*From: Lala*

*To: IELTS Prep Group*

*Subj: IELTS* ***Reading*** *material 5*

**Lesson Objective**

The student shall be able to use “power words” as part of their oral vocabulary, read and comprehend business language and demonstrate effective oral communication skills

First Portion

**Power Words**

**Evaluation Criteria**

* Ability to understand the definition of the word and how to use in context within a complex statement/sentence

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *iteration* | *prognosis* | *commissary* | *sorority* | *illuminate* |
| *dire* | *bootleg* | *enthrall* | *steadfast* | *astonishing* |

* Match the word with the correct definition:

1. ​to put ​[light](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/light) in or on something
2. the ​[process](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/process) of doing something again and again, usually to ​[improve](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/improve) it
3. very ​[serious](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/serious) or ​[extreme](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/extreme)
4. made ​[illegally](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/illegal) or ​[copied](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/copy)
5. to ​[keep](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/keep) someone ​[completely](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/complete) ​[interested](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/interested)
6. a ​[shop](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/shop) that ​[supplies](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/supply) ​[food](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/food) and ​[goods](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/good), ​[especially](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/especially) to ​[people](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/people) in the ​[army](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/army) or in ​[prison](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/prison)
7. ​[staying](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/stay) the same for a ​[long](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/long) ​[time](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/time); not ​[changing](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/change) or ​[losing](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/lose) ​[purpose](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/purpose)
8. a ​[social](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/social) ​[organization](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/organization) for ​[female](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/female) ​[students](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/student) at a ​[college](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/college) or ​[university](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/university)
9. a doctor’s ​[judgment](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/judgment) of the ​[likely](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/likely) or ​[expected](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/expect) ​[development](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/development) of a ​[disease](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/disease)
10. very ​[surprising](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/surprising)

Second Portion

**Reading**

**Evaluation Criteria**

* Ability to read, with clear pronunciation, and comprehend the meaning of the paragraph. Student will be asked several questions to validate their comprehension of the reading material

**ARTICLE 1**

**What I Learned From the Last Meal My Mother Ever Cooked for Me**

*By Karen Karbo*

IT’S EASTER, and I’ve decided to make my hero Julia Child’s beef bourguignonne, the only recipe I make that my mother also made, the same classic dish that Julie Powell, as played by Amy Adams, ruined so spectacularly in *Julie & Julia* by falling asleep on the sofa and leaving it too long in the oven.

Beef bourguignonne isn’t really a spring dish. Our corner supermarket doesn’t have small onions; it stocks them only for big winter holidays. I settle for frozen, feeling a flick of irritation because this is what my mother used.

It’s the only Julia dish my mother made that I found acceptable, but I cook it only maybe once a year because doing so makes me so sad that when I’m done, I can rarely bring myself to eat it.

* How often does the author cook Beef Bourguignonne?
* What does she feel whenever she cooks it?

During my first semester of college, my mother, only 46, was diagnosed with brain cancer, an astrocytoma with the shape and reach of a starfish. That summer, she had suffered from crushing headaches and double vision. Her doctors decided it was an underactive thyroid, then hypoglycemia, then menopause. Her headaches had persisted, and miraculously, so did her elaborate nightly meals. There is no summer longer than the one before college; your old life has wilted, but your new life has yet to bloom. In the afternoons, I watched my mother wash down three aspirin with a swig of Coors before getting something on to simmer. How on earth did she manage this, and why?

They were able to remove part of her tumor, but only part. The prognosis was dire. My mother, according to her surgeon, woke up, looked him straight in the eye, and “asked all the hard questions.” She was given six months to live but managed only three.

* What does the idiom “wash down” mean?
* According to the surgeon, after her mom’s operation, she “asked all the hard questions” what hard questions could her mother have asked?

By February, she had completed her prescribed rounds of radiation and chemotherapy. My parents had been steadfast in shielding me from the horror of it all. I was a mere 17. I’d gone away to USC, my father’s alma mater, pledged a sorority, and was dutifully having the time of my life. They insisted.

My birthday is March 2, and suddenly, uncharacteristically, my father called and summoned me home on Sunday for my birthday dinner.

I was happy. Home meant presents, cake, and my choice of fancy dinner. In the naive way of children to whom nothing bad has ever happened, I assumed that if my mom was cooking me a birthday dinner, then she was better and was going to be OK.

* Where did the author’s father graduate from?
* Why did her parents shield her from seeing the horrors of cancer treatment?

The fanciest special-occasion food I knew was steak and baked potatoes with sour cream and chives, and that’s what I asked for. Also, a green salad with Bob’s Big Boy Bleu Cheese dressing. I knew there would also be some kind of store-bought cake from the grocery store.

But that Sunday, the moment I walked in the door, I took one whiff and knew we weren’t having steak. It was that smell I knew so well: the buttery, floury, slightly blood-infused smell of browning beef on a too-warm day. My mother was setting our places at the big dining room table, one utensil at a time. She wore her usual capris and a bright floral top, and an orange turban to hide what she called her bald chicken head.

* What food does the author wanted for her birthday?
* Why would her mom wear a turban?

I felt the sense of injustice rising up in me. It wasn’t fair! They’d called and asked what I wanted and I’d said steak, and there was no steak. Instead, my mother was cooking beef bourguignonne. I didn’t even dislike beef bourguignonne, but it was not steak. No steak. No baked potato with sour cream and chives. No green salad with Bob’s Big Boy Bleu Cheese dressing. And also, no cake. And soon, no mother; the person I loved most in the world was leaving me.

I followed her into the kitchen. We didn’t talk. She couldn’t talk well after her brain surgery. She leaned against the counter, her redhead’s pale complexion mottled and her face slack and puffy from her meds, removing each piece of beef from the pan with the focus and precision of someone defusing a bomb.

I think she made a few simple things before she died a week later, but Julia’s beef bourguignonne was the last thing she made for me.

* What did the author feel when she found out that they didn’t prepare the food that she wanted?
* Describe the author’s mother.

When I made the dish last Easter, I rushed through the browning of the stew meat, ruining my favorite hoodie with splattered oil. I also wound up with an extra plate of sautéed carrots and onions. I spent most of my young adulthood furious that my mother had solicited my opinion about what I wanted for my birthday dinner and then didn’t cook it. Then I moved into a phase where I realized I was really angry at her not for her menu planning but for dying and leaving me alone, for that is how I thought of being left with my well-meaning silent father. Now that I have lived past the age at which she died and have a daughter older than I was when she got sick, I can only imagine the sheer terror she must have felt at the thought of dying and of leaving me to make my way in the world without her.

Then, in a further iteration, over the course of the long Easter afternoon while I stood in front of the stove turning and basting the beef, I found myself admiring her courage. Her days were numbered, and she knew it, and she was going to spend her last days at the stove making something that gave her pleasure.

* Why was she angry at her mother?
* What was the author’s realization about her mother?

*From Julia Child Rules: Lessons on Savoring Life  
Also in Reader's Digest Magazine April 2014*

[*Source*](http://www.rd.com/true-stories/inspiring/what-i-learned-mother-cooked/)

**ARTICLE 2**

**The Power of Music: How Billie Holiday Showed Me the Beauty in Hardship**

*A pianist reflects on the beautiful soundtrack to her life*

*By Lara Downes |* [*Source*](http://www.rd.com/culture/billie-holiday-inspired-me/)



Every Saturday morning, when I was a little girl, my sisters and I went to the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for what we called Saturday classes: piano lessons, theory, music history—serious classical music training for serious little musicians. After we got home, we had a ritual. We’d get out our “dress-up” from the vintage steamer trunk that housed a collection of my mother’s 1960s party dresses and my grandmother’s furs, go through my parents’ record collection—the Beatles, Sinatra, Charles Aznavour, Nat King Cole, Billie Holiday—and dance around the living room. The Billie Holiday records stopped me in my tracks. I was enthralled by Lady Day, her dark eyes shaded by a white gardenia, her world-worn voice, and the mood and phrasing, line and color that she brought to even the simplest tune.

* Describe the girls’ routine every Saturday.

In my diary, when I was eight, I made a careful list in perfect cursive of all my favorite things. My favorite song was Billie Holiday’s “I Cover the Waterfront”—such a sad song, about watching and waiting for a love that’s gone. That year was the last year of my father’s long, slow dying. After he passed away, I spent foggy afternoons at the window, looking out over the San Francisco Bay, waiting for the grief to lift. I pulled out the old records at night. “I cover the waterfront,” Billie sang. “I’m watching the sea / Will the one I love be coming back to me?”

My father was born in Harlem and grew up steps from the clubs where jazz blossomed in its golden age and where Billie Holiday was singing during his childhood. He loved jazz. In my earliest memories, he is listening to records, the long length of him stretched out in our living room. In the end, he left us the memories and the records.

* What’s the author’s favorite song?
* How did the author’s father influence her?

Our family buried our loss in our music. My mother took me and my sisters to Europe, where we lived in the great capitals and studied at the great conservatories with the legendary artists of a quickly vanishing generation. It was a very different life, surely, than the one my father had imagined for us. American culture was something far away, accessed through overdubbed TV reruns, the occasional jar of peanut butter from an Army base commissary, and the cheap East Bloc bootleg jazz CDs we bought at open-air markets.

My sisters and I were growing up. I had my first love affairs. I spent one cold winter in Vienna practicing Schumann all day and listening to Billie Holiday records all night, missing a boy an ocean away. Schumann and Lady Day both knew a thing or two about heartache. “I’ll be looking at the moon, but I’ll be seeing you,” she sang.

* How were their lives in Europe?
* Interpret the line “I’ll be looking at the moon, but I’ll be seeing you”

Ten years later, I moved back to the States. I made my way, very alone, through the unknown landscape of the New York music world. I was starting over, and it was hard. There were moments of despair and defeat. I practiced Ravel and Liszt all day in a windowless sublet and listened to Billie Holiday records at night. “Beautiful to take a chance,” she sang. I found new courage and took some chances and had some astonishing luck— a competition-win, a Carnegie Hall debut recital, a recording contract.

I was hungry for American music, for a reconnection with what was home. I played music by Copland, Gershwin, Bernstein, and Ellington. There was something I needed to find in a musical tradition “beyond category,” as Ellington put it—a musical sea made of waves of immigration and tides of change. This distinct sound, from the concert halls to the clubs, spoke to me because it is everything we are, coming from so many different places and people.

* Did the author become successful in States?
* What type of music does the author wanted and why?

On my bedside table I have two posed studio photographs from the 1930s. My two grandmothers: Grandmother Fay, one of seven sisters born to Jewish immigrants from the town of Belz in Ukraine, who grew up in Buffalo, New York, and came out to San Francisco when my mother settled there, who lived just a few blocks away from us when I was little but whose story I wish I knew better. And my Jamaican grandmother, Ivy, who moved as a

young woman to Harlem, who died when my father was very small, and whose story is lost to family history and memory except for the equation of nose and cheekbones that I see whenever I look in the mirror.

My story of race and roots is captured in these two faded portraits. Two women, looking out at me in the bloom of their youth, framed inside the parameters of a time in which a relationship between them would have been buried under layers of impossibilities and prejudices. Looking into their eyes, I see proof of how much change has come in two short generations, how very recently their granddaughter’s version of American life became possible.

* Differentiate the author’s two grandmothers.

My parents met at a sit-in in San Francisco in the mid-’60s, and they dreamed for their three caramel-colored girls of a future color-blind America in which race wouldn’t matter. But, of course, it did. From the beginning, I was well aware of the undercurrent of racial complexities and complexes that run through our culture. Being caramel colored in America comes with a burden of confusions, assumptions, and questions. Living abroad shifted that burden, but when I came back, I felt it again.

A musician is born and then made. Everything folds together: all the music you hear, study, practice, and perform, all the lessons you’re taught and the ones you learn on your own. So when I decided to pay tribute to Billie Holiday by recording a piano album of her songbook, I had to take a hard look at this lifetime I’ve lived with her music. I had to turn back to the nights when her voice had sung me out of sadness to sleep, back to those Saturday afternoons of my childhood, and to ask myself what I’d learned from her, as a musician and a woman.

* What does being *caramel-colored* mean?
* How did America see people of mixed race back then?

She was one of the most innovative and distinctive musicians of any genre. She was a brilliant, mesmerizing, self-destructive woman whose life swung from tragedy to triumph and back again. Her voice spoke volumes about hard living and heartbreak and about improvising your way through it all. She took a song, any song, and made it immediately and forever her own. She didn’t follow anyone’s rules. “If I’m going to sing like anyone else,” she said, “then I don’t need to sing at all.”

When I was eight, Billie Holiday’s music taught me that something beautiful could be made from sadness. For a musician, that is one of the most powerful lessons to learn. It’s what saves us. She lived a short and troubled life, but the happiness and luck that she did find, she found through music. And finding your joy and strength in music is something I know. I know what it’s like, when things have fallen to pieces, to put on a satin dress and go onstage and find the secret power of a woman in a satin dress and make your listeners fall in love with the music. Just like I fell in love with Billie Holiday’s songs.

* How is Billie Holiday described by the author?
* What is one of the most important lessons to learn as a musician?

She gave away her heart boldly and foolishly, and every time it was bruised, she turned that pain into something graceful and moving, in a song. “Love is funny or it’s sad, it’s a good thing or it’s bad,” she sang, “but beautiful.” There have been times when I’ve given my heart at the wrong time to the wrong man. One spring I played Rachmaninoff during the day and listened to Billie Holiday at night. “I’m a fool to want you,” she sang, a phrase I echoed in my head.

It’s been hard to hold on to hope this year. I’m raising a caramel-colored boy of my own and would like to think that my parents’ dream can come true for him. But I am afraid it is still out of reach. I’ve been sad and turned to the music that taught me how to find the beauty in pain. I’ve been playing Billie Holiday songs across America with my musician’s voice reaching back to join hers. I’ve met people who heard her sing in Harlem when my father was a boy, people who were her friends and lost her too soon, people who have lived their whole lives with her records, as I have.

* How does the songs that the author listened to reflect the events in her life?
* What did the author learned from music?

This music has made me new friends; told me new stories, brought back things I thought I’d lost a long time ago. It’s brought me home.  After all the years, all the travels, all the music, I’ve understood the lesson I’ve learned from Lady Day: that the magic in making music, as in living life, is to forget about all the definitions and rules you ever learned, to lean back against the

launchpad of your history and your experience, your losses and heartaches and joys, to look out into the future and to make something that is completely your own. Something that reaches deep to your center and pulls out a truth powerful enough to illuminate the moment and to shine far ahead, into memory. Something unexpected, something indefinable, perhaps complicated, but beautiful.

* How does music affect the author’s life?
* Is music important?

END