Verbal & Reading

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Synonyms

Use the word bank to find the most suitable word that best matches the descriptions.

- Appoint
- Glee
- Grief
- Jittery
- Pledge
- Romp
- Startle
- Sweltering
- Triumph
- Vessel

1. _____: to play
2. _____: to choose
3. _____: nervous
4. _____: delight
5. _____: a promise
6. _____: a surprise
7. _____: sorrow; sadness
8. _____: a ship
9. _____: victory
10. _____: extremely hot

Smart Word Choices

Choose the appropriate words to complete the passage. To make the right choice, sometimes you have to read the text that follows.

The rhinoceros is one of the largest animals in the world. Its _____ body is held up by short, thick legs.

11. A) small
    B) tiny
    C) hairy
    D) huge

Rhinos can be over six feet tall and weigh about three tons. That's almost as heavy as three small cars.

The rhino is a _____ of the horse.

12. A) friend
    B) neighbor
    C) cousin
    D) hunter

These animals are part of the same family, but they don't look much alike. For one thing, the rhinoceros has horns. In fact, the word rhinoceros means "horn-nosed. "

Some rhinos have just one horn. But most have _____.

13. A) two
    B) three
    C) four
    D) one

The front horn is used to fight enemies, and the back horn is used to dig up bushes and trees for food. Both horns keep growing throughout the rhino's life.

Rhinos must live near water. They need it to keep cool. They also like mud. These animals have almost no hair. So they can get sunburned just as people do. The mud _____ the rhinos' bodies.

14. A) hurts
    B) leaves
    C) harms
    D) covers

    This protects their skin and keeps it from getting sunburned.

    Long ago, _____ rhinos roamed all over the earth.
15. A) tiny
    B) many
    C) hairy
    D) fat

    There were even some in North America. But not anymore. Today few are left. Most of these live in Africa.

    The black rhino is very _____.
16. A) rare
    B) ugly
    C) short
    D) tall

    They aren't seen very often. A black rhino's horn can grow to be three feet long. Some people believe this horn is magic. They think it cures sick people. In order to get the horns, many black rhinos are _____.
17. A) raised
    B) stopped
    C) found
    D) killed

    That's the reason there are so few alive now.

    In Africa today, it is against the law to hurt rhinos. Some hunters still break the law. But most people in Africa are working hard to save the rhinoceros.

The Groundhog – Nature's Little Digger

Early settlers in America often encountered a small, chubby animal that caused them quite a bit of trouble. Resembling a squirrel with a shorter tail, this creature would dig relentlessly, disrupting the settlers' fields and gardens. Native Americans had already named this animal "the digger," a fitting description of its behavior. The settlers, however, called it the groundhog.

Groundhogs are skilled diggers, creating intricate burrows that serve as their homes, particularly for their long winter hibernation. They select sandy locations for their burrows because the sand allows rainwater to drain quickly, keeping their homes dry. These burrows are more than just simple holes in the ground; they are complex systems with multiple rooms that are strategically higher than the tunnels. This design ensures that even if water enters the tunnels, the living spaces remain dry and comfortable.

A groundhog's burrow is thoughtfully constructed with at least two entrances. The main entrance is wide and surrounded by a mound of earth, allowing the groundhog to dive in quickly when threatened. The second entrance is cleverly concealed among grass or vegetation and can be as far as 30 feet from the main entrance, providing an escape route if needed.

Interestingly, groundhog burrows are so well designed that other animals often make use of them. One observer documented a groundhog's burrow over a winter season and found that it was also used by a rabbit, a skunk, a raccoon, and even a family of foxes. These animals recognized the safety and comfort of the groundhog's home, demonstrating how one animal's hard work can benefit an entire ecosystem.

18. What was the groundhog called by Native Americans?
    A) The burrower
    B) The digger
    C) The runner
    D) The sleeper

19. Why do groundhogs choose sandy places for their burrows?
    A) Sand is easier to dig through
    B) Sand keeps the burrows warm
    C) Sand allows rainwater to drain quickly, keeping the burrows dry
    D) Sand provides food

20. How many entrances does a typical groundhog burrow have?
    A) One
    B) Two or more
    C) Four
    D) None

21. What is the purpose of the second entrance to a groundhog's burrow?
    A) To let in light
    B) To store food
    C) To provide an escape route
    D) To allow water in

22. Why do other animals use groundhog burrows?
    A) They are easy to find
    B) They are dry and well-built
    C) They are always empty
    D) They are warm in winter

23. What other animals have been observed using groundhog burrows?
    A) Only birds
    B) Just rabbits
    C) Rabbits, skunks, raccoons, and foxes
    D) Deer and squirrels

24. What is a key feature of the rooms in a groundhog's burrow?
    A) They are underground
    B) They are higher than the tunnels to stay dry
    C) They are filled with water
    D) They are always dark

25. What do early settlers think of the groundhog?
    A) They thought it was a helpful animal
    B) They were bothered by it because it spoiled their fields with digging
    C) They used it for hunting
    D) They kept it as a pet

26. Describe the construction and design of a groundhog's burrow.

27. Why do other animals use groundhog burrows, and what does this say about the burrows?

Ships in Bottles – A Sailor's Art

The intricate art of placing ships in bottles began with sailors on old sailing ships, who spent long stretches of time at sea. These sailors held a deep affection for their majestic ships, with their tall masts and numerous sails. During their free time on these lengthy voyages, they often carved small models of the ships they knew so well, creating miniature versions of their homes on the sea.

Creating a ship in a bottle starts with crafting the hull, the bottom part of the ship. The hull must be made narrow enough to fit through the opening of the bottle. After shaping the hull, the sailor carefully adds the masts, sails, and rigging ropes, paying attention to every detail to ensure the model resembles the real ship. Finally, the model is painted, bringing the tiny ship to life with colors and patterns.

The real challenge comes when it is time to place the completed ship inside the bottle. The sailor threads a string through the rigging and gently presses the masts, sails, and ropes

flat against the hull. Then, with steady hands and precise movements, the ship is slowly pushed through the narrow neck of the bottle. Once the ship is inside, the sailor carefully pulls the string, causing the masts to rise and the sails to unfold, as if the ship were ready to set sail. Every detail, from the position of the masts to the arrangement of the sails and ropes, is adjusted to perfection. This meticulous process requires patience, skill, and a delicate touch, as one wrong move could ruin the entire model.

The result is a beautifully crafted ship, perfectly encased in a bottle, looking as if it is ready to sail on a tiny ocean. This tradition of ship-in-a-bottle making is a testament to the sailors' craftsmanship and their enduring connection to the sea. It is a remarkable blend of art and engineering, capturing the spirit of the open ocean within a glass vessel.

28. Who first made ships in bottles?
    A) Artists on land
    B) Pirates
    C) Sailors on old sailing ships
    D) Fishermen

29. Why did sailors make models of their ships?
    A) To sell them
    B) To pass the time on long sea trips and express their love for their ships
    C) To give as gifts
    D) To use them as toys

30. What is the first part of the ship that sailors make when crafting a ship in a bottle?
    A) The sails
    B) The hull
    C) The anchor
    D) The deck

31. Why does the hull of the ship have to be narrow?
    A) To make it look realistic
    B) To fit through the opening of the bottle
    C) To be lightweight
    D) To float on water

32. How do sailors get the ship into the bottle?
    A) They use magic
    B) They cut the bottle open and then glue it back
    C) They press the masts and sails flat and push the ship through the neck of the bottle
    D) They build it inside the bottle from scratch

33. What happens after the ship is inside the bottle?
    A) The sailor pours water into the bottle
    B) The ship is left flat inside the bottle
    C) The sailor pulls a string to raise the masts and set the sails upright
    D) The ship is broken apart and reassembled inside

34. What does making a ship in a bottle require from the sailor?
    A) Money
    B) A lot of materials
    C) Patience, skill, and a delicate touch
    D) Help from many people

35. Why is making a ship in a bottle considered a blend of art and engineering?
    A) It requires painting skills
    B) It involves both artistic creativity and precise construction techniques
    C) It uses machinery
    D) It is done in a workshop

36. Describe the process of getting a ship into a bottle.

37. What does making a ship in a bottle symbolize about sailors and their connection to the sea?

Musk Oxen – The Bearded Ones

Musk oxen, often affectionately called "The Bearded Ones," are unique animals known for their impressive appearance. They are covered in long, brown hair that drapes down to their white, furry feet, giving them a distinctive, almost ancient look. Despite their name, musk oxen do not belong to the ox family; they are actually more closely related to goats. About the same size as cows, these resilient creatures inhabit the harsh, cold environments of Alaska, Greenland, and Canada, where they are well adapted to the extreme weather conditions.

When threatened, musk oxen have a remarkable defense strategy. They quickly form a protective circle, standing shoulder to shoulder with their heads lowered, and face their enemy. Their white horns curve down and then up like handlebars, presenting a formidable barrier to predators. This fierce stance not only protects them from threats but also underscores their reputation as tough survivors in the wild.

Unfortunately, musk oxen have faced significant challenges over the years. People hunted them extensively for their meat and wool, causing their populations to decline. In response, laws were enacted to protect these animals from overhunting. Some people even began raising musk oxen domestically, particularly valuing the animals for their qiviut, a long, silky undercoat that is highly prized. One pound of qiviut can be spun into six miles of fine wool yarn, which can then be dyed and made into exceptionally warm clothing. This fiber is softer and warmer than sheep's wool, making it a valuable resource.

Despite their fierce appearance, musk oxen are quite friendly and seem to enjoy interacting with humans. On farms, they have been known to approach people curiously, sometimes even nuzzling a camera with their wet noses when someone tries to take their picture. These interactions suggest that musk oxen are well-suited to life on farms, where they can be cared for and protected, contributing their unique wool while living in a safe environment.

38. What nickname is often given to musk oxen?
A) The Wooly Wanderers
B) The Bearded Ones
C) The Shaggy Kings
D) The Furry Guardians

39. To which family do musk oxen actually belong?
A) The ox family
B) The goat family
C) The sheep family
D) The bison family

40. Where do musk oxen live?
A) Australia and New Zealand
B) Alaska, Greenland, and Canada
C) Africa and South America
D) Europe and Asia

41. How do musk oxen protect themselves when they sense danger?
A) They run away quickly
B) They dig burrows to hide
C) They form a circle, standing shoulder to shoulder, and face their enemy
D) They climb trees

42. What part of the musk ox is highly valued for making fine wool yarn?
    A) Their hooves
    B) Their horns
    C) Their long, silky undercoat called qiviut
    D) Their tails

43. What has been done to help protect musk oxen from overhunting?
    A) They have been moved to zoos
    B) Laws were passed to save them, and some people began raising them on farms
    C) They have been trained to live in cities
    D) They were relocated to warmer climates

44. What do musk oxen sometimes do when someone tries to take their picture?
    A) They run away
    B) They charge at the camera
    C) They may walk over and put a wet nose on the camera
    D) They ignore the person

45. What makes qiviut from musk oxen so special?
    A) It is very colorful
    B) It is softer and warmer than sheep's wool and can be made into fine clothing
    C) It glows in the dark
    D) It is waterproof

46. Describe the musk oxen's defense strategy when facing a threat.

47. What is qiviut, and why is it valuable?

The Journey to the North Pole

The North Pole, one of the most remote and challenging places on Earth, was first reached by Robert E. Peary in 1909. Peary's expedition to the pole was a monumental feat, accomplished with the help of a sled team. He was not alone on this historic journey; a Black American explorer named Matthew Henson, along with four Inuit guides, accompanied Peary. Together, they braved the extreme cold and treacherous conditions of the Arctic to reach their goal.

Many years later, in 1978, a Japanese adventurer named Naomi Uemura also set out for the North Pole, but unlike Peary, he made the journey entirely on his own, with only his sled dogs for company. Uemura's trip was both thrilling and perilous, highlighting the dangers of solo exploration in such an unforgiving environment. Just four days into his journey, Uemura was attacked by a massive polar bear. The bear tore through Uemura's tent, devouring all of the dog food. In a tense confrontation, Uemura managed to shoot and kill the bear, and he and his dogs survived on fresh bear meat for the following days.

The journey was not only dangerous but also incredibly lonely. As Uemura traversed the vast, icy expanse, snow stretched endlessly in every direction. The isolation was profound, with no one to talk to and only the relentless cold for company—temperatures often plummeting to 50° below zero. To cope with the solitude, Uemura kept a diary, documenting his experiences with the hope of writing a book about his adventure upon his return.

After a grueling 500-mile trek and many days of enduring the harsh conditions, Naomi Uemura finally reached the North Pole. His achievement was remarkable, as he became the first and only person to complete the

journey alone, a testament to his determination, courage, and resilience.

48. Who was the first person to reach the North Pole?
A) Naomi Uemura
B) Robert E. Peary
C) Matthew Henson
D) Sir Edmund Hillary

49. Who accompanied Robert E. Peary on his journey to the North Pole?
A) His family
B) A group of scientists
C) Matthew Henson and four Inuit guides
D) A team of sled dogs

50. What made Naomi Uemura's trip to the North Pole unique?
A) He was the first to go by boat
B) He went by himself with only sled dogs
C) He took a helicopter
D) He traveled with a large team

51. What danger did Naomi Uemura encounter four days into his trip?
A) A snowstorm
B) Falling through the ice
C) An attack by a polar bear
D) Losing his way

52. How did Naomi Uemura and his dogs survive after the bear attack?
A) They found a food supply station
B) They ate fresh bear meat
C) They foraged for berries
D) They received a food drop by helicopter

53. Why did Uemura keep a diary during his journey?
A) To document his experiences and plan to write a book
B) To pass the time
C) To make maps
D) To write letters to his family

The Mighty Redwoods

Redwoods are among the most magnificent and towering trees in the world, known as the giants of the forest. These majestic trees can grow as tall as a 25-story building, reaching heights of over 300 feet. Given their immense size, one might expect redwoods to have equally massive roots that delve deep into the ground to support their towering structure. However, redwoods defy expectations with their surprisingly shallow roots that extend only about eight feet deep.

So, how do these colossal trees manage to stay upright without toppling over? The answer lies in the extensive and interconnected nature of their root systems. Although the roots are shallow, they spread out wide, covering an area as large as a football field. This vast network of roots intertwines with those of neighboring redwoods, creating a supportive web that holds the trees firmly in place. The close proximity of redwoods to each other strengthens this network, as their roots literally link together, providing mutual support against the forces of wind and gravity.

However, the redwood forest's strength can be compromised if too many trees are cut down at once. Removing several trees disrupts the interconnected root system, weakening the stability of the remaining trees. Over time, the surviving trees may struggle and die, causing the forest to thin out. Without the collective strength of their intertwined roots, individual redwoods are more vulnerable to being knocked down by strong winds. To

preserve these ancient forests, careful management, including selective cutting and replanting, is essential to maintain the integrity of the redwoods' root systems and the forest as a whole.

54. How tall can redwood trees grow?
A) As tall as a 5-story building
B) As tall as a 10-story building
C) As tall as a 25-story building
D) As tall as a 50-story building

55. How deep are the roots of a redwood tree?
A) 30 feet deep
B) 20 feet deep
C) 10 feet deep
D) 8 feet deep

56. How do redwood trees stay upright despite their shallow roots?
A) They are held up by large rocks
B) Their roots spread out wide and intertwine with those of other redwoods
C) They have deep roots that anchor them firmly
D) They use their branches to balance

57. What is a significant threat to the stability of redwood forests?
A) Lack of sunlight
B) Overwatering
C) Cutting down too many trees at once
D) Lack of wind

Fannie Farmer and Her Cookbook Legacy

You might have seen the name Fannie Farmer on a box of candy or a cookbook, but was Fannie Farmer a real person? Indeed, she was, and she became famous for revolutionizing the way people cooked. In the late 1880s, Fannie Farmer attended a special culinary school in New England, where her talent in the kitchen quickly became evident. She excelled so greatly that she was asked to manage the school herself, a rare honor at the time for a woman.

In 1902, Fannie Farmer went on to establish her own cooking school, where she continued to innovate in the culinary arts. However, it was her meticulous approach to recipes that truly set her apart. Before Fannie Farmer, cookbooks often provided vague instructions like "add some sugar," which left much to guesswork. Farmer believed that cooking could be made more accessible and successful if recipes included precise measurements. Her cookbook introduced this novel concept, specifying exact amounts like "1 cup of sugar," which transformed cooking from an art of intuition into a more reliable science.

Initially, Fannie Farmer struggled to get her cookbook published because it was so different from the norm. Publishers doubted whether people would accept her detailed, methodical approach. But once it hit the shelves, her cookbook became a sensation. Since its first publication in 1896, millions of copies have been sold, helping countless cooks and bakers perfect their craft. Fannie Farmer's insistence on precise measurements has since become a standard in all modern cookbooks, cementing her legacy as a pioneer who made cooking accessible and accurate.

58. What did Fannie Farmer study in New England?
A) Medicine
B) Law
C) Cooking
D) Painting

59. What was unique about Fannie Farmer's approach to recipes?
A) She used only organic ingredients
B) She introduced precise measurements in cooking
C) She avoided using sugar and salt
D) She focused only on desserts

60. Why did Fannie Farmer's cookbook initially struggle to get published?
A) It was written in a different language
B) It was too similar to other cookbooks
C) Publishers thought it was too different and detailed
D) It was too expensive to print

61. How did Fannie Farmer's cookbook change cooking?
A) It made cooking more expensive
B) It simplified recipes with precise measurements
C) It removed all traditional cooking techniques
D) It focused only on professional chefs

62. What did people commonly think of recipes before Fannie Farmer's influence?
A) They were easy to follow
B) They were vague and imprecise
C) They were only for professional chefs
D) They were all written in French

63. In which year did Fannie Farmer publish her influential cookbook?
A) 1886
B) 1896
C) 1906
D) 1916

64. What role did Fannie Farmer play at the cooking school she attended?
A) She was the head chef
B) She managed the school
C) She was a guest lecturer
D) She only attended classes

65. What impact did Fannie Farmer's cookbook have on the culinary world?
A) It made cooking more difficult
B) It established the standard for recipe precision and clarity
C) It focused solely on vegetarian recipes
D) It discouraged home cooking

Answer Key

Synonyms

1. Romp
2. Appoint
3. Jittery
4. Glee
5. Pledge
6. Startle
7. Grief
8. Vessel
9. Triumph
10. Sweltering

Smart Word Choices

11. D
12. C
13. A
14. D
15. B
16. A
17. D

The Groundhog – Nature's Little Digger

18. B
19. C
20. B
21. C
22. B
23. C
24. B
25. B
26. A groundhog's burrow is a well-designed system of tunnels and rooms, built in sandy areas to keep them dry. The burrows have multiple rooms that are positioned higher than the tunnels, ensuring that the living spaces remain dry even if water enters the tunnels. The burrow also has at least two entrances: a wide, open main entrance and a hidden secondary entrance that serves as an escape route.
27. Other animals, such as rabbits, skunks, raccoons, and foxes, use groundhog burrows because they are well-constructed, dry, and offer protection. This demonstrates that groundhog burrows are highly functional and provide a safe and suitable habitat not only for groundhogs but also for other animals in the ecosystem.

Ships in Bottles – A Sailor's Art

28. C
29. B
30. B
31. B
32. C
33. C
34. C
35. B
36. To get a ship into a bottle, the sailor threads a string through the ship's rigging and flattens the masts, sails, and ropes against the hull. The ship is then carefully pushed through the narrow neck of the bottle. Once inside, the sailor pulls the string, causing the masts to rise and the sails to unfurl, positioning everything correctly to make the ship look like it is ready to sail.
37. Making a ship in a bottle symbolizes the sailors' deep connection to the sea and their love for their ships. It reflects their craftsmanship, patience, and dedication, as well as their desire to capture the beauty and spirit of the ocean in a small, intricate model. This art form is a tribute to their life at sea and the ships that were their homes on the water.

Musk Oxen – The Bearded Ones

38. B
39. B
40. B
41. C
42. C
43. B
44. C

45. B
46. When threatened, musk oxen form a protective circle by standing shoulder to shoulder, with their heads lowered and facing the enemy. Their white horns curve downward and then up like handlebars, presenting a formidable barrier to predators. This strategy helps protect the herd from threats, showcasing their collective strength and resilience.
47. Qiviut is the long, silky undercoat of musk oxen. It is highly prized because it can be spun into fine wool yarn that is softer and warmer than sheep's wool. One pound of qiviut can make six miles of yarn, which can be dyed and used to create warm, luxurious clothing, making it a valuable resource in cold climates.

The Journey to the North Pole

48. B
49. C
50. B
51. C
52. B
53. A

The Mighty Redwoods

54. C
55. D
56. B
57. C

Fannie Farmer and Her Cookbook Legacy

58. C
59. B
60. C
61. B
62. B
63. B
64. B
65. B