

DAY 33: VOCABULARY PRACTICE

The United States voting system



Critics say that current voting systems in the United States are inefficient and responsible for the inaccurate counting of votes. Miscounts can be especially damaging if an election is closely contested. Instead of **conventional** ballot systems, critics would like to see the widespread **implementation** of computerized voting systems.

In traditional voting, frequent errors can occur by sheer accident. Voters usually have to locate and **indicate** their choice of candidate by marking an X on a large sheet of paper, or ballot, containing a list of many names. People with poor eyesight can easily mark the wrong name. Conversely, computerized voting machines employ easy-to-use touch-screen technology. To cast a vote, a voter needs only to touch the candidate's name on the screen to record a vote. Voters can even have the computer magnify the name for easier viewing.

Another major problem with old voting systems is that they **rely** heavily on people to tally the votes. Officials must often count ballots and record votes individually. Since they have to deal with thousands of ballots, mistakes are **inevitable**. If an error is **detected**, a time-**consuming** and expensive recount has to take place. In **contrast**, computerized systems remove the **incidence** of human error, since all the vote counting is done quickly and automatically.

Finally some people **maintain** that installing voting technology nationwide is too risky. However, without giving it a thought, governments and individuals alike trust complex computer technology to be perfectly accurate in daily banking transactions as well as in the communication of highly sensitive information. So, why not entrust computers with our elections?

EXERCISE 8-7

Choose the word that is closest in meaning to the word from Reading 3.

1. _____ **conventional** a. convenient b. accepted c. traditional
2. _____ **implementation** a. application b. agreement c. consequence
3. _____ **indicate** a. express b. specify c. direct
4. _____ **rely** a. relieve b. depend c. expect
5. _____ **inevitable** a. uncertain b. possible c. unavoidable
6. _____ **detect** a. notice b. expose c. ignore
7. _____ **consume** a. waste b. expend c. devour
8. _____ **contrast** a. opposition b. similarity c. tandem
9. _____ **incidence** a. absence b. frequency c. experience
10. _____ **maintain** a. sustain b. service c. claim

EXERCISE 8-8

Complete each of the following sentences with the appropriate choice from the words listed in Exercise 8-7. Be sure to use the correct form of each verb and to pluralize nouns if necessary.

1. There are people who _____ that solar energy is neither economic nor feasible on a large scale.
2. Nowadays most people _____ on their cell phones for more than just making calls.
3. The red arrow _____ the direction in which you have to go.
4. E-mail has replaced _____ communication, such as letters and cards.
5. These exercises may _____ a lot of time, but doing them is worth the effort.

6. The _____ of cancer is higher among people living in heavily polluted environments than among those who are not exposed to chemicals on a daily basis.
7. A CT scan can _____ tumors in the body if they are of sufficient size.
8. The widespread _____ of computer technology in the medical field has made it easier to locate, copy, file, and archive patient records.
9. Although many people would like to live forever, death is _____.
10. In our Academic Writing class, our first assignment is to write a compare-and-_____ essay.

EXERCISE 8-9

Choose the word that corresponds to the best answer.

1. The word *contest* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) compete
 - (B) match
 - (C) challenge
 - (D) supervise
2. The word *magnify* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) enlarge
 - (B) duplicate
 - (C) minimize
 - (D) intensify
3. The word *tally* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) correspond
 - (B) count
 - (C) qualify
 - (D) verify

Reading 4: The legacy of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster



On April 26, 1986, the worst nuclear accident in history **occurred** at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant outside Pripjat, Ukraine, when a powerful explosion **released** four hundred times the amounts of radiation that fell in the atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima at the end of World War II. Although a relatively small number of people died in the blast, the long-term repercussions on humans and the environment will be felt for centuries.

Shortly after 1:00 a.m., a steam explosion during a routine test in the plant's No. 4 reactor **triggered** a second explosion and ignited a massive fire. Unaware of lethal radiation levels, firefighters, rescue workers, and cleanup crews arrived without protective clothing. As a result, 28 of the 31 reported deaths were a direct result of radiation exposure.

The Soviet government was slow to warn the public about hazardous radiation in the air. Thirty-six hours after the explosion, 45,000 residents (mostly from Pripjat) were evacuated from a 10-kilometer area around the plant. Two days later, more than 100,000 other citizens were evacuated from an **established** 30-kilometer "**exclusion zone**."

In the years following the disaster, the effects of radiation have been devastating. Many babies in Belarus were born with multiple holes in their hearts—a condition known as "Chernobyl heart." The number of thyroid cancer cases in victims younger than 14 at the time of the explosion **exceeds** the national average. Many of the 600,000 "liquidators" who helped clean up over the years have reported numerous health problems. Their children's health has been affected as well.

The accident contaminated farmlands and endangered water supplies in much of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. **Initially** animals were exposed to harmful radiation, but later, in the absence of humans in the 30-km exclusion zone, their populations recovered and flourished.

Today, reactor No. 4 is still encased in an aging concrete sarcophagus. **Despite** radiation warnings, some residents have returned to the 30-km zone. But no one is permitted to live in the more strictly **enforced** 10-km zone where radiation levels **prohibit** human habitation for the next 100 to 200 years.

EXERCISE 8-10

Choose the word that is closest in meaning to the word from Reading 4.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. _____ | occur | a. exist | b. happen | c. appear |
| 2. _____ | release | a. launch | b. provide | c. free |
| 3. _____ | trigger | a. provoke | b. avoid | c. set off |
| 4. _____ | establish | a. confirm | b. set up | c. recognize |
| 5. _____ | exclusion | a. prohibition | b. elite | c. omission |
| 6. _____ | exceed | a. surpass | b. accelerate | c. excel |
| 7. _____ | initially | a. primarily | b. at first | c. originally |
| 8. _____ | despite | a. because of | b. apart from | c. notwithstanding |
| 9. _____ | enforce | a. impose | b. require | c. organize |
| 10. _____ | prohibit | a. prevent | b. ban | c. inhibit |

EXERCISE 8-11

Complete each of the following sentences with the appropriate choice from the words listed in Exercise 8-10. Be sure to use the correct form of each verb and to pluralize nouns if necessary.

- During examinations, communicating with another student is strictly _____.
- The driver was stopped and fined by police for _____ the speed limit.
- Exam protocol requires that the _____ of digital devices during examinations be strictly _____.
- Most car accidents _____ because drivers exceed the speed limit or do not pay attention to the road.
- In what year was the United Nations _____?
- Eating peanuts can _____ an extreme or fatal reaction in people who are allergic.

7. _____ we didn't like our instructor, but by the end of the term we changed our minds.
8. _____ the fact that I didn't really need one, I decided to buy a new cell phone.
9. Factories and power plants _____ carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

EXERCISE 8-12

Choose the word that corresponds to the best answer.

1. The word *repercussions* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) rewards
 - (B) benefits
 - (C) possibilities
 - (D) consequences
2. The word *lethal* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) fatal
 - (B) safe
 - (C) legitimate
 - (D) excessive
3. The word *evacuate* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) clean
 - (B) abandon
 - (C) remove
 - (D) escape
4. The word *devastating* in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
 - (A) disastrous
 - (B) permanent
 - (C) unprecedented
 - (D) significant