

Cambridge 8, test 1, reading passage 1:

A chronicle of timekeeping

Shipment:

A load of goods sent by sea, road, or air, or the act of sending them.

- And last week the company said shipments from Quincy Farms had declined 5 percent because of the cut.
- At the moment supervision of these shipments in most countries stops at the national border.

Wax:

A solid substance made of fat or oil and used to make candle, polish.

- Posed him in a uniform with a musket in front of a wax image of General Washington.
- The solid wax gives heavier protection. We also lost many recordings: the wax masters could be broken.

Wane:

Become smaller, weaker, or less important.

- But with his popularity waning and the economy temporarily faltering, Park was in trouble even in his own entourage.
- Even in the final years of the Soviet Union, the managers were stepping into the void created by waning party power.

Wax and wane:

To increase and decrease over time

- Interest in the show has waxed and waned.

Conspicuous:

Very easy to notice, very great and impressive.

- It was a small country town, and Lauren looked very conspicuous in her fashionable New York clothes.
- Cuzco's few tourists are conspicuous as they explore the old cobbled streets

Municipal:

Relating to or belonging to the government of a town or city.

- The museum and other municipal buildings are threatened.
- Although municipal waste seems to grow more slowly than income in rich countries, it does still grow.

Cosmic:

Relating to space or the universe_ extremely large.

- The universe is believed to have been created about 15 billion years ago in a cosmic explosion.
- I've only been back on the case, in cosmic terms, about two-and-a-half minutes.

Equinox:

One of the two times in a year when night and day are of equal length.

- Only during the time of the spring and autumn equinoxes do our aquariums have a tropical day.
- Dominic knows that in the 1960s the equinox had progressed to Aquarius.

Basin:

A round container attached to the wall in a bathroom, where you wash your hands and face SYN

sink:

- Water splashed in the basin of the fountain.
- It was a naturally sheltered basin, a trick of the undulating meadows along the Comer.

Anchor:

A piece of heavy metal that is lowered to the bottom of the sea, a lake etc to prevent a ship or boat moving.

- These ancient trees are a spiritual anchor that our culture needs to hold on to.
- The anchors are usually linked by sundry cords and tapes of varying age and wear.

Nationwide:

Happening or existing in every part of the country SYN countrywide

- *A nationwide hunt was launched yesterday for the killer of 13-year-old Nicola Jones.*
- *May 24 saw further nationwide strikes and demonstrations in 12 cities.*

Passage reading 2:**Air traffic control in the USA****Congested:**

Full of traffic_ a part of your body that is congested is very full of liquid, usually blood.

- Pedestrians picked their way across congested streets.
- Often looks rather besotted with a congested mottled and purple face; a bloated face but not edema.

Beacon:

A light that is put somewhere to warn or guide people, ships, vehicles, or aircraft.

- Navigation was helped by a radio beacon set up by the Army on the island.
- It might have been an airport beacon back on Earth, and he stared at it with a tightening of the throat.

Fortuitous:

Happening by chance, especially in a way that has a good result.

- A fortuitous fire destroyed all evidence of his wrongdoing.

- Ironically enough, his main field experience occurred as a fortuitous consequence of the First World War.

Vicinity:

(Of something) in the area around a particular place.

- This was one of the largest silk mills in the vicinity, although it started life as a corn mill.
- Many persons in the vicinity were awakened by the blast, and some were thrown from their beds.

Reliance:

When someone or something is dependent on someone or something else SYN dependence.

- A decreasing reliance on the inflation tax can be discerned in all four countries.
- It is difficult to reverse half a century of total reliance on the car.

Cue:

An action or event that is a signal for something else to happen.

- Some people can cope with hearing loss by using other cues to meaning.
- Use the leash to give the dog cues about what you want him to do.

Realm:

A general area of knowledge, activity, or thought.

- But they do not exist in some half-real realm, neither fully actual nor merely possible.
- Feminism exists outside the realm of political instrumentality, as an idea.

Aviation:

The science or practice of flying in aircraft_ the industry that makes aircraft.

- At the same time Beaverbrook told the House of Lords of Britain's willingness to attend an international conference on civil aviation
- Light aviation is an unpredictable business.

Turboprop:

A turbine engine that drives a propeller_ an aircraft that gets power from this type of engine.

- All my fellow passengers in the turboprop are asleep.
- The Aircraft division manufactures and assembles a range of turboprops and jetliners.

Cruise:

To move at steady speed in a car, aircraft.

- It was Friday night and the kids were out cruising up and down Main Street.
- The Jayhawks cruised to a 7-0 victory over the Eagles.

Passage reading 3:

Telepathy:

Spark:

A small action or event that causes something to happen, especially trouble or violence_ a flash of light caused by electricity passing across a space.

- A spark created by loose wires was the cause of the explosion.
- Turner provided the team the spark they needed in the second half.

Derision:

When you show that you think someone or something is stupid or silly.

- Even outside all these imaginings, rumor and derision held us in an unwelcome embrace.
- Raul looked him up and down, eyes opened wide with derision.

Brink:

A situation when you are in, usually a bad one.

- But when the bust came, he teetered with others on the brink of bankruptcy.
- Is it really news that a couple on the brink of separation should be arguing about the custody of their children?

Swamp:

To suddenly give someone a lot of work, problems to deal with.

- About 3000 years ago a tidal wave swamped the coastal lowlands of Greece, causing massive destruction.
- The dam burst, swamping the valley and hundreds of homes.

Tranquil:

Pleasantly calm, quiet, and peaceful.

- Efforts are being made to make life more tranquil in Japan's noisy and overcrowded cities.
- In summer, the normally calm, tranquil streets fill with crowds of tourists.

Beam:

A line of light shining from the sun, a lamp etc.

- Maggie stumbled across the field with only a narrow beam of light from her flashlight to help her.
- We could see the beams of searchlights scanning the sky.

Flaw:

A mistake, mark, or weakness that makes something imperfect SYN defect.

- It was half price because of a slight flaw.
- In this he was fatally handicapped by his own inconsistencies, paradoxes and deep personal flaws.

Leakage:

The deliberate spreading of secret information_ when gas, m water etc leaks in or out, or the amount of it that has leaked.

- Leakages of confidential information.

Outright:

Clear, direct and complete.

- It would, however, be incorrect to deduce that in the nineteenth century only outright deception was commented upon.
- The point is to avoid outright confrontation.

Plausible:

Reasonable and likely to be true or successful OPP implausible.

- I need to think of a plausible excuse for not going to the meeting.
- In any plausible way of forming Jupiter the hydrogen and helium are initially well mixed at a molecular level.

Esoteric:

Known and understood by only a few people who have special knowledge about something.

- It brings us into touch with levels of ourselves untouched hitherto, and so it has a profound esoteric significance.

- It simply feels good to gain even esoteric knowledge, and that is more than enough.

Test 2, reading passage 1:

Sheet glass manufacture: the float process

Lime:

A white substance obtained by burning limestone, used for making cement, marking sports field etc SYN quicklime.

- Some have occurred as a result of lime and fertilizer applications coupled with more intensive grazing of livestock
- The lime was mixed with flowers of sulphur so that the walls would give off sulphurous fumes when they got warm.

Unblemished:

Not spoiled by any mistake or bad behavior SYN spotless_ without marks or damage SYN flawless.

- He has established an unblemished reputation for accuracy.
- She is a woman with an unblemished reputation of fairness and competence.

Tint:

A small amount of a particular color SYN shade, hue.

- It was October, and the leaves had begun to take on their warm autumn tints.
- Petal colors include every tint between white and pink.

Ribbon:

A narrow piece of attractive cloth that you use, to tie your hair or hold things together.

- Christmas ornaments hung from red ribbons on the tree.
- Before her the long straight reach of the canal lay like a silver ribbon.

Mar:

To make something less attractive or enjoyable SYN spoil.

- He had handsome Arabic features, marred by a long scar across his face.
- The movie's premiere was marred by gang-related violence.

Tremor:

A small earthquake in which the ground shakes slightly_ a slight shaking movement in your body.

- The medication can cause hair loss, tremors, and increased weight.
- Another well-known effect of caffeine is increased hand tremor, which has been measured in numerous experiments.

Ripple:

To move in small waves, or to make something move in this way.

- He saw ahead of him the rippling waters of the river.
- The occasional dip of an oar rippled the lake's glassy surface.

Reading passage 2:

The little ice age

Glacial:

Relating to ice glaciers, or formed by glaciers.

- Attempts to light a fire in the glacial dining-room had to be abandoned when it smoked out the house.
- But we are no longer limited by the glacial rate of natural genetic innovation.

Northeasterly:

Towards or in the northeast_ a northeasterly wind comes the northeast.

- They set off in a northeasterly direction.

Perish:

To die, especially in a terrible or sudden way.

- Everyone aboard the ship perished when it sank off the coast of Maine.
- We must make sure that democracy does not perish.

Herring:

A long thin silver sea fish that can be eaten.

- Girls, caught by the arm, have snow rubbed into their hair like salt into a herring.
- The herring was never quite considered a member of the fish family.

Fleet:

A group of ships, or all the ships in a navy.

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

Offshore:

In order the sea and not far from the coast.

- More than 100 offshore funds pay an income in sterling.
- Needless to say, the use of offshore centers is never far from being a controversial matter.

Regime:

A government, especially one was not elected fairly or that you disapprove of for some other reason.

- The US supported several right-wing regimes in Central America.
- The military regime refused to recognize the elections.

Reading passage 3:**The meaning and power of smell****Olfactory:**

Connected with the sense of smell.

- Frustrated female appetites are consoled with olfactory stimulation: bananas, strawberries, raspberries in the soap or bath oil.
- The temporal responsiveness of insect olfactory organs is truly remarkable.

Grimace:

To twist your face in an ugly way because you do not like something, because you are feeling pain, or because you are trying to be funny.

- He grimaced and scratched his short, curly black hair where it stuck out from under his tartan cap.

- He married his high school sweetheart, though he grimaces at that term.

Sensation:

A feeling that you get from one of your five senses, especially the sense of touch.

- A common sign of brain tumors is a tingly, numb sensation in the toes and fingertips.
- She felt a cold sensation as the icy water dripped down her back.

Realm:

A general area of knowledge, activity, or thought.

- But they do not exist in some half-real realm, neither fully actual nor merely possible.
- Feminism exists outside the realm of political instrumentality, as an idea.

Test 3, reading passage 1:

Striking back at lighting with lasers

Fury:

Extreme, often uncontrolled anger SYN rage.

- Shaking with uncontrollable fury, she stood up to confront him.
- Today, public fury alternates with apathy.

Brew:

To make beer_ to make a drink of tea or coffee.

- Any wonder that there is a campaign-finance scandal brewing in Washington?
- His face was like something brewed up out of spit and bile.

Stumble:

To hit your foot against something or put your foot down awkwardly while you are walking or running, so that you almost fall.

- 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.

Nifty:

Something that is nifty is good because it is clever, skilful, or effective.

- It's a nifty computer game that teaches math skills.
- He scooped up the heavy wet snow, digging hard, his mind ticking through the mechanics of a last nifty illusion.

Zapper:

A thing you use for changing CHANNEL s on a television from a distance SYN remote control _a piece of electrical equipment that attracts and kills insects.

- More than 15 million viewers now own a zapper.
- This will ease the effects of these sleep zappers.

Torrential:

Having the qualities of a torrent; characterized by a very rapid flow, moving in a fast and violent stream.

- He spent many nights sleeping in an open orchard in torrential rain until he located a small cave.
- I woke to the sound of torrential rain.

Hailstone:

A small ball of frozen rain.

- He and Jimmy lay beneath the wagon as a barrage of hailstones beat hard on the planks above.

- I found a small but perfectly-formed hailstone on my knee, which must have got in through the air vent.

Reading passage 2:

The nature of genius

Cult:

An extreme religious group that is not part of an established religion.

- A spokesman denied the group is a cult and said members could leave whenever they wanted.
- Members of the cult are not allowed to marry or own property without permission.

Divinity:

The study of God and religious beliefs SYN theology.

- His power was greater than that of all the other divinities together.
- The eternal, overarching divinity whom Graves' favorite goddess personified has gone by many names.

Boffin:

A science_ someone who is very clever.

- A few science boffins were asked for their opinions, but otherwise the article gave very little information.
- Government boffins have been explaining a new weapon that destroys people but leaves houses intact

Anecdote:

A short story based on your personal experience.

- Personal anecdotes have no place in an academic essay.
- But he illustrates his points with telling anecdotes that make good, and fast, reading.

Corporal:

A low rank in the army, air force etc.

- Sergeants and corporals outnumber private soldiers.
- Smith and Petrossian, the corporals, were checking kit, pushing among the reluctant men.

Paediatrics:

The area of medicine that deals with children and their illnesses.

- He was senior house officer in paediatrics at the District Hospital.
- His medical special interests had been embryology, paediatrics, and homoeopathy.

Vantage point:

A good position from which you can see something _A way of thinking about things that comes from your own particular situation or experiences SYN point of view.

- We enjoyed the lights of Los Angeles from a vantage point high above the city.
- From her piggyback vantage point she heard dry reeds whisper and water splash.

Mundane:

Ordinary and not interesting or exciting SYN boring.

- Most of the law cases he deals with are pretty mundane.
- My initial job was pretty mundane, but later I was given more responsibility.

Prodigy:

A young person who has a great natural ability in a subject or skill.

- Everest climbers display prodigies of endurance.

- He watched his would-be freshman prodigy Alton Ford make just one of two free throws at the other end.

Outstrip:

To do something better than someone else or be more successful.

- Even the most primitive computer can outstrip the human brain in certain types of calculation.
- Girls are now outstripping boys in all school subjects.

Unpalatable:

An unpalatable fact or idea is very unpleasant and difficult to accept.

- Senator Long tends to avoid unpalatable social issues.
- As a consequence land has become unproductive as unpalatable weeds have replaced nutritious fodder.

Reading passage 3:

How does the biological clock tick?

Mutation:

A change in the GENETIC structure of an animal or plant that makes it different from others of the same kind.

- A minor mutation should be deemed an eccentricity and nothing more.
- A second bug experienced a mutation that allowed it to make use of the acetate excreted from the first.

Frugal:

Careful to buy what is necessary.

- Hidden hotel costs can be a source of frustration to the frugal traveler.
- The monks lead a frugal life, allowing themselves only the bare essentials.

Hedgehog:

A small brown European animal whose body is round and covered with sharp needle-like spines.

- A hedgehog tries to climb up the net and when it hears you approach it promptly rolls up into a ball.
- I wanted to see a baby hedgehog.

Lethargic:

Feeling as if you have no energy and no interest in doing anything.

- All this hot weather is making me feel lethargic.
- The spectacular play inspired his lethargic teammates to start playing harder.

Comrade:

A friend, especially someone who shares difficult work or danger.

- They belonged to every organization, social club, old comrades association, and church for miles around.
- And the same tensions continued after 1975 as southern Communists balked at domination by their northern comrades.

Spar:

To practice boxing with someone.

- Foreman was cut over his right eye while sparring.
- The two have sparred for months over the health bill.

Test 4, passage 1:

Land of the rising sun

Curriculum:

The subject that are taught by a school, college.

- Are politicians the best people to be developing the educational curriculum?
- We cover the curriculum by choosing things the kids will be interested in.

Homogenize:

To change something so that its parts become similar or the same.

- The American landscape is being homogenized by malls and fast-food restaurants.
- Plans to homogenize the various school systems.

Render:

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

- Both runways have been rendered useless by enemy bombings.
- Galan rendered his drawing of a new commercial center in less than a week.

Quote:

To repeat exactly what someone else has said or written.

- Dr. Morse quoted three successful cases in which the drug was used.
- I don't think the company is doing very well, but don't quote me on that.

Reading passage 2:

Biological control of pests

Engender:

To be the cause of a situation or feeling.

- Their financial success has engendered jealousy among their neighbors.
- Although the plot failed, the reaction it engendered is significant.

Superbug:

A type of bacterial that cannot be killed by traditional drugs.

- That did kill many, but some mosquitoes became resistant: A superbug had evolved.
- The tots were struck down by a superbug in the intensive care unit at the London hospital.

Glaring:

Very bad and very noticeable.

- It was a glaring example of bad judgment," said one official who asked not to be named.
- It was a glaring error, which cost the company over \$2 million in lost business.

Havoc:

A situation in which there is a lot of damage or a lack of order, especially so that it is difficult for something to continue in the normal way SYN chaos.

- A weak yen creates havoc in several ways for Detroit.
- Direct sunlight plays havoc with the varnish.

Avid:

Doing something as much as possible.

- Tim's father is an avid collector of old blues and jazz records.
- As a keen writer and avid newspaper reader, Jenny had always wanted to be a journalist.

Glory:

The importance, honor, and praise that people give someone they admire a lot.

- The designs reflect the glories of French fashion.
- He was bitter because he couldn't inherit the glory they unwittingly advertised.

Weevil:

A small insect that feeds on grain, flour etc and spoils it.

- Help at hand away with vine weevil Pippa Greenwood outwits this frustrating plant predator.
- He was the weevil in the fruit, according to Rex, the canker in their midst.

Weed:

A wild plant growing where it is not wanted that prevents crops or garden flowers from growing properly.

- Dorothea bent down and pulled weeds out of the garden.
- Everyone called me a weed when I was at school because I was so bad at sports.

Devious:

Using dishonest tricks and deceiving people in order to get what you want.

- In the film, he plays a devious defense lawyer named Richard Adler.
- Their method of collecting money was devious, but not illegal.

Hyacinth:

A garden plant with blue, pink, or white bell-shaped flowers and a sweet smell.

- As I turned out the lights, I caught a whiff of the intense fragrance of hyacinths.
- Crocus, tulips, grape hyacinths and the rest can follow.

Nuisance:

A person, thing, or situation that annoys you or causes problems.

- Rabbits can be a nuisance to gardeners.
- The overgrown vacant lot was declared a public nuisance.

Defoliant:

A chemical substance, used especially in war, that makes all the leaves of plants drop off.

- Chemical defoliants would not be used against crops, nor would producers be arrested or property confiscated.

Hispid:

Having or covered with rough rigid coarse hairs or bristles (of animal parts or plants).

Plague:

To cause pain, suffering, or trouble to someone, especially for a long period of time.

- Elway has been plagued all season by back problems.
- Heavy rains continue to plague the state.

Beetle:

An insect with a round hard back that is usually black. Verb: to go somewhere quickly and leaning forward.

- It is useless to beetle your brow in what you clearly believe to be a threatening fashion.
- If you are curious about the bombardier beetle, by the way, what actually happens is as follows.

Reading passage 3:

Collecting Ant Specimens

Stray:

To move away from the place you should be.

- A number of Charles's men were killed because they had strayed out of formation.
- Do women instinctively want to find a mate and never stray?

Bait:

Food used to attract fish, animals, or birds so that you can catch them.

- I felt I was arguing on behalf of myself and the other two, who never rose to the bait.
- Don't you know you're using that boy like bait to catch a fish?

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.

Rotten:

Badly decayed and no longer good to use.

- I wouldn't climb that tree if I were you - some of the branches look rotten.
- The floor in the bathroom is all rotten.

Trunk:

The thick central woody stem of a tree.

- As the phrase suggests, a main trunk of cables splits off into branches which supply individual subscribers.
- Barbara Molland had found the box in a trunk that stood under the window in Kate's room.

Bark:

The outer covering of a tree.

- Black too is a color, and the deep ridges of persimmon tree bark are an almost-black striated with dark gray.
- Wood and bark Wood and bark are essential constituents of a vast number of instruments.

Nest:

A place made or chosen by a bird to lay its eggs in and to live in.

- About as pleasant to come across as a nest of vipers.
- Individuals could invest in stocks and bonds themselves, creating their own retirement nest eggs.

Forage:

To go around searching for food or other supplies.

- A light rum and tonic in hand, he abandoned his post for the kitchen to forage for food.
- A troupe of golden-crowned kinglets was foraging close to the ground.

Forceps:

A medical instrument used for picking up and holding things.

- For larger hooks, a good pair of curved surgical forceps cannot be bettered.
- He seized a horrible pair of forceps and I closed my eyes as he started flexing his muscles.

Shrub:

A small bush with several woody stem.

- Inside, the complex is immaculate, with neatly trimmed shrubs and rose bushes lining each building.
- It also is useful to wrap this synthetic material around shrubs that are prone to freeze damage.

Debris:

The pieces of something that are left after it has been destroyed in an accident, explosion.

- The beach was littered with debris.
- Fragments of building debris can form a large part of the total number of finds from a site.

Marsh:

An area of low flat ground that is always wet and soft.

- She caught a few words: marsh, explosion, death.
- You play over a salt marsh, or bayou, from tee to green.

Sift:

To put flour, sugar etc through a sieve or similar container in order to remove large pieces_ to examine information, documents etc carefully in order to find something out or decide what is important and what is not.

- It will take a while to sift through all these magazines.
- Police continued to sift through the statements of various witnesses Saturday

Twig:

A small very thin stem of wood that grows from a branch on a tree.

- And again in what directions do the branches and smaller twigs grow?
- He found a not very effective twig and scraped.

Funnel:

A thin tube with a wide top that you use for pouring liquid into a container with a narrow opening, such as a bottle _a metal CHIMNEY that allows smoke from a steam engine or steamship to get out

- An opening in a small pipe near the end of the funnel chuffed steam in bursts.
- One is reduced to her ribs; the other still has her steel plating and her funnel.