

While You Read



4 **Reading** Read the article *Visual Media and Language* and compare your answers in 3 to the ideas in the article. Do not try to complete the missing words at this stage. Focus on the meaning of the whole reading text.



Skills Focus Dealing with New Words in Texts



Strategy

Focusing on the Surrounding Text and Context

Use the surrounding text to try and think of the meaning of the missing word or phrase, not the item itself. Use this as a strategy to deal with new or difficult vocabulary items in texts in this way:

Blank out the word or phrase. In other words, pretend that it's not there and try to work out the meaning of the missing item. You can also think about the form of the word or phrase or its purpose, e.g. if it's an action (verb), a person, a thing (noun), etc.

5 **Understanding vocabulary from context** Read the article. Think about the meaning of the missing word or phrase. Then check the following list of words and definitions, and select an appropriate item. Write the letter of the item in the blank space.

Visual Media and Language

Although technology has been useful as a teaching tool, the (1) _____ of young children to television or video is still believed to have a negative effect on learning. In the first twelve months of life the brain triples in size. It continues to develop, in the next two years, more than at any other period in an individual's life. What children experience during this time can therefore have (2) _____ effects on their (3) _____ and learning skills and especially their ability to learn language. Unfortunately, studies have shown that exposure to television can make it more difficult for infants to learn language.

Children learn many lessons about the (4) _____, sensual, and emotional world through three-dimensional reality. It makes no difference if this reality involves a ball sailing through the air, (5) _____ pots and pans on the kitchen floor, or seeing your mother annoyed at the noise. This is not the case with images on a screen that look broken up to a very young child. A baby can only see bright (6) _____ of color and light. Babies are attracted to colorful images but can't make sense of them or learn anything.

Some parents watch television with their young children and actively explain images on the screen, instead of using the "tube" as a babysitter! But even that doesn't change the fact that every time the television is on, children are doing a passive activity instead of participating in social interaction. According to Dr. Dimitri Christakis, a University of Washington pediatrician, no matter how much parents communicate with their children when the television is on, there are fewer occasions for children to learn language. It is during social interaction that children are able to hear, process, repeat, and learn language, not during silent television viewing. This is a particularly worrying statistic for the 30% of American households where the television is on most of the day, regardless of whether anyone is watching. Surveys tell us about 40% of infants are watching some sort of video by age five months, and by age two the number rises to 90%.

According to Christakis, baby videos may be connected with the drop in language acquisition (learning the first language) in infants, a fact which led the American Academy of Pediatrics to

prevent any and all television watching for babies under two years of age.

Though such studies are limited to the effects of learning and language acquisition on very young children, it does make one (7) _____ the effects that staring at screens, passively, instead of interacting actively with other people have on individuals of all ages, at all stages of their (8) _____.

- A **banging** making a very loud noise (by hitting something against a surface or object)
- B **cognitive** connected with thinking and conscious mental processes
- C **development** the process of growing or changing (cognitive development, physical development)
- D **exposure** experiencing something or being affected by it because you are in a particular place or situation
- E **long-term** continuing a long time into the future
- F **patches** small parts of a surface or material that is different from what is around it
- G **physical** relating to things that you can see, touch, hear, smell, or taste
- H **wonder** ask yourself a question or wish to know about something

After You Read

6 **Thinking critically** Think about and discuss the issues raised in the article. Post your comments on OUR BLOG or OUR BBOARD.

WRITING

Story Plot: Summary

1 **Topic** Focus on the following images and discuss the questions.



1. Can you identify the characters in the images?
2. Which science fiction and fantasy movies are they from?
3. Do you like watching science fiction movies? Why? Why not?
4. What are your favorite movie genres (drama, adventure, thriller, etc.)? Please give reasons.
5. Do you read reviews and/or the story plot of a film before you go to the movies or watch a video?
6. Do you prefer to watch a film at home or go to the movies? Please give reasons.