

Cambridge 10, test 1, reading passage 1:

Step wells

Irrigation:

Artificially supply an area land with water; apply liquid to a part of the body to cleanse or disinfect (Medicine)

- The water in Lake Powell is used to irrigate the area.
- The stored water is then used to irrigate nearby agricultural land.

Utilitarian:

Intended to be useful and practical rather than attractive or comfortable.

- My father was a carpenter and held a passionate but essentially utilitarian belief in education.
- Along with good light and utilitarian spaces, Chelsea offers comparatively cheap real estate.

Monument:

Something that serves to commemorate (statue, building, etc.), memorial; statue; tombstone

- Ellis Island is preserved as a historic monument
- Memorial monuments usually celebrate triumphs rather than the state's decimation of cultures and peoples.

Bygone:

The period of time in the past.

- He had impeccable manners that somehow always reminded you of an older, bygone age.
- It is a relic of a bygone age, a cultural icon with a colorful political past

Heyday:

Prime, time of greatest success or popularity, period of greatest power or influence.

- In its heyday it must have been a good little vehicle, but now it was definitely finished.
- The building had originally been a manor house and must have looked beautiful in its heyday.

Dot:

A small round mark or spot_ something that looks like a small spot because it is so far away.

- His fabric prints include lots of roses, hearts, and dots.
- The plane was just a dot in the sky.

Aquifer:

Underground stratum of rock or gravel which holds water (supplies water for springs, wells, etc.).

- Because of the long residence times typical of most bodies of groundwater, contaminated aquifers are not readily restored by natural processes.

Crater:

Bowl shaped pit (on the moon, at the mouth of a volcano, etc.); hole formed by the explosion of a mine or other explosive.

- When the bomb exploded it left a huge crater in the ground.
- Such a resolution would also establish whether impact craters and volcanoes exist.

Paving:

Material used to form a hard level surface on a path, road, area etc.

- Concrete paving blocks are a more flexible and more versatile alternative to slabs.
- He started walking again, treading carefully on the cracks between the paving stones

Slop:

Be spilled; overflow

- It is wrong to slop and make messes that others have to clear up behind one.
- As she slopped about in the cooling water, Jess pondered over this peculiarity.

One of several levels or layers that rise up one above the other.

- We always sat in the top tier of seats.
- I suppose I could have joined in except I was on the second tier of the other stand.

Pillar:

Column, narrow vertical structure used as a support or for decorative purposes.

- A white pillar of steam marked its finale.
- Never mind that he had been a pillar of the regime and was approved on to the ballot by the Council of Guardians.

Relentless:

Strict. Cruel, determined, without ever stopping.

- Hugh felt the relentless sun on his back.
- Ridge's success is due to a relentless pursuit of perfection.

Embellish:

To make something more beautiful by adding decorations to it.

To make story or statement more interesting by adding details that are not true.

- He says the truth is sensational enough without anyone having to embellish it.
- Lynn couldn't help embellishing the story.

Churn:

Prepare butter by agitating cream; shake or agitate with violent motion.

- He was now churning out drawings at a tremendous rate.
- My mind churned with countless plots and schemes, conjuring up acts of untold terror and devastation.

Derelict:

A derelict building or piece of land is in very bad condition because it has not been used for a long time.

- In the middle of town is a derelict building that used to be the school.
- It includes derelict factories and some of the poorest housing in the country.

Silt up:

If something silts up or is silted up, it becomes filled with silt (sand).

- The old harbor silted up years ago.

Pristine:

Extremely fresh or clean, not spoiled or damaged in any way.

- He passed her a pristine handkerchief and waited.
- The car has been restored to pristine condition.

Hallmark:

An idea, method, or quality that is typical of a particular person or thing

A mark put on silver, gold to show the quality of the metal

- Her health was a hallmark of her personality.
- His campaign hallmark is his informality and accessibility.

Shrine:

A place that is connected with a holy event or holy person, and that people visit to pray.

- Hope then built a beautiful shrine at the other end of the village
- To me, this voyage was something much more-it was a pilgrimage to the shrine of my philosophy.

Strike:

To hit or fall against the surface of something.

- Evidence shows that the victim had been struck several times with an iron bar.
- Her husband had never struck her before.

Verandas:

An open area with a floor and a roof that is attached to the side of a house at ground level

- I missed my Mbarara veranda, having to write up my journal on a table
- No one had poured coffee yet, and the silence on the veranda was now very tense.

Ornate:

Cover with a lot of decoration.

- The ornate interior of the opera house was almost overwhelming.
- A pair of ornate gold candlesticks stood on the altar.

Flock:

A large group of people, crowd.

- As a hermit living in a cave, he refused the flock of naked women sent to tempt him.
- It's easy to spot flocks of geese as they migrate.

Fling:

Throw; cast; toss, discard; speak sharply or forcefully; involve oneself in an energetic manner; move in an energetic or violent manner.

- He pulled the knife from her hand and flung it out of the window.
- When he gave her the tickets she ripped them up and flung them at him

Reading passage 2**European transport systems 1990_2010****Fleet:**

A group of a ships, or all ships in a navy _ a group of vehicles that are controlled by one company.

- There are unconfirmed reports that the seventh fleet is moving into the area.
- We have the largest fleet of trucks in the state.

Haulage:

The business of carrying goods in trucks or trains for other companies.

- Jean works for a road haulage company based in St Etienne.
- Rail freight charges are high compared with the cost of road haulage.

Culprit:

The person who is guilty of a crime or doing something wrong _ the reason for a particular problem or difficulty

- Some money was taken from my desk yesterday. I think I know who the culprit is.
- The FBI was called in to help track down the culprits.

Pitch:

A strong level of feeling about something or a high level of an activity or quality

- The President made his strongest pitch yet for standardized testing in schools.
- The village has attractive playing fields, with a football and cricket pitch.

Freight:

Goods that are carried by ship, train, or aircraft and the system of moving these goods

- These trains haul freight between Grand Junction and Denver.
- Prices begin at \$ 15, 825 with freight for a two-door model with rear wheel drive only.

Curb:

To control or limit something in order to prevent it from having a harmful effect

- The city is trying new measures to curb pollution.
- The only way to curb the spread of the disease is by immunizing the entire population.

Saturate:

To put a lot of something into a particular place, especially so that you could not add any more

- Saturate the label with vinegar and let it sit before you try to scrape it off the bottle.
- The bathtub overflowed, and water saturated the carpeting.

Reading passage 3

The psychology of innovation:

Quartet:

Musical composition for four performers.

- All over the country children worked in similar acts but this particular quartet, Les Jolies Petites, was fortunate.
- There was a barbershop quartet on board.

Quintet:

Five singers or musicians who perform together

- Every one of the quintet saw the opposition party gain strength during his final period in office.
- A long list of names yes, but there's nothing larger here than a quintet format.

Seize:

To take hold of something suddenly and violently

- "Come with me," said Nat, seizing him by the arm.
- The General has been Head of State since he seized power in 1982.

Gamble:

To risk money or possession on the result of something such as a card game or a race

- At the trial, defense attorney Neal gambled by calling no defense witnesses.
- By converting pounds to other currencies investors are gambling that the pound will fall.

Pervasive:

Existing everywhere

- Alcohol is still a pervasive problem with high - school students.
- Violence and crime are pervasive features of city life.

Veteran:

Someone who has had a lot of experience of a particular activity

- The case of these two veterans may be just the beginning.
- Among the protesters will be Laura Magnani, another veteran in the campaign against capital punishment.

Prototype:

Original model which serves as an example for later stages or forms; ideal, example.

- Pilots have begun testing a prototype of the new aircraft.
- The prototype of this particular computer was developed by an American in 1975.

Overbearing:

Always trying to control other people other without considering their wishes or feelings

- His wife felt stifled in the presence of her overbearing mother-in-law.
- The manager can be very overbearing at times, and it's difficult to argue with him.

Cambridge 10, test 2, Passage one:

Tea and industrial revolution

Enigma:

Someone or something that is strange and difficult to understand

- As I studied more about their past, I became more puzzled, and the enigma expanded.
- It is something of an enigma how a man who could not bear to hurt a living thing could serve as defense secretary.

Tannin:

A reddish acid used in preparing leather, making ink etc.

- One of the problems we've had of late is the wine keeping too much tannin as it matures.
- Red wines are fermented at a higher temperature than whites to extract color and tannin from the skins.

Succumb:

To stop opposing someone or something that is stronger than you, and allow them to take control

- People would succumb to temptation and revert to familiar if inefficient form
- We cannot, we will not succumb to the dark impulses that lurk in the far regions of the soul everywhere.

Dysentery:

A serious disease of your bowels that makes them bleed and pass much more

- Fear of the rats hurried even those with the fluid stomach of embryonic dysentery or gastroenteritis.
- This is one of the most dangerous bacteria that causes dysentery.

Eccentric:

Behave in a way that is unusual and different from most people

- Our neighbor is an eccentric old lady who has about 25 cats.
- Mr. Withers is a little eccentric, but he's basically harmless.

Alight:

To step out of a vehicle after a journey

- A returning female alights within a few feet of where she last left her baby.
- As the tram was between stops, they were unable to alight.

Burst:

Break open or apart suddenly and violently so that its contents come out, break open, move suddenly.

- Thousands of gallons of oil flowed into the river when an oil pipeline burst.
- The dam burst after heavy rains.

Halve:

To reduce something by a half, or to cut or divide something into two equal pieces.

- Halve the eggplant lengthwise and hollow out the center.
- At the current rate, costs will be halved again within a decade.

Sanitation:

The protection of public health by removing and treating waste, dirty water etc.

- There was very little sanitation the way we know sanitation.
- He was assassinated the day after addressing a rally of striking sanitation workers in Memphis.

Gin:

A strong alcoholic drink made mainly from grain, or a glass of this drink.

- They drank beer and gin, which Lee brought to the room but only sipped to be polite.
- Combining the three ounces of gin and vermouth that you stir you will end up with a four-ounce martini.

Grip:

The way you hold something tightly, or power and control over someone or something, or understanding of something.

- It's hard to get a good grip on this box.
- The policeman had a firm grip on my arm.

Clipper:

A fast sailing ship used in the past

- But the days of clipper ships were numbered.
- Many of the best racing clippers were therefore composite built.

Reading Passage 2:

Gifted children and learning

Manipulate:

To make someone think and behave exactly as you want to, by skilfully deceiving or influencing them_ to use skill in moving or handling something.

- Babies investigate their world by manipulating objects.
- He's so crazy about her he doesn't realize he's being manipulated.

Tuition:

Teaching, especially in small group_ the money you pay for being taught.

- Computerworld offers personal tuition on the latest equipment.
- If you prefer doing it on horseback, there are stables in nearby Going where tuition is available.

Pupils:

Someone who is being taught, especially a child.

- The new law reduces the number of pupils per class in the first four years of schooling.
- The 20 pupils attending the meetings are ages 5-12.

Curiosity:

The desire to know about something.

- Olly was bursting with curiosity about the new house.
- His curiosity and detailed pursuits with paint and drawing materials continued throughout his life as a vital source of exploration and communication.

Succinct:

Clearly expressed in a few words, concise

- a succinct description of the Egyptian writing system
- The new labelling is more succinct and advises consumers simply that oat bran may help prevent heart disease.

Reading passage 3

Museums of fine art and their public

Facsimile:

An exact copy of a picture, piece of writing etc.

- A facsimile of the 1896 book was published in February.
- After a few experiments, I came up with a reasonable facsimile of Rebecca's accidental assemblage.

Apprentice:

Someone who works for an employer for a fixed period of time in order to learn a particular skill or job.

- I worked as an apprentice electrician for 18 months.
- When I finish classes, I'm hoping to land a summer job as a chef's apprentice.

Repository:

A place or container in which large quantities of something are stored.

- However, unlike definitions, there is no convenient repository from which they can be instantly extracted.
- Modern dance, Alvin believed, needed a living repository of its classics and curiosities.

Treasure:

A very valuable and important object such as a painting or ancient document _ someone who is very useful or important to you.

- A husband that cooks and cleans is a real treasure.
- Your old furniture could be a treasure to a growing number of collectors.

Sheer:

To change direction suddenly, especially in order to avoid something.

- Finally on the fourth day one of the anchor ropes sheered through and we lost that anchor to the gale.
- Rimmed by a waist-high balustrade, the garden sheers down some twenty feet.

Render:

To cause someone or something to be in a particular condition _ do something because it is your duty.

- Digital technology could render today's televisions useless.
- The angry exchange rendered future compromise impossible.

Fidelity:

When you are loyal to a person, an organization, or something that you believe in.

- First and last he sought only the strictest fidelity to justice, rectitude and truth.
- We gain a new sense of loyalty, steadfastness and fidelity that are not our own.

Awe:

To admire someone and have great respect for them and sometime a slight fear of them.

- I felt the wonder and awe of the first European explorers who looked at the mountain.
- Most people stand in awe of these agglomerations of power, admit their inability to fight them, and submit.

Cambridge 10, test 3, reading passage 1:

The context, meaning and scope of tourism

Aristocrat:

Someone who belong to the highest social class.

- He was promoted by the emperor, made an aristocrat, and be-came wealthy.
- The importance of the mandarins made them look to Western eyes rather like aristocrats.

Gross:

Total amount of money before any tax or cost have been taken away_ clearly wrong and unacceptable.

- a gross income of \$150,000
- Obviously you get more used to it the more often you do it, but it's still pretty gross.

Amorphous:

Having no definite shape or features

- In her later works, large, amorphous shapes seem to float on the canvas.
- The molten rock hardens into amorphous forms.

Commodity:

A product that is bought and sold_ a useful quality or thing.

- Food shopping takes time, a commodity of which most of us have precious little.
- Other commodity exchanges said they would keep normal hours.

Quote:

To repeat exactly what someone else has said or written_ to give a piece of information that is written down somewhere.

- He was always quoting clever sayings from Oscar Wilde's plays.
- If you call the hotel directly, you may get a rate lower than those quoted by travel agents.

Reading passage 2:

Autumn leaves

Hemisphere:

A half of the earth or one of the two halves of your brain.

- Damage to the corresponding part of the right hemisphere had no effect on speech.
- It was bitterly cold inside the aluminum hemisphere.

Conifer:

A tree such as a pine that has leaves like needles and produces brown cones that contain seeds.

- I often see foxes, roe deer and red squirrels in the conifer plantation there.
- It's classed as being a conifer but it looks nothing like one.

If you are redundant, your employer no longer has a job for you_ not necessary because something else means or does the same thing.

- Businesses are closing and making people redundant.
- He argued that he was not redundant because there was other work available within the terms of his contract of employment.

Dismantle:

To take machine or piece of equipment apart so that it is in separate pieces_ to gradually get rid of system or organization.

- Jimmy was in the garage, dismantling his bike.
- The first thing the soldiers did was to dismantle the enemy's surveillance equipment.

Twig:

A small very thin stem of wood that grow from a branch on a tree_ verb: to suddenly realize something about a situation.

- It took him about two minutes to twig what I was going on about!
- So I gradually amassed armfuls of small twigs, which I carried back to my cave.

Maple:

A tree which grows mainly in northern countries such as Canada. Its leaves have five points and turn red or gold in autumn.

- I walked through hardwood forest of very thick sugar maples and yellow birches.
- Most of northern Calabria is mountainous and thickly wooded with pine, silver fir and maple.

Sumac:

Any of a number of small trees and shrubs having feathery leaves and a small reddish fruit.

Minted:

A newly minted word, phrase, idea etc has been invented or produced very recently_ very rich.

- Cray liked to hire talented but newly minted engineers.
- Some newly minted salesmen and saleswomen have been laid off from other jobs.

Scrambling:

The activity of climbing over rocks using your hands but no ropes.

- I also advise against solo scrambling.

- It was steep and exposed but solid, and the final push for the summit involved some exhilarating scrambling.

Robust:

Strong and healthy, showing determination or strong opinion

- He was a robust little boy, with curly dark hair.
- Paul travelled north to visit his parents, who he found less robust than before.

Dull:

Not interesting or exciting

- A dull opening Wednesday on Wall Street kept stock prices at low levels.
- I'm afraid I must seem very dull compared with all those interesting people you meet.

Plausible:

Reasonable and likely to be true or successful

- His explanation sounds fairly plausible to me.
- I need to think of a plausible excuse for not going to the meeting.

Paradox:

A situation that seems strange because it involves two ideas or qualities that are very different.

- Being defined in terms of tension or paradox, ambiguity's potential diversity was restored to some sort of unitary wholeness.
- Fortunately, a way out of this apparent paradox exists.

Hue:

Type of color or opinion.

- The Prince wore majestic robes of a rich purple hue.
- Colorful seaweeds are found in a variety of hues.

Reading passage 3:

Beyond the blue horizon

Archipelago:

A group of Small Island.

- Cornelius observed that freckles on her left cheek mapped out the Tuamotu archipelago of south-west Polynesia

- For the rest, the archipelago could and did live off its own resources.

Daring:

Involving a lot of risk or danger, or brave enough to do risky things

- It is a particularly daring stunt, involving being tied up and suspended in mid-air.
- Three inmates fled the prison in a daring tunnel escape

Canoe:

A long light boat is pointed at both ends and which you move along using a paddle.

- In my sixth year I did make myself a smaller canoe, but I did not try to escape in it.
- Memories merge with reality now as we beach the canoe near the ledges under the still-standing thick hemlock.

Rove:

Travel from one place to another.

- Bands of armed men rove the countryside.
- Benedict's eyes roved over her sleeping body.

Taro:

A tropical plant grown for its thick root, which is boiled and eaten.

- Coconuts are being scraped and the juice is squeezed on pounded taro or cassava for puddings.
- Rice was their basic food and their most important food crop, far ahead of maize, taro or sago.

Clad:

Wearing a particular kind of clothing.

- She felt hot, despite being clad only in a thin cotton dress.
- An armor-clad ship.

Rim:

The outside edge of something circular

- John's glasses had small lenses and steel rims.
- Her lipstick left a red mark on the rim of the cup.

Stubborn:

Determined not to change your mind, even when people think you are being unreasonable.

- Despite stubborn opposition, the President managed to raise interest rates.
- I've got a very stubborn streak and I discovered that I couldn't bear people telling me what I could and couldn't eat

Rig:

To dishonestly arrange the result of an election or competition before it happens.

- Many of the game shows of the 1950s turned out to be rigged.
- The senator resigned after accusations that the vote had been rigged.

Eternity:

A period of time that seems very long because you are annoyed, anxious etc.

- It seemed an eternity in coming.
- They had practiced together for only an hour, yet it seemed like an eternity.

Cambridge 10, test 4, reading passage 1:

The mega fires of California

Blaze:

A big dangerous fire (use especially in news reports).

- Six fire fighters were injured battling the blaze.
- The church was completely destroyed in the blaze.

Acreage:

The area of a piece of land measure in acres

- But Carlton sold off the last of his acreage to his brother-in-law last year.
- Optic and Cooper make up their spring barley acreage.

Scorch:

If you scorch something, its surface burns slightly and changes color.

- Having the iron on a very high heat can scorch the fabric.
- The heater was left on all night and it scorched the wall.

Dilapidated:

A dilapidated building, vehicle etc is old and in very bad condition, derelict.

- Jesse was raised in a large, dilapidated house on the East Side.
- We stayed in an old, dilapidated hotel with a leaky roof.

Blueprint:

A plan for achieving something_ a pattern that all living cells contain.

- Conservation groups have suggested a blueprint for a "Green World".
- He calls them a blueprint for disaster in their current form and wants them amended.

Serpentine:

Winding like snake_ complicated and difficult to understand.

- Its proposed costly serpentine curve makes sense there, but not necessarily elsewhere.
- There are serpentine steps leading up from the road.

Siege:

A situation in which an army or the police surround a place and try to gain control of it or force someone to come out of it.

- Here the Navy is under siege for all kinds of moral and ethical improprieties.
- The book is not an exhaustive account of all the sieges of the war.

Jurisdiction:

The right to use an official power to make legal decisions, or the area where this right exists.

- In general, the American courts have no jurisdiction to deal with crimes outside the USA.
- The council has no jurisdiction over these matters.

Revamp:

To change something in order to improve it and make it seem more modern.

- Now the new town is being revamped.
- The site was revamped two months ago and a new system was installed to enable Tesco to handle increased levels of traffic.

Reading passage 2:**Second nature****Reticent:**

Unwilling to talk about what you feel or what you know.

- John was somewhat reticent about it at first, but finally admitted he was working on a new book.
- Few of them cared to talk about their jobs; they were as reticent as veterans of an unpopular war.

Stamina:

Physical or mental strength that lets you continue doing something for a long time without getting tired.

- Brooks just doesn't have the stamina to play the whole game.
- Exercises to increase your strength and stamina.

Cerebrospinal:

Pertaining to the brain and spinal cord (Anatomy)

Vow:

A serious or religious promise.

- After being released from his wedding vows, John joined the Friars Minor.
- She told him that she was bound by a vow not to tell any human being.

Intimidate:

To frighten or threaten someone into making them do what you want.

- He's being kept in jail until the trial so that he can't intimidate any of the witnesses.
- The boss is quite tough, but don't let him intimidate you.

Allegation:

A statement that someone has done something wrong or illegal, but that has not been proved.

- The newspaper made several allegations, none of which turned out to be true.
- There have been allegations in the press that the fire was started deliberately.

Reading passage 3:**When evolution runs backwards****Atavism:**

Appearance of a trait belonging to a distant ancestor that has been dormant in recent generations (Biology).

Connotation:

A quality or an idea that a word makes you think of that is more than its basic meaning.

- For most people "motherhood" has a very positive connotation
- A whole group of connotations, arising from our knowledge of the drug culture, then settles on the music.

Appendage:

Something that is connected to a more important thing.

- Among the Apterygota the retention of at least some abdominal appendages is a general feature.
- I dissected preserved larvae into their component appendages and painstakingly traced each detail.

Render:

To cause someone or something to be in a particular condition.

- In beautifully rendered prose, she relates her daily struggles.
- The angry exchange rendered future compromise impossible.

Mole:

A small dark furry which is almost blind_ someone who works for an organization while secretly giving information to its enemies.

- FBI moles had infiltrated the company looking for evidence of fraud.
- The government suspects there is a mole who is leaking information to the press.

Salamander:

A small animal similar to a lizard, which lives on land and in the water.

- The salamander, who now barely moved, could never have moved fast.
- The dusky salamander lives in the southern Appalachian Mountains, and likes to stay at home.

Amphibian:

An animal such as a frog that can live both on land and in water

- Members of this group are chiefly external parasites of turtles, fishes, and amphibians.
- Plants and many insects and amphibians have an additional method: chemical defense.

Metamorphose:

To change completely and become something different, or to make something change in this way.

- Along the way, its reputation metamorphosed.
- The place metamorphosed into storage space.

Tadpole:

A small creature that has a long tail, lives in water.

- Now only one lake supports tadpoles.
- Over the Easter term, the inky tadpoles changed from commas into exclamation marks.

Hind:

Relating to the back part of an animal with four legs.

- It was a small piece of shrapnel, but it did a number on the left cheek of my hind end.
- The hair is somewhat longer on both front and hind legs.

Toe:

To do what other people in a job or organization say you should do.

- He looks under the table and sees a bare toe rubbing the toe of his sneaker.
- Like on horseback, I hold on with the tips of my toes.