

Cambridge 9, test 1, reading passage 1:

William Henry Perkin

Stumble:

To hit your foot against something or walk in an unsteady way.

- I finished the whiskey, then stumbled upstairs and into bed.
- The room was dark, and Stan nearly fell over a chair as he stumbled to the phone.

Breakthrough:

An important new discovery in something you are studying, especially one made after trying for a long time.

- Negotiators have made a breakthrough on the most difficult issue of employment security.
- Scientists at Merck were nearing a breakthrough on a new drug to treat HIV.

Quinine:

A drug used for treating fevers, especially malaria.

- Howards began by manufacturing fine chemicals, especially the antimalarial drug quinine and its derivatives, for the pharmaceutical industry.
- I believe its main ingredient was quinine and doubt if it can be obtained today.

Tar:

A black substance, thick and sticky when hot but hard when cold, used especially for making road surfaces_ a sticky substance that forms when tobacco burns.

- His facial scars radiating ridges pigmented with tar or carbon pictured some many-legged mutant spider.
- The amount of tar in cigarettes is also important but less so than the number smoked or duration of smoking.

Dye:

A substance you use to change the color of your clothes, hair.

- Carbonless paper coated with chemicals and dye which will produce copies without carbon paper
- Pots of dye always seemed to be boiling in the back room.

Excretion:

The process of getting rid of waste material from your body.

- The excretion of mercury by the kidney generally forms the basis for measurement of exposure.

- The use of rose Bengal dye was the first attempt at assessing liver function through dye excretion.

Snail:

A small soft creature that moves very slowly and has a hard shell on its back.

- At different points along a trail the child sees snails-different snails each time.
- Making a shell is costly for a snail.

Glandular:

Related to the glands, or produced by the glands.

- He contracted glandular fever and viral meningitis.
- He is swept from day to day by waves of glandular emotion.

Grasp:

To take and hold something firmly_ to completely understand a fact or an idea.

- Science lessons should be taught in a way that makes the material easier to grasp.
- Fame has come suddenly, and Peyton is finding it hard to grasp.

Patent:

A special document that gives you the right to make or sell a new invention or produce that no one else is allowed to copy.

- At about the time of the exhibition, it emerged that the firm was infringing the Medlock patent.
- He had a patent and had earned millions of dollars in royalties.

Clamour:

The expression of feelings of anger and shock by a large number of people.

- The station was filled with the clamour of shouting voices and movement.
- Just then the raucous clamour of alarm bells sounded from all over the house and from the basement area ahead of him.

Reading passage 2:

Is there anybody out there?

Acronym:

A word made up from the first letters of the name of something such as an organization. For example, NATO is an acronym for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

- It was called UDAG-a sincere-sounding acronym that covered a multitude of sins.

- Many new terms and acronyms are noted, but some of them are not satisfactorily explained.

Intermittent:

Stopping and starting often and for short periods.

- There will be intermittent thunderstorms throughout the day.
- There were clouds and intermittent rain during the festival.

Cog:

One of the small bits that stick out on a cog_ (a cog in a machine: someone who only has a small unimportant job in a large organization.)

- He's joined the Liberal Party, and now he's a very important cog in the cabinet.
- They were like cogs working together, fitting into place when and where they were needed.

Orbit:

To travel in a curved path around a much larger object such as earth, the sun.

- The satellite will orbit the Earth for the next 15 years.
- Venus orbits the sun once every 225 Earth days.

Reading passage 3:

The history of the tortoise

Parched:

Very dry, especially because of hot weather.

- It seemed to parch his mouth as he gulped it down.
- parched. His mouth was parched with expectation and from the whisky of the night before.

Ashore:

On or towards the shore of a lake, river, sea.

- Most of the other passengers had gone ashore.
- Two bodies were washed ashore last night.

Gill:

One of the organs on the sides of a fish through which it breathes.

- As well as having gills, Lungfish have primitive lungs with which they can obtain oxygen from the air.
- Sediment also clogs the gills of fishes.

Incarnation:

A period of time when someone or something has a particular job, use etc.

- Supporters hope that the party in its new incarnation will be more popular with the voters.
- Her first incarnation on East Enders was too shocking, though.

Amphibious:

Able to live both on land and in water.

- Dinosaurs were probably the first ancestors of amphibious reptiles and fish.
- The case for the Navy's amphibious capability was being made by events.

Nest:

Build a nest; search for bird's nests; arrange something inside something else; make homey or home-like

- The birds stop briefly to nest and feed.
- I wondered if the kingfisher still nested in the sandy banks there.

Test 2

Reading passage 1:

Acoustic:

Related to sound and the way people hear things.

- Deaf people get no acoustic feedback when they talk, so their speech is often impaired.
- Various pieces of recording equipment are used to produce interesting acoustic effects.

Reverberation:

A sever effect that is caused by a particular event and continues for a long time.

- The June 5 union election will have reverberations throughout the auto industry.
- If that generous interpretation is correct, then the success of Cobra might have reverberations far beyond beer and curry.

Spectrum:

A complete range of opinion, people, sound, radio.

- At one end of the spectrum were the Communists, and at the other, the Nationalists.
- The spectrum of protest activity goes from peaceful to extremely violent.

Promulgate:

To spread an idea or belief to as many people as possible.

- However, most people see these institutions as promulgating the wealth and power of rich Western countries.
- Some of these are defined in the regulations promulgated for the administration of the Wholesome Meat Act.

Reading passage 2:

Venus in transit

Allege:

To say that something is true or that someone has done something wrong, although it has not been proved.

- In a statement to the press, Massey alleged that her husband had planned to kill her.
- Taylor is alleged to have used public money to buy expensive presents for her friends.

Polymath:

Someone who has a lot of knowledge about many different subject.

- He is either a polymath or an extremely thorough researcher.
- His ebullient personality is a vivid reminder of the polymath of past times.

Latitude:

The distance north or south of the equator, measured in degrees.

- Having his own show gives Williams wide latitude to discuss controversial topics.
- The birds breed in northern latitude.

Thwart:

To prevent someone from doing what they are trying to do.

- Efforts to clean up the oil spill have been thwarted by storms.
- Harry knew now that nothing could thwart his plans.

Besiege:

To surround a city or castle with military force until the people inside let you take control.

- Opposition forces who besieged the parliament building.
- The capital has been besieged by the opposition militia for two months now.

Undaunted:

Not afraid of continuing to try to do something in spite of difficulties or danger.

- Unconvinced, the battalion marched out of the city, but the undaunted colonel followed, arguing as he went.

- Our team of ballot counters, undaunted by the mammoth task before them, faithfully recorded your favorites.

Reading passage 3:

A neuroscientist reveals how to think differently

Iconoclastic:

Iconoclastic ideas, opinion, writings etc attack established beliefs and customs.

- As a pastor he was diligent and although iconoclastic, he defended the clergy against outside attack.
- It is in its nature neither conservative nor iconoclastic.

Rumbling:

Remarks that show that people are starting to become annoyed, or that a difficult situation is developing.

- There were rumblings of discontent among the students.
- As he left, the crowd broke up, and I heard rumblings of disappointment about having to hang around.

Pitfall:

A problem or difficulty that is likely to happen in a particular job, course of action, or activity.

- And Magic can count on more pitfalls before his team is back to prominence again.
- It would be wise to note at this point that there can be pitfalls.

Test 3

Reading passage 1:

Attitudes to language:

Polemic:

A written or spoken statement that strongly criticizes or defends a particular idea, opinion, or person.

- We discussed, planned, and engaged in passionate polemics.
- Essentially, the play is a polemic on the judicial system.

Exempt:

Not affected by something, or not having to do it or pay it.

- Furthermore, interest on the bonds of state and local governments is exempt from the Federal income tax.
- And, frankly I would be surprised if the majority of readers were completely exempt from such situations.

Aptitude:

Natural ability or skill, especially in learning.

- A trainee with normal aptitude can learn these techniques in a few months.
- All applicants are given aptitude tests before being invited for interview.

Deviation:

A noticeable difference from what is expected or acceptable.

- Some even feared deviation from their own narrow path, as if deviants were excluded from heaven or segregated.
- A closer examination of the Celtic Church reveals a much greater deviation from Rome than is generally acknowledged or even known.

Authoritarian:

Strictly forcing people to obey a set of rules or law, especially ones that are wrong or unfair.

- His management style has been criticized as authoritarian.
- Many people are now demanding a more democratic and less authoritarian form of government.

Tenet:

A principle or belief, especially one that is part of a large system of beliefs.

- In order to reveal these foundations we must therefore examine the main tenets of conservative and liberal political thought.
- No dissent from or criticism of Kim IL Sung, his tenets, or his decisions was permitted.

Quasi:

Like something else or trying to be something else.

- a quasi-scientific theory
- the chairman's quasi-judicial role

Elitist:

An elitist system, government etc is one in which a small group of people have more power and advantages than other people.

- A prime source of violence resides in the elitist educational strategies that are firmly rooted in the school ethos.
- The elitist republic has evolved into an inclusive democracy.

Reading passage 2:

Tidal power

Tidal:

Relating to the regular rising and falling of the sea.

- Her almost flat nose tended to widen at the nostrils, flaring over a tidal wave of a mouth.
- Studio heads and directors ignore the long list of artistic failures and succumb to the tidal pull.

Blade:

The flat wide part of an object that pushes against air or water_ the flat cutting part of a tool or weapon.

- The blade should be kept sharp.
- A boy would have better opportunities - of doing that nasty trick with the razor blade, for example.

Propeller:

A piece of equipment consisting of two or more blades that spin around, which makes an aircraft or ship move.

- He sat there looking at the dead propeller all the way to Cleveland.
- Most impressive is probably the Mustang nose and propeller at what once was the entrance to Steeple Morden.

Saline:

Containing or consisting of salt.

- Mucosal resistance was similar in the three groups when the acid challenge was given after saline pretreatment.
- Other doctors were putting compresses of saline solution on the worst burns.

Subsidiary:

A company that is owned or controlled by another larger company.

- The subsidiary has 50 offices around the country.
- The stated intention of the Eleventh Directive is to harmonize the laws relating to subsidiaries and branches.

Debris:

Pieces of waste material, paper.

- Flaps were to be left in the down position to facilitate the removal of mud and other debris prior to their retraction.
- Fragments of building debris can form a large part of the total number of finds from a site.

Reading passage 3:

Information theory – the big idea

Circuit:

A path that forms a circle around an area, or journey along this path.

- He intends to push the record to over 9000 miles by walking another 2000 miles to complete the circuit.
- I have done the circuit many times before, but always with sitting in the co-pilots seat.

Shun:

To deliberately avoid someone or something.

- When the rumors started, the children found themselves shunned by their classmates.
- Some young women are shunned by their families when they become pregnant outside of marriage.

Inveigle:

To persuade someone to do what you want, especially in a dishonest way.

- She had inveigled me into taking messages to her lover.

Theorem:

A statement, especially in mathematics, that you can prove by showing that it has been correctly developed from facts.

- Some young women are shunned by their families when they become pregnant outside of marriage.
- The non-substitution theorem then applies, and prices are again determined independently of demand conditions.

Trick:

Something you do in order to deceive someone_ something that makes things appear different.

- For my final trick, I will make this elephant disappear.
- He refused to answer, suspecting they were asking him a trick question.

Ravage:

To damage something very badly.

- A ragged tear ravaged the painted face that looked back at her.
- It was thus doomed to fail-but not before it had ravaged every society it touched.

Test 4

Reading passage 1:

The life and work of Marie Cuie

Prodigious:

Very large or great in a surprising or impressive way.

- Building the bridge was a prodigious feat of engineering and finance.
- He fell in love, via a prodigious email correspondence, with another academic whom he had met fleetingly at a conference.

Ore:

Rock Or earth from which metal can be obtained.

- As the granite cooled it squeezed out hot fluids containing mineral ores in solution.
- Earlier studies on the deposit indicated the copper ore can be treated using conventional methods.

Pitchblende:

A dark shiny substance dug from the earth, from which uranium and radium are obtained.

- The cliff contains pitchblende veins that have been sources of dissolved uranium.
- Veins of pitchblende in the cliff are the source of uranium in the flat floodplain deposits at the foot of the cliff.

Isotope:

One of the possible different forms of an atom of a particular element.

- Asteroids contain a variety of rare radioactive isotopes of potassium, uranium, thorium, rubidium, and so on
- There is also a section on isotope dilution analysis.

Inauguration:

To hold an official ceremony when someone starts doing an important job in government.

- The new President will be inaugurated in January.

- In 1960, Brazil inaugurated its new capital, Brasilia.

Reading passage 2:

Young children's sense of identity

Caregiver:

Someone who takes care of a child or sick person.

- As patients are sent home sooner and sooner, families are thrown into the role of caregivers.
- As I discussed earlier, we also need to increase the continuity of relationships between adult caregivers and children.

Mimic:

To copy the way someone speaks or behaves, especially in order to make people laugh.

- Jackson mimicked a foreign accent to make his point.
- This insect mimics the appearance of a wasp.

Vocalize:

To make a sound or sounds with your voice.

- Getz vocalized what everyone else at the meeting was thinking.

Contingent:

Depending on something that may happen in the future.

- Compounds of limitation are derived at three different levels, from limitations which are continuous, contextual, and contingent.
- It is a necessarily existing source of all actuality, which actualizes a subset of possibilities by a contingent act of will.

Empirical:

Based on scientific testing or practical experience, not on ideas.

- His theory is inconsistent with the empirical evidence.
- At the empirical level culture and nature cannot be discriminated in this way.

Dab:

A small amount of something that you put onto a surface.

- With big dabs of his brush, he began painting.
- An absolute pristine typical Redesmere roach of old, complete with dab of orange under its chin.

Tug:

To put with one or more short, quick pulls.

- The little girl was tugging her mother's sleeve, trying to get her attention.
- We tugged at the door but it still wouldn't open.

Reading passage 3:

The development of museums

Artefact:

An object such as a tool, weapon etc that was made in the past and is historically important.

- An artefact from the past can be used to engage interest and awaken curiosity.
- Many artefacts decorated in this way have been found in royal tombs on the mainland.

Enact:

To act in a play, story_ to make a proposal into a law.

- The characters wear colorful outfits and enact their scenes center stage.
- Under a new law, universities must enact smoke-free policies on their campuses.

Vulgarize:

To spoil the quality or lower the standard of something that is good.

- He thought: we can vulgarize everything but not this.

Fantasy:

An exciting and unusual experience or situation you image happening to you, but which will probably never happen.

- My son seems to live in a fantasy world sometimes.
- Psychologists say that memories can sometimes be pure fantasy, rather than actual recollections.

Steer:

To control the direction a vehicle is going, for example by turning a wheel.

- Steer slightly to the right as you enter the bend.
- Even the children had a go at steering the boat.

Cathedral:

The main church of a particular area under the control of a bishop.

- He cleared his mind and went farther into the vast cathedral.

- **But the Commission considers that the role played by music in the worship of parish and cathedral ought not to be confused.**