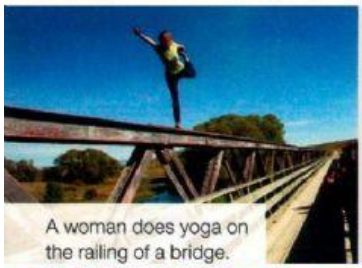


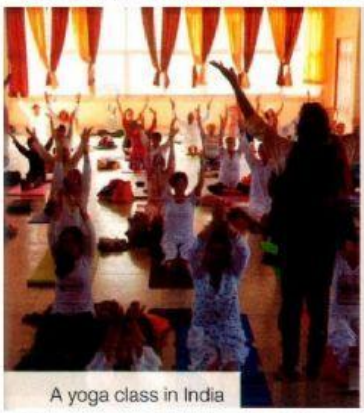
Swami Vivekananda

Yoga was **initially** practiced over 5000 years ago in India. In India, yoga is a tradition that is related to both religion and culture. **Prior to** the 19th century, yoga was not well understood and was rarely practiced in other parts of the world. The introduction of yoga to other countries is **attributed** to the Indian yoga master Swami Vivekananda, who toured Europe and the United States in the 1890s.



A woman does yoga on the railing of a bridge.

Many different **versions** of yoga are practiced, from traditional styles such as hatha and Sivananda yoga to modern versions such as chair yoga and laughter yoga. For fans of yoga, it is the **ultimate** workout because it involves not only the body but the mind as well. There are many health benefits associated with yoga. It helps you be more flexible, stronger, and it relieves stress. Yoga-style meditation[1] called yoga nidra can be very relaxing. Some yoga teachers claim that just a half an hour of yoga nidra is **equivalent** to two or three hours of sleep.



A yoga class in India

As yoga grows in popularity, more people are teaching yoga and more yoga schools and centers are opening. Since the 1960s the **expansion** of yoga has been remarkable, and today yoga is taught and practiced everywhere. It has become a truly **global** business with yoga retreats[2] in the United States, Mexico, Thailand, New Zealand, France, Egypt, and many other countries. According to **data** in the *Yoga Journal*, 14.3 million people in the United States alone practiced yoga in 2010. Scientists and researchers are now completing the first World Yoga Survey to count how many people around the world practice yoga. It is estimated that more than 30 million people practice yoga around the world and that there are over 70,000 yoga teachers. In many places, there are no laws controlling the quality of schools and teachers. Some people are asking for **legislation** to make sure the quality of yoga education remains high.

[1]In yoga, **meditation** is sitting quietly for a long time with a calm and clear mind.
[2]In a yoga **retreat**, groups of people go away for several days to practice yoga in a nice, peaceful place.



Write each word in **blue** from exercise **A** to complete each definition.

1. _____ is the act or process of becoming larger.
2. If B is the cause of A, then we can say that A is _____ to B.
3. The _____ form of something is the very best form of it.
4. Information, especially in the form of facts or numbers, is known as _____.
5. _____ means at the beginning of a process or situation.
6. If one thing is _____ to another, they are the same.
7. _____ of an item are forms of the item with some differences.
8. _____ means concerning or including the whole world.
9. If an event happens _____ a particular time, it happens before that time.
10. When a government passes _____, it makes a new law or laws.