Using the word "About"

"About" is a useful word that is used often in the English Language. It has a variety of definitions, for example:

1. As an adverb it can mean "close to", "ready to do something", "nearby", " on all sides".
2. As a preposition after a verb it can mean "in a circle around", "near", or "concerned with".

It is the last definition that will be discussed here. We often use the word "about" with words like *talking and thinking*. However, similar words do not require "about". Here are some charts to show when "about" should be used and when it should not.

With About	Without About
think about	consider ....
talk about	discuss ....
read about	explain ...
write about	study ....
argue about	
tell (someone) about	

Examples

1. I often think about you. Do you think about me?
2. Last night Emma and Mary talked about the movie. Emma also talked with Mary about her classes.
3. Bill is reading about the French Revolution.
4. Bill wrote about the French Revolution in his essay. He wrote to his parents about the French Revolution. He wrote in an email to his parents about it.
5. She argued with him about it. She argued about it with him. (Both is OK)
6. Please tell me about your trip. Tell me all about it! (I want to know everything about your trip)
7. We need to discuss your bad grades. (We have to talk about them)
8. Before you decide to buy that house, please consider the price! (You should think about the price)
9. The teacher explained how to do the problem. She explained it well.
10. The students studied grammar today. After class Ben studied with Clara.

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Directions: Choose the correct expression in the blank (with or without "about")

1. In his book, the author talks talks about his childhood.
2. We need to discuss discuss about the plan at the meeting.
3. Clean your room! I don't want to argue argue about it anymore!
4. In our book club we are reading reading about famous painters.
5. The boys talked talked about their Christmas presents.
6. Billy's mother patiently explained explained about to Billy why he can't play in the mud.
7. Please consider consider about the weather when you make plans for this weekend.
8. Sam told David told David about last night's party.
9. She has been thinking thinking about what to give her father for his birthday.
10. Before the exam the students studied studied about the grammar rules.
11. Why don't you want to talk talk about it?
12. This is important! We need to discuss discuss about it.
13. In the article the journalist wrote wrote about the new vaccine.
14. Please explain explain about to me why you won't come to the party.
15. Will you tell me tell me about your new boyfriend??
16. I think we should consider consider about how to help the poor (people).
17. Please discuss discuss about this with your parents!
18. Jeff likes to read read about the Vikings.

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