

From: Djamila
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Lesson Objective

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

Section One

Vocabulary

Evaluation Criteria

- Ability to understand definitions of English vocabulary

MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT DEFINITION

VOCABULARY	DEFINITIONS
1. STREAK (Noun)	A. Divergence in the structural or functional characteristics of an organism from the norm or average.
2. SUBTLE (Adj)	B. To undergo evolutionary change and gradually develop into different forms.
3. VARIATION (Noun)	C. A continuous/consecutive series of successes or failures and losses.
4. INHERENT (Adj)	D. To defeat or check (someone) by confusing or puzzling : to confuse or frustrate completely.
5. BAFFLE (Verb)	E. Something that is not immediately obvious or noticeable. Difficult to understand or perceive.
6. DEDUCE (Verb)	F. To reach a conclusion because of different elements and things that we know to be true. To determine by reasoning.
7. EVOLVE (Verb)	G. involved in the constitution or essential character of something; belonging by nature or habit

Section Two

Reading Comprehension and Pronunciation skills.

Evaluation Criteria

- Ability to effectively read and comprehend written English in a social or business environment.
- Reading Tip

Multiple choice questions often require detailed reading of paragraphs because the questions may be written to test your understanding of the main idea or supporting points. Also, the wrong options (called distractors) will come from the same part of the passage as the answer, and you need to eliminate these.

Article 1

The Creators of Grammar

- A)** No student of a foreign language needs to be told that grammar is complex. By changing word sequences and by adding a range of auxiliary verbs and suffixes, we are able to communicate tiny variations in meaning. We can turn a statement into a question, state whether an action has taken place or is soon to take place, and perform many other word tricks to convey **subtle** differences in meaning. Nor is this complexity inherent to the English language. All languages, even those of so-called 'primitive' tribes have clever grammatical components. The Cherokee pronoun system, for example, can distinguish between 'you and I', 'several other people and I' and 'you, another person and I'. In English, all these meanings are summed up in the one, crude pronoun 'we'. **Grammar is universal and plays a part in every language, no matter how widespread it is.** So the question which has baffled many linguists is - who created grammar?
- B)** At first, it would appear that this question is impossible to answer. To find out how grammar is created, someone needs to be present at the time of a language's creation, documenting its emergence. Many historical linguists are able to trace modern



complex languages back to earlier languages, but in order to answer the question of how complex languages are actually formed, the researcher needs to observe how languages are started **from scratch**. Amazingly, however, this is possible.

- C)** Some of the most recent languages evolved due to the Atlantic slave trade. At that time, slaves from a number of different ethnicities were forced to work together under colonizer's rule. Since they had no opportunity to learn each other's languages, they developed a **make-shift** language called a pidgin. Pidgins are strings of words copied from the language of the landowner. They have little in the way of grammar, and in many cases it is difficult for a listener to deduce when an event happened, and who did what to whom. [A] Speakers need to use circumlocution in order to make their meaning understood. [B] Interestingly, however, all it takes for a pidgin to become a complex language is for a group of children to be exposed to it at the time when they learn their mother tongue. [C] Slave children did not simply copy the strings of words uttered by their elders, they adapted their words to create a new, expressive language. [D] Complex grammar systems which emerge from pidgins are termed creoles, and they are invented by children.
- D)** Further evidence of this can be seen in studying sign languages for the deaf. Sign languages are not simply a series of gestures; they utilise the same grammatical machinery that is found in spoken languages. Moreover, there are many different languages used worldwide. The creation of one such language was documented quite recently in Nicaragua. Previously, all deaf people were isolated from each other, but in 1979 a new government introduced schools for the deaf. Although children were taught speech and lip reading in the classroom, in the playgrounds they began to invent their own sign system, using the gestures that they used at home. It was basically a pidgin. Each child used the signs differently, and there was no **consistent** grammar. However, children who joined the school later, when this inventive sign system was already around, developed a quite different sign language. Although it was based on the signs of the older children, the younger children's language was more fluid and compact, and it utilised a large range of grammatical devices to clarify meaning. What is more, all the children used the signs in the same way. A new creole was born.
- E)** Some linguists believe that many of the world's most established languages were creoles at first. The English past tense –ed ending may have evolved from the verb 'do'. 'It ended' may once have been 'It end-did'. Therefore it would appear that even the most widespread languages were partly created by children. Children appear to have innate grammatical machinery in their brains, which springs to life when they are first trying to make sense of the world around them. Their minds can serve to create logical, complex structures, even when there is no grammar present for them to copy.

Questions:

1) In paragraph A, why does the writer include information about the Cherokee language?

- a) To show how simple, traditional cultures can have complicated grammar structures
- b) To show how English grammar differs from Cherokee grammar
- c) To prove that complex grammar structures were invented by the Cherokees.
- d) To demonstrate how difficult it is to learn the Cherokee language

2) What can be inferred about the slaves' pidgin language?

- a) It contained complex grammar.
- b) It was based on many different languages.
- c) It was difficult to understand, even among slaves.
- d) It was created by the land-owners.

3) All the following sentences about Nicaraguan sign language are true EXCEPT:

- a) The language has been created since 1979.
- b) The language is based on speech and lip reading.
- c) The language incorporates signs which children used at home.
- d) The language was perfected by younger children

4) In paragraph C, where can the following sentence be placed?

It included standardised word orders and grammatical markers that existed in neither the pidgin language, nor the language of the colonizer

- A) B) C) D)**



5) From scratch' in paragraph B is closest in meaning to:

- a) from the very beginning
- b) in simple cultures
- c) by copying something else
- d) by using written information

6) 'Make-shift' in paragraph C is closest in meaning to:

- a) complicated and expressive
- b) simple and temporary
- c) extensive and diverse
- d) private and personal

7) Which sentence is closest in meaning to the highlighted sentence?

Grammar is universal and plays a part in every language, no matter how widespread it is.

- a) All languages, whether they are spoken by a few people or a lot of people, contain grammar.
- b) Some languages include a lot of grammar, whereas other languages contain a little.
- c) Languages which contain a lot of grammar are more common than languages that contain a little.
- d) The grammar of all languages is the same, no matter where the languages evolved.

8) All of the following are features of the new Nicaraguan sign language EXCEPT:

- a) All children used the same gestures to show meaning.
- b) The meaning was clearer than the previous sign language.
- c) The hand movements were smoother and smaller.
- d) New gestures were created for everyday objects and activities.

9) Which idea is presented in the final paragraph?

- a) English was probably once a creole.
- b) The English past tense system is inaccurate.
- c) Linguists have proven that English was created by children.
- d) Children say English past tenses differently from adults.

10) Look at the word 'consistent' in paragraph D. This word could best be replaced by which of the following?

- a) Natural
- b) Predictable
- c) Imaginable
- d) Uniform

Article 2

Risk-Taking and the Monkey Economy

- A)** Humans are uniquely smart among all the other species on the planet. We are capable of outstanding feats of technology and engineering. Then why are we so prone to making mistakes? And why do we tend to make the same ones time and time again? When Primate Psychologist Laurie Santos from the Comparative Cognition Lab at Yale University posed this question to her team, they were thinking in particular of the errors of judgement which led to the recent collapse of the financial markets. Santos came to two possible answers to this question. Either humans have designed environments which are too complex for us to fully understand, or we are biologically prone to making bad decisions.
- B)** In order to test these theories, the team selected a group of Brown Capuchin monkeys. Monkeys were selected for the test because, as distant relatives of humans, they are intelligent and have the capacity to learn. However, they are not influenced by any of the technological or cultural environments which affect human decision-making. The team wanted to test whether the capuchin monkeys, when put into similar situations as humans, would make the same mistakes
- C)** [A] Of particular interest to the scientists was whether monkeys would make the same mistakes when making financial decisions. [B] In order to find out, they had to introduce the monkeys to money. [C] The monkeys soon **cottoned on**, and as well as



learning simple exchange techniques, were soon able to distinguish 'bargains' – If one team-member offered two grapes in exchange for a metal disc and another team-member offered one grape, the monkeys chose the two-grape option. [D] Interestingly, when the data about the monkey's purchasing strategies was compared with economist's data on human behaviour, there was a perfect match.

- D)** So, after establishing that the monkey market was operating effectively, the team decided to introduce some problems which humans generally get wrong. One of these issues is risk-taking. Imagine that someone gave you \$1000. In addition to this \$1000, you can receive either A) an additional \$500 or B) someone tosses a coin and if it lands 'heads' you receive an additional \$1000, but if it lands 'tails' you receive no more money. Of these options, most people tend to choose option A. They prefer guaranteed earnings, rather than running the risk of receiving nothing. Now imagine a second situation in which you are given \$2000. Now, you can choose to either A) lose \$500, leaving you with a total of \$1500, or B) toss a coin; if it lands 'heads' you lose nothing, but if it lands 'tails' you lose \$1000, leaving you with only \$1000. Interestingly, when we stand to lose money, we tend to choose the more risky choice, option B. And as we know from the experience of financial investors and gamblers, it is unwise to take risks when we are on a losing **streak**.
- E)** So would the monkeys make the same basic error of judgement? The team put them to the test by giving them similar options. In the first test, monkeys had the option of exchanging their disc for one grape and receiving one bonus grape, or exchanging the grape for one grape and sometimes receiving two bonus grapes and sometimes receiving no bonus. It turned out that monkeys, like humans, chose the less risky option in times of plenty. Then the experiment was reversed. Monkeys were offered three grapes, but in option A were only actually given two grapes. In option B, they had a fifty-fifty chance of receiving all three grapes or one grape only. The results were that monkeys, like humans, take more risks in times of loss
- F)** The implications of this experiment are that because monkeys make the same irrational judgements that humans do, maybe human error is not a result of the complexity of our financial institutions, but is imbedded in our evolutionary history. If this is the case, our errors of judgement will be very difficult to overcome. **On a more optimistic note however, humans are fully capable of overcoming limitations once we have identified them.** By recognising them, we can design technologies which will help us to make better choices in future.

Questions:

1) What was the aim of the experiment outlined above?

- a) To investigate whether monkeys could learn to use money
- b) To investigate where human mistakes come from
- c) To find out whether it is better to take risks in times of loss
- d) To determine whether monkeys make more mistakes than humans

2) Where in paragraph 3 could the sentence below be best placed?

The team distributed metal discs to the monkeys, and taught them that the discs could be exchanged with team-members for food.

- A) B) C) D)**

3) Which of the following statements is the best paraphrase of the highlighted sentence?

On a more optimistic note however, humans are fully capable of overcoming limitations once we have identified them.

- a) Hopefully, humans will soon be able to solve these problems.
- b) Fortunately, humans can solve problems that we know about.
- c) Luckily, humans do not have many limitations which have been identified.
- d) We are happy to note that we can solve the problem which we have identified

4) The words 'cottoned on' are closest in meaning to:

- a) Learnt
- b) Knew
- c) Completed
- d) Conducted

5) Which paragraph addresses why monkeys were chosen for the experiment?

- a) Paragraph B
- b) Paragraph C
- c) Paragraph D
- d) Paragraph E

6) What can be inferred about Laurie Santos?

- a) She thinks that both humans and monkeys are greedy.
- b) Her job frequently involves working with monkeys.
- c) She believes that humans should never take risks.
- d) She prefers monkeys to humans

7) Which THREE of the following statements are supported by the text?

- a) Both monkeys and humans take risks at any opportunity
- b) Risk-taking behavior among humans is the same as that among monkeys.
- c) Human mistakes are due to the complexity of our environment.
- d) Monkeys and humans take more risks if there is the chance they will lose out.
- e) Humans' perception of risk has probably been part of our minds for millions of years
- f) Monkeys make fewer errors of judgement than humans do.