
14. shrill
15. unobtrusively
16. vestiges

These words which appear in **Our Town** have been identified as words or derivatives of words that have appeared on past SAT tests. They are listed here in the order in which they appear in the novel.

1. sentinel
2. unobtrusively
3. legacy
4. despair
5. savant
6. vestiges
7. belligerent
8. diligent
9. shrill
10. languid
11. alacrity
12. conceited
13. musingly
14. cynicism
15. lugubriousness
16. epitaph

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## Vocabulary Test

**Directions:** Select the word that **best** completes the following sentences

alacrity  
despair  
legacy  
sentinel

belligerent  
diligently  
lugubrious  
shrill

conceited  
epitaph  
musingly  
unobtrusive

cynicism  
languid  
savant  
vestiges

1. Switzerland is the least \_\_\_\_\_ of the world's nations, never having waged war as other nations have.
2. Janet's father's \_\_\_\_\_ to her was the lake house which he left her in his will.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ attentively stood guard at the passage to the king's chamber.
4. The teacher never realized that the new girl had a question because her demeanor is so \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ on the old tombstone read, "Here lies John Brown."
6. Although its sluggish motion may make the snake appear \_\_\_\_\_, it is actually quite prepared to strike.
7. Bruno is so \_\_\_\_\_ that he would have us believe that he is a \_\_\_\_\_, but in reality he has very little knowledge concerning anything.
8. The last \_\_\_\_\_ of the colony vanished when the hurricane struck and erased all traces of it.
9. I value \_\_\_\_\_ in a waiter; there is no substitute for prompt, cheerful service.
10. The boy's \_\_\_\_\_ mournfulness over his dog's death became so excessive that his parents had to rush out and buy him another.
11. Martin's \_\_\_\_\_ has kept him from having any friends; his fault-finding and sarcasm are so extreme that no one else can stand him.
12. The dog listened \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ of his master's high-pitched whistle; he would have waited all night for that sound if necessary.
13. Her feelings of hopelessness grew into a sense of \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The castaway sat \_\_\_\_\_ on the beach, pondering how to get off the desert island.

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## Test 1

1. belligerent
2. legacy
3. sentinel
4. unobtrusive
5. epitaph
6. languid
7. conceited, savant
8. vestiges
9. alacrity
10. lugubrious
11. cynicism
12. diligently, shrill
13. despair
14. musingly