Crutch Words

Crutch words—we all have them. Here is a list of words that many writers tend to repeat. Keep this handy when you revise. And since overused words vary from person to person, feel free to add your own.

Actions (past and present forms)
Begin
Breathe/Breaths
Feel
Frown
Gaze
Get
Glance
Grin
Cross (the room, the floor, etc.)
Hear
Imagine
Is/Was/Were
Know
Like
Look
Need
Nod
Notice
Realize
Recall
Remember
See
Seem
Shiver
Shake
Shrug
Sigh
Sit
Smile
Stand
Stare
Start
Step
Think
Try
Turn
Understand
Walk
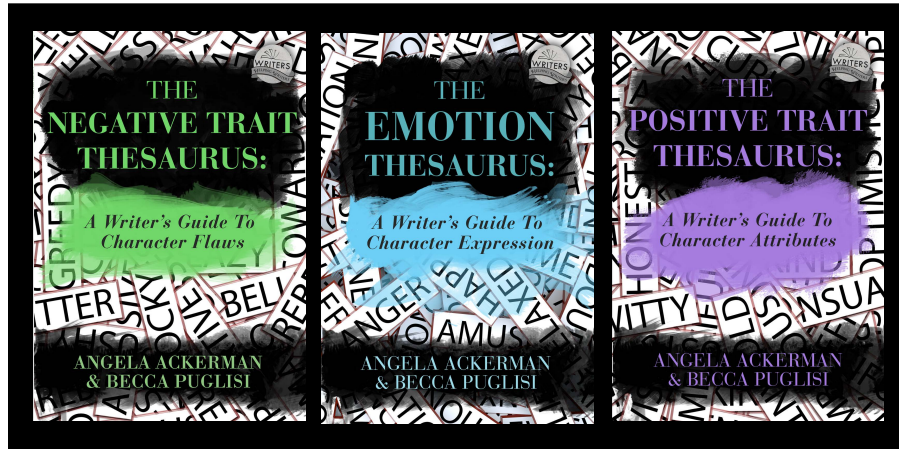Want
Was/Were + -ing verb
Watch
Went
Wonder

Body Parts
Chest
Hand
Heart
Stomach
Eyes
Face

Unspecific Words and Words that Overgeneralize
All
Almost
Bad
Believe
Close
Every
Good
Great
Near
Pretty
Ugly

Other Commonly Repeated Words
Across
Adverbs ending in –ly
Before/After
As/Since/Because
Could/Should/Would
Down/Up
Had/Have
Just/Only
Over/Under
Really/Very
Sudden/Suddenly
That
Well

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